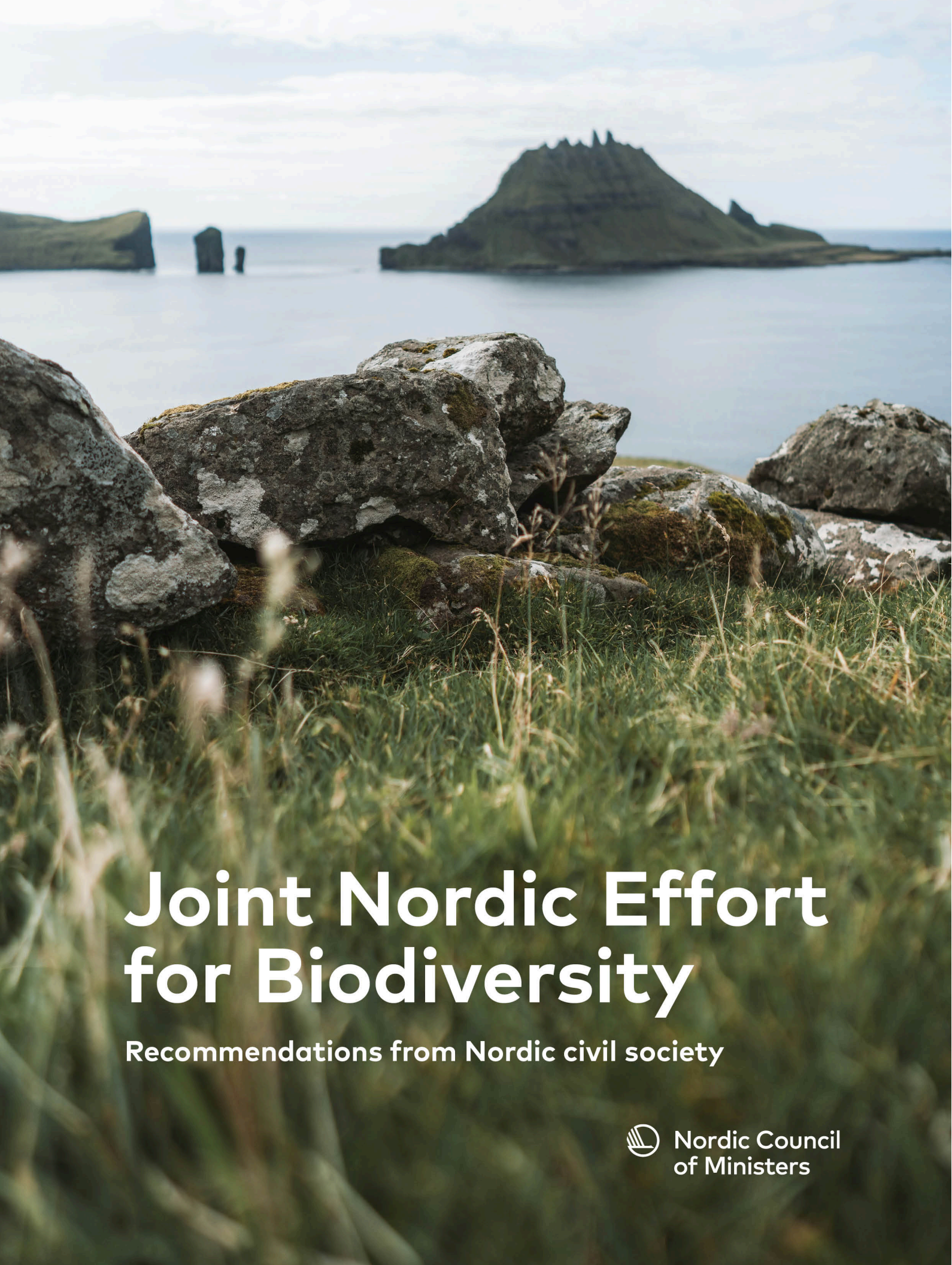


Joint Nordic Effort for Biodiversity

Recommendations from Nordic civil society

Nordic Council of Ministers

Contents

Introduction 5

Target 1:
Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss 9

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 9

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 11

Target 2:
Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems 12

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 13

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 14

Target 3:
Conserve 30% of Land, Waters, and Seas 15

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 16

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 17

Target 4:
Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts 19

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 20

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 21

Target 5:
Ensure Sustainable, Safe, and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species 22

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 23

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 24

Target 6:
Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimise Their Impact 25

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 25

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 26

Target 7:
Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity 27

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 28

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 29

Target 8:
Minimise the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience 30

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 31

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 31

Target 9:
Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People **33**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 34

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 34

Target 10:
Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry **36**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 37

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 38

Target 11:
Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People **39**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 40

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 40

Target 12:
Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity **41**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 42

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 43

Target 13:
Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge **44**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 45

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 45

Target 14:
Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level **47**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 48

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 49

Target 15:
Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts **50**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 51

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 52

Target 16:
Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Overconsumption **53**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 54

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 55

Target 17:
Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology **57**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 58

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 58

Target 18:
Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity **59**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 60

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 61

Target 19:
Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity from all Sources, including $30 Billion through International Finance **62**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 63

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 64

Target 20:
Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity **66**

Policy proposals for National Implementation 67

Policy proposals for International Implementation 67

Target 21:
Ensure That Knowledge is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action **68**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 69

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 69

Target 22:
Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all **70**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 71

Policy proposals for International Implementation 72

Target 23:
Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action **73**

Policy Proposals for National Implementation 74

Policy Proposals for International Implementation 74

Acronyms and Abbreviations **75**

Organisations who have contributed to and/or supported this publication **77**

About this publication **79**

This publication is also available online in a web-accessible version at:
https://pub.norden.org/temanord2024-539



Introduction

Following years of negotiations, including delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022 in Montreal, Canada. The GBF sets out an ambitious pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050. Yet the framework's implementation and effect are dependent on national and regional execution with civil society organisations instrumental in ensuring this.

Joint Nordic Effort for Biodiversity

Civil society organisations are drivers of ambition in international agreements and instil accountability for governments to follow up on their commitments. They are also key actors in the implementation of the agreements themselves. "Joint Nordic Effort for Biodiversity" is a collaborative project led by the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), alongside CONCORD Sweden and The Danish 92 Group - Forum for Sustainable Development. The project is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Working Group for Biodiversity (NBM).

The purpose of the project is to catalyse biodiversity action, advance the implementation of the GBF within the Nordic region and to strengthen Nordic civil society's impact on the negotiations in the CBD, including Nordic governments' positions.

Context of this document

By harnessing the expertise of Nordic CSOs across various thematic areas, we have developed policy recommendations on GBF implementation to the Nordic governments, gathered in this publication.

The policy recommendations should be considered as a whole. Several targets reflect the recommendations, but we have made an effort to avoid repetition. Some issues are cross cutting or do not belong under one specific target, such as the terminology for Indigenous Peoples or the role of citizens in the framework and implementation efforts.

The publication is the result of a wide range of civil society organisations with varying expertise providing input across focus areas, perspectives and political views. Hence, the policy recommendations in this publication are not the primary positions and prioritised messages of all of the organisations that have contributed or are supporting the publication but rather a compilation of proposals. The proposals have been adjusted to fit the Nordic context, and many of the organisations will have more specific suggestions for their own governments. In this context, the proposals for national implementation are recommendations for the implementation in the Nordic countries, with the preconditions that entails. Hence, they should not be read as general recommendations for all national action plans.

Indigenous Peoples or indigenous peoples and local communities

The rights of Indigenous Peoples are essential for the rights-based implementation of the GBF. Yet there are still challenges with how the GBF and the Convention on Biodiversity refer to Indigenous Peoples. In the document, we will alternate between using the terms Indigenous Peoples and local communities or Indigenous Peoples, depending on the context, although the GBF uses the term 'indigenous peoples and local communities' with all lower-case letters. This is to align our terminology with the request from the three UN special mechanisms dedicated to Indigenous Peoples to seize the use of the term 'indigenous peoples and local communities', while at the same time avoiding confusion as we are referring to the text of the Convention on Biodiversity or the GBF.

Role of Citizens

The GBF highlights the role played by citizens to achieve the global vision and *"Invites Parties and relevant organizations to support community-based monitoring and information systems and citizen science and their contributions to the implementation of the monitoring framework"* for the GBF. Hence, we propose that **Nordic governments prepare national strategies for involving citizens in nature conservation and natural resource management i.e. through community-based monitoring and citizen science.** Responsibility still lies with governmental institutions, but citizen involvement, for example via community-based monitoring and citizen science, is critical as the parties to the GBF agreed that the GBF is

"*a framework for all – for the whole of government and the whole of society. Its success requires political will and recognition at the highest level of government and relies on action and cooperation by all levels of government and all actors of society*". An assessment of the indicators for the GBF shows that half of the indicators can involve citizens in data collection or interpretation.

Greater involvement of citizens in the GBF would increase engagement, harness knowledge from those living close to nature, facilitate decision making at local to national levels by filling data gaps, and increase implementation of the GBF to improve prospects for biodiversity.

Policy Recommendations





Target 1: Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss

Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Introduction

The overarching goal of the GBF is for the world's countries to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030. The objective for area management in Target 1, along with the targets on conservation and restoration, are crucial elements for halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity. Land-use changes are the main direct reason for both species and natural habitats being at continuing risk of disappearing in both the Nordic region and globally.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Amend national legislation regulating spatial planning to ensure that biodiversity is highlighted as one of the most important considerations and premises that must be safeguarded.
- Develop clear national targets and guidelines for how participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land and sea use change should be implemented, including the legal establishment of a mitigation hierarchy showcasing, in prioritised order, different measures to limit the negative impact on biodiversity.

- Ensure that a good ecological condition is achieved in all ecosystems, prioritising the most vulnerable ecosystems both on land and at sea.
- Direct development of renewable energy to areas with the lowest environmental footprint, both on land and at sea, and impose on developers the use of best practices for mitigating impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity. Achieving this necessitates thorough ecological mapping and strict requirements for location and mitigation measures in the licensing systems.
- Establish a governmental monitoring system for ecosystems and qualities, improving the available knowledge to contribute to avoiding the gradual loss of biodiversity due to short-term motivated decisions not taking into account biodiversity risks.
- Enable and facilitate citizen science and citizen generated data in the monitoring of ecosystems.
- Adopt landscape ecology as a basic premise for sustainable, long-term area planning.
- Develop a clear national strategy within the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), focusing on areas of high biodiversity importance - including red listed habitats, areas with occurrences of multiple red listed species, migration routes - while respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and of local communities.
- Identify, protect and restore areas and ecosystems that can be integrated in larger, ecologically functioning units by restoring areas connecting them.
- Develop guidelines that include Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and land management practices, as well as their full, effective and meaningful participation in spatial planning and land-use-change processes.
- Extend national and global moratoria on deep seabed mining activities unless and until the environmental, social and economic risks are comprehensively understood and it can be clearly demonstrated that deep seabed mining can be managed in such a way that ensures the effective protection of the marine environment and prevents loss of biodiversity.
- Ensure that all alternative sources for the responsible production and use of the metals also found in the deep sea, such as reduction of demand for primary metals, a transformation to a resource efficient, closed-loop and materials circular economy are fully explored and applied before any deep seabed mining activity is considered.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Provide capacity building and technical support for developing countries to strengthen their ability to integrate biodiversity in their spatial planning, while not weakening people's ability to live sustainably in relation to biodiversity.
- Support and advocate for the acknowledgement of forests, and tropical forests especially, in all NBSAPs as areas of significant ecological importance, requiring protection levels.
- Bring deforestation and forest degradation of tropical forests to a full halt before 2030.
- Support and advocate for the acknowledgement in NBSAPs of the rights of Indigenous Peoples to manage their traditional territories, and for the plans to be founded on Indigenous Peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) in biodiversity management processes.
- Support small-scale producers and Indigenous Peoples in promoting sustainable food systems by advancing food sovereignty and sustainable land use practices in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Farmers and Other Persons Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), adopted in 2018.
- Ensure that the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) includes all ecosystems as well as all commodities to ensure that we do not cause biodiversity loss in other parts of the world.
- Promote a full stop in the destruction of all primary ecosystems.
- Support and advocate an international moratorium on deep seabed mining activities unless and until the environmental, social and economic risks are comprehensively understood and it can be clearly demonstrated that deep seabed mining can be managed in such a way that ensures the effective protection of the marine environment and prevents loss of biodiversity.
- Support the work to fully explore and apply alternative sources for the responsible production and use of the metals also found in the deep sea, such as reduction of demand for primary metals, a transformation to a resource efficient, closed-loop materials circular economy.



Target 2: Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems

Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 percent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.

Introduction

Most of the nature in the Nordics has been altered by human activity in some way. Nature, which is degraded to the extent that it threatens biodiversity and ecosystem services should be restored. There is broad scientific consensus on this, supported by the International Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The UN has declared 2021–2030 as the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.

According to the UN Environment programme (UNEP) report from 2021, "*Becoming #GenerationRestoration: Ecosystem Restoration for People, Nature and Climate*", we can prevent the loss of 1 million endangered species by halting and reversing the degradation of lands and oceans.[1] By restoring just 15% of ecosystems in key areas, it is possible to reduce extinction by 60% through habitat improvement. Furthermore, the report states that ecosystem restoration is needed on a large scale in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and countries need to deliver on their existing commitments to restore 1 billion hectares of degraded land in addition to making similar commitments for marine areas.

Restoring ecosystems involves various measures, from converting monotonous industrial forests to diverse old-growth forests, rewetting drained wetlands, removing fish migration barriers, and recreating species-rich cultural landscapes

1. Becoming #GenerationRestoration: Ecosystem Restoration for People, Nature and Climate, https://www.unep.org/interactive/ecosystem-restoration-people-nature-climate/en/index.php

from overgrown areas, to re-establishing eelgrass beds and kelp forests, reducing nutrient and pesticides pollution, cleaning up contaminants, and minimising the impacts of invasive species.

There is a lack of understanding regarding the importance of restoration efforts, particularly in marine ecosystems. Legislation, political attention, increased knowledge of methodologies, actor involvement and public acceptance are all needed to establish the necessary frameworks facilitating restoration efforts on private land, encompassing areas such as forests, wetlands, and coastal regions. There is a legal gap in securing the conservation of restored habitats and keystone species against future development.

According to the IPBES report, restoration yields tenfold the monetary investment in the form of enhanced ecosystem services: by increasing carbon sequestration; reducing flood risks; supporting pollinators; and increasing fish populations. Restoration is essential for bolstering populations and increasing biodiversity, thereby enhancing the functioning of ecosystems. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCCs) Special Report on Climate Change and Land[2] published in 2019, it is also crucial to preserve and enhance ecosystems' capacity to sequester and store carbon to achieve climate goals. Robust ecosystems are likewise vital for mitigating the adverse effects of climate change. Since the restoration of ecosystems represents a significant economic investment, funding allocations must be raised to a substantially higher level.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt national legislation committing the government to have at least 30% of degraded ecosystems per main category of ecosystem under effective restoration by 2030.
- Develop national restoration plans which outline the priorities, timelines, financing, monitoring and descriptions of the initiatives to achieve this restoration of 30% of degraded ecosystems.
- Establish sizable, long-term research programs to identify the best methods for restoration, including the knowledge and lived experience of Indigenous Peoples and women.
- Prioritise restoration of ecosystems that are important for red listed species, rare or threatened species and nature types, carbon storage, ecosystem services and corridors between areas of intact nature.
- Secure sufficient funds to invest in the restoration of ecosystems nationally.

2. Climate Change and Land: An IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems, https://www.ipcc.ch/report/srccl/.

- In the EU-member Nordic Countries, make all national decisions and restoration activities align with the new EU Nature Restoration Law.
- Ensure that where old growth forests have not been protected and are degraded, they are restored and protected.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Secure sufficient funds to invest in the restoration of ecosystems, globally.
- Facilitate international collaboration on restoration, including knowledge exchanges, demonstrating best practices, and supporting restoration plans.
- Establish safeguards to avoid the risk of displacement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially the poor and otherwise vulnerable groups.
- Promote Indigenous-led restoration initiatives and ensure they have access to international funding.



Target 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters, and Seas

Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 percent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that we have significant deficiencies in the protection of most ecosystems, such as forests, coastal ecosystems, seas, and wetlands.

Prioritising Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)[3], such as Important Bird Areas (IBAs) is required to safeguard the most important places for biodiversity. We must ensure that protected areas are large enough to maintain their ecological functions upon which biodiverse life depends and to safeguard from impacts from the currently changing climate. For some ecosystem types, restoration is needed to even achieve 30% representative protection. This is especially the case in naturally diverse

3. According to IUCN- International Union for Conservation of Nature, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) are among the most diverse places on Earth and contribute significantly to the planet's biodiversity and overall health. These sites have proven to be a key tool for guiding decisions on conservation and sustainable management.

ecosystems that are already heavily damaged or lost, such as various types of high-productivity lowland forests, rich and intermediate fens, and swamp forests. Restoration is not an alternative to protection, but a complementary means to reach the goal of 30% protected area. There is a need to allocate more funds for protection, both for assessment and compensation. Improved communication about the importance of protection is also necessary, along with stronger legal instruments for establishing protected areas. Other effective area-based conservation measures are also required to protect Indigenous territories and restore nature, these must occur even where there are conflicts over land use and area.

Preventing large-scale biodiversity loss requires effective conservation of more land, inland waters and oceans, while respecting Indigenous Peoples' rights, Many species depend entirely on specific vegetation types for survival, making forest conservation, establishment of strict protected areas, where this can be done without interfering with Indigenous Peoples' rights and their human rights to practise their culture, can be a crucial tool in efforts to preserve biodiversity and halt the biodiversity loss. It is therefore vital that there be established global standards for what makes up for good protection, while recognising Indigenous Peoples' territorial rights and their contributions to biodiversity protection.

Indigenous Peoples around the world continuously face major threats in terms of displacements, dispossessions and other rights violations as a result of conservation and protection schemes. It is imperative that this will be specifically addressed in the NBSAPs, including the Nordic countries' implementation of this target beyond national borders.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt national legislation, committing the government to protect and conserve at least 30% per main category of ecosystem by 2030.
- Protect at least 30% of each main category of ecosystems, prioritising Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).
- Ban destructive fisheries practices and other human activities putting species and/or habitats at risk in marine protected areas.
- Implement a moratorium on logging of all potential old-growth forests until biodiversity values have been mapped and documented, and the issue of potential protection of the area has been resolved.
- Respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples according to UNDRIP, including their right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and their human right to execute their culture, implement strict conservation regulations ensuring positive conservation outcomes in protected areas and other areas of high

biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity in the Nordic countries. This can include, but is not limited to, prohibiting human disturbances such as hunting, fishing, logging, etc., especially during the nesting and breeding season.

- Develop a national action plan to effectively achieve the protection of at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity, in the Nordic countries in line with the GBF.
- Ensure that existing and new Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective-Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) are protecting biodiversity. Adjust and improve their regulations and management to fulfil the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria for area-based protection of biodiversity. Industrial and damaging exploitation like bottom trawling fisheries, logging, mining operations or wind energy plants should not be allowed within PAs and OECMs.
- Apply a rigorous and transparent approach to the selection of candidate OECMs and clearly and specifically articulate the biodiversity benefits the candidate sites are delivering, with the aim to contribute to halt and reverse biodiversity loss; exclude for consideration all the sites without clearly defined biodiversity attributes or that are failing to achieve single species population health, i.e. that host overfished species or species subject to current overfishing within the area.
- Ensure that a holistic marine spatial planning for national waters is fully implemented by 2030.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Contribute via financing, capacity building, and information sharing, while acknowledging and respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples as stipulated in the UNDRIP and adhering to CBD article 8, achieve the protection and conservation of at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal, and marine areas conservation by 2030, protecting areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services.
- Support and advocate for regulations in international agreements to establish protection zones without commercial activity or exploitation of organisms (no logging, hunting, fishing, catching, etc), while respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and recognising their sustainable, customary use.

- Support and advocate for the acknowledgement of tropical forests in all NBSAPs as areas of high biodiversity importance to be effectively protected, at both national and regional levels. Deforestation or forest degradation of tropical forests must come to a full halt before 2030.
- Ensure that the human rights, the rights of Indigenous Peoples to manage their traditional territories, and the right of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior and informed consent as stipulated in the UNDRIP, are acknowledged in NBSAPs, including in decisions on biodiversity management and conservation measures.
- Advocate for the establishment of safeguards to ensure the implementation of this target, as well as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) agreement, to respect and secure the rights of Indigenous Peoples in accordance with Section C.a and Target 22 of the GBF.



Target 4: Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimise human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.

Introduction

Today, species are becoming extinct at a rate between ten and one hundred thousand times faster than historically, with an estimated one million species threatened with extinction due to human impact. Human exploitation of ecosystems includes land use changes, overharvesting, resource extraction, the spread of harmful invasive species, pollution, and climate change. Effective coexistence between humans and living organisms requires less negative impact on other species populations, including their genetic variation, and enables species to adapt to climate change and other environmental changes.

According to UNEP et al.,[4] our global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss, with agriculture alone being the identified threat to 24,000 of the 28,000 (86%) species at risk of extinction. Global dietary patterns need to move

4. Food system impacts on biodiversity loss | UNEP - UN Environment Programme

towards more plant-heavy diets, mainly due to the disproportionate impact of animal agriculture on biodiversity, land use and the environment. Direct exploitation through fishing, hunting and trapping, is the second largest threat to biodiversity. Measures to reduce the negative impact of direct exploitation on the status of wild and domesticated species should be implemented. Efforts should also be directed towards finding solutions that facilitate coexistence with wild animals.

Together with legislation regulating species management, an overarching strategy and the precautionary principle can improve the status of threatened species. The goal of halting species extinction requires collaboration from sector authorities, area management, commercial ventures, non-commercial activities, infrastructure development, forestry, hunting, and agriculture.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt national legislation requiring the halt and reverse of biodiversity loss.
- Establish legally binding environmental quality standards for species and ecosystems to limit the managing administration's authority to permit land-use changes that could degrade environmental quality, creating an effective tool to provide stronger legal protection for biodiversity that is particularly vulnerable to land-use changes.
- Develop a national strategy on human-wildlife to improve coexistence between humans and wild animals, aiming to avoid and/or reduce conflict.
- Establish clear, binding guidelines across all sectors and management levels regulating activities and interventions that affect red-listed species. These guidelines should also apply to near threatened species to prevent them from becoming threatened.
- Implement measures to improve the status of threatened species in red list assessments by 2030, including large predators, and ensure that necessary resources are allocated to achieve this.
- Develop specific recovery plans for threatened species and populations in fisheries management.
- Phase out subsidies aimed at reduction of threatened wild animal species native to the ecosystem.
- Promote non-lethal management when there are conflicts between wild species and humans and increase acceptance of and tolerance for wild animals.
- While respecting the rights of Indigenous People, tighten national regulation of hunting.

- Support and promote non-consumptive use of nature, such as nature tourism, bird watching and wildlife photography.
- Make efforts to reintroduce wild species, particularly keystone species such as large predators.
- Authorities should implement measures of protection so that large predators are no longer red-listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable.
- Encourage sustainable farming practices that promote biodiversity and reduce dependency on monoculture farming, such as the diversification of crops, to protect genetic diversity and halt species extinction.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Develop international policy instruments that support sustainable use and production by small scale farmers, subsistence farmers, and local communities.
- Develop international policy instruments, i.e. treaties or regulations, that support sustainable use and production by small scale farmers, subsistence farmers, and local communities, where non-lethal means for coexistence with wildlife is an inherent part of sustainability.
- Advocate for the recognition of the role played by the global food systems in biodiversity loss in international negotiations and promote regulations to halt species extinction and loss of genetic diversity driven by food production.



Target 5: Ensure Sustainable, Safe, and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species

Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimising impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.

Introduction

Harvesting, use, and trade of wild species are significant drivers of biodiversity loss posing serious threats to ecosystems and the species that inhabit them. The overharvesting of relatively large populations can have negative consequences for ecosystems and resource bases. At the same time, harvesting, use, and trade of wild species are a part of the economy, culture, traditions, and recreation.

Sustainable harvesting is defined as harvesting that does not negatively impact the reproductive population or the predators that depend on these species for sustenance. The goal of sustainable harvesting involves both sector authorities, environmental administration, as well as commercial and non-commercial activities such as fisheries, agriculture, forestry, hunting, recreational fishing, and foraging. Import and consumption within the Nordic countries can contribute to overharvesting and defaunation in other countries. Overharvesting of wild species is a global problem that must be addressed from multiple angles and national measures must be aligned with international efforts to address the key drivers.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Establish national mechanisms to ensure that the presence of threatened species automatically triggers knowledge-based management assessments, including harvesting bans, species-specific action plans, and prioritisation.
- Ensure assessment of populations of harvested species is scientifically justified from an ecosystem perspective, incorporating long-term population variations.
- Strengthen efforts to prevent and combat environmental crime both within the national authority for investigation and the prosecution of environmental crime and in the individual police districts, as well as at customs/border checkpoints.
- Link the management of wild species to ecosystem-based management, rather than focusing solely on individual species and species of commercial interest. Introduce new reference points that account for intra or inter-species dynamics, and for the impacts of climate change on the ecosystems. Acknowledge the importance of species´ roles in sustaining natural ecosystems.
- Develop and implement multi-species models for fisheries management that consider both commercial and non-commercial species, including marine mammals and seabirds.
- Develop and implement guidance, indicators, and practical tools to help fisheries' managers minimise the impacts on non-target species and ecosystems.
- Develop and implement national policy instruments to prevent the destruction of fauna, poaching and the exploitation of endangered species for trade, including restricting or banning trade in hunting trophies.
- Tighten national regulation of hunting.
- Ensure that actions to implement sustainable use, harvesting and trade of wild species do not restrict the customary sustainable use of natural resources by Indigenous Peoples and local communities considering their spiritual, cultural, economic, and subsistence needs.
- Identify, recognise and develop collaborative management plans with Indigenous Peoples and with local communities ensuring their full, equitable, and inclusive representation and participation in relevant decision-making processes.

- Strengthen the capacity of officials to enforce the decisions of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and make agreements with importing countries in this regard, as well as strengthen the due diligence practices.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Strengthen cooperation between the Nordic countries on preventing and combating environmental crime.
- In close cooperation between relevant Nordic countries, implement stricter regulations for both commercial and recreational fishing in the Skagerrak, in line with scientific recommendations, including stopping trawling and purse seining in degraded marine ecosystems and particularly vulnerable fjord areas.
- Promote an international ban on the use of bottom trawls and Danish seines and ensure that areas not previously exposed to trawling are protected from it.
- Review the existing international treaties and other agreements dealing with sustainable fisheries management (UNCLOS, UNFSA, SDGs, etc.) and identify the additional steps needed to minimise impacts on non-target species and ecosystems.
- Strengthen the protection of red listed species in all ecosystems and encourage the creation of protected nature areas without hunting, fishing or other exploitative use, while respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples to sustainable customary use.
- Ensure that states do not engage in activities that diminishes the effectiveness of international nature agreements like the Bern Convention and CITES, hence ensuring proper protection of endangered large predators.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practices and traditional knowledge to enhance Indigenous Peoples and local communities management systems and encourage cross border cooperation.
- Support capacity building in trade partner countries in the Global South to enforce CITES convention.



Target 6: Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimise Their Impact

Eliminate, minimise, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent by 2030, and eradicating or controlling invasive alien species, especially in priority sites, such as islands.

Introduction

Invasive alien species are animals, plants, or fungi introduced intentionally or spread accidentally to areas beyond their original range, which become naturalised and have negative consequences for native biodiversity. Alien species are one of the five major drivers of biodiversity loss in Europe and globally. To effectively manage alien species requires the involvement of commercial and non-commercial activities including landscaping, infrastructure development, shipping, agriculture, forestry, waste management, sector authorities and nature conservation groups.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt a national emergency preparedness scheme with an early warning system and detailed management plans to react to the discovery of new invasive species with high invasion potential in any ecosystem.

- As soon as possible and latest by 2025 develop a national action list outlining species prioritised for management actions on land and at sea, such as the eradication of alien species with very high ecological risk.
- Adopt national policies to strengthen resilience of native ecosystems by increasing biological diversity and avoiding large areas of monocultures associated with various types of land use such as agriculture.
- Ensure scientifically informed approaches in the management of introduced species.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Establish Nordic cooperation on an early warning system and detailed management plans upon the discovery of new invasive species with high invasion potential.
- Contribute to capacity building on developing and enforcing legislation and regulation to reduce risk of import and establishment of invasive alien species in developing countries.
- Provide funds to combat the establishment and spread invasive alien species in developing countries.



Target 7:
Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity

Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including:

- ***a.*** *by reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use;*
- ***b.*** *by reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods*
- ***c.*** *by preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.*

Introduction

Pollution poses a threat to both biodiversity and human health. Pollution can be highly visible, such as plastic litter and ghost fishing, or it can be invisible, like micro- or nanoplastics, environmental toxins—persistent and often man-made substances that bioaccumulate in the food chain and cause insidious toxic effects. Pollution in the form of excessive input of natural nutrients, for example, from the fertilisation of fields, fertilisation of forests, discharges from fish farms, and inadequate treatment of waste from homes and recreational properties is a significant problem for many ecosystems including waterways and coastal areas. Moreover, the inadequate use of toxic substances such as pesticides, significantly reduces the surrounding biodiversity of plants, insects and animals.

There are many types of pollution, but the common factor is that they negatively impact ecosystems and biodiversity. Reducing pollution involves halting both point source emissions and more diffuse spread of substances into nature to prevent adverse effects on species and ecosystems. Strengthening nature's own filtration methods such as vegetative buffer zones, wetlands, and retention ponds can also help mitigate pollution.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Prohibit the discharge of pesticides (biocides) in aquaculture, such as copper and other anti-fouling pesticides used on fish farm nets.
- Phase out the use of environmentally harmful pesticides in agriculture.
- Phase out the use of environmentally damaging substances in consumer products, and impose stricter requirements for risk assessments of new substances, considering how they may impact the environment.
- Establish permanent buffer zones where cultivated land meets water bodies and watercourses, prohibit autumn ploughing, and actively preserve and restore retention ponds, wetlands, streams, marshes, forests, and other nature-based filtration systems that reduce runoff from agriculture.
- Introduce an eco-modulated tax on plastic packaging and other plastic products for the producers and importers to incentivize the usage of more environmentally sustainable materials.
- Implement requirements for sedimentation of drainage water from agriculture to reduce nitrogen pollution in each local watershed.
- Implement an ambitious national plan for identification and remediation of sites contaminated by previous land use.
- Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for new, untreated direct discharges, such as sewage from leisure boats or fish farms along the coast.
- Prevent microplastic emissions early in the value chain by introducing requirements for product design and mitigating measures to limit known sources of microplastic pollution such as dust from tire wear, runoff from artificial turf fields, paint waste, spills of plastic raw materials, and waste from plastic processing industries.
- Adopt appropriate legislation defining anthropogenic noise and light in nature as pollution, both on land and in the sea, and implement measures to limit harm on wildlife, habitats and ecosystems.
- Develop a binding national plan to reduce the input of phosphorus and other nutrients from agriculture into rivers, lakes, and fjords.

- Introduce legislation and effective enforcement so imported goods, including online goods, comply with the same environmental, health, and safety standards as those imposed on domestically produced goods. This includes standards for pesticide residues, nutrient runoff, and other pollutants.
- Develop and implement a national strategy for nutrient management that includes best practices for nutrient cycling and utilisation.
- Implement and enforce a precautionary principle in regards to which pesticides should be allowed or where the maximum limits are.
- Invest in research on the implications for biodiversity and human health of chemicals and microplastic that are leaked into nature.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Commit to adopting a binding and equitable global treaty to end plastic pollution, with specific measures to eliminate the most harmful plastic products and chemicals including: product design requirements to ensure they are safe and easy to reuse and recycle; robust means of implementation; mechanisms for gradual strengthening.
- Contribute to strengthening regulations on nitrogen at the global and EU level.
- Establish policies to support zero waste goals and prevent the dumping of waste in other countries. Support and advocate for the prohibition of the export of hazardous chemicals and wastes to countries with weaker environmental regulations and include stricter controls on the transboundary movement of hazardous chemicals, in relevant international processes such as the science policy panel on chemicals and waste.
- Contribute to establishing an effective global agreement against banned pesticides, especially targeting countries with weaker environmental regulations.



Target 8: Minimise the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience

Minimise the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimising negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.

Introduction

Nature absorbs over half of all greenhouse gas emissions each year, and intact ecosystems are capable of absorbing and storing enormous amounts of carbon. However, when intact ecosystems are degraded or destroyed, the livelihoods of a large number of species are also weakened. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that as much as 30% of Earth's species could disappear due to climate change. Climate change and destruction of nature exacerbate each other negatively: Climate change exacerbates natural destruction by causing species extinction and making nature less resilient and more vulnerable to changes.

Damaged ecosystems cannot protect against floods and landslides or absorb carbon as effectively as intact ecosystems. Therefore, conserving and restoring ecosystems are important climate actions. Knowledge of biodiversity's contribution to carbon storage and protection against extreme weather events is the basis for strengthening nature's resilience. By using this knowledge to ensure strong, diverse, and well-functioning ecosystems, we can prevent and protect against the effects of climate change. For example, good buffer zones along streams, rivers, and

wetlands will be important for mitigating the consequences of extreme weather events and other climate changes, especially for homes and infrastructure. Conservation and restoration of forests on slopes, as well as conservation and restoration of wetlands and moist forest types, are also examples of management that works with nature and reduces the risk of natural damage due to climate change.

Climate change is a global problem closely linked to energy use and lifestyle, hence national measures must be seen in the context of the Nordic countries' international responsibilities. To achieve a just climate transition depends on adaptation by all municipalities, sector authorities and nature management practitioners as well as changes in commercial and non-commercial activities including forestry, housing and infrastructure development, agriculture, fossil fuels, and fisheries

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Increase efforts to improve knowledge regarding the role of species, habitats, and ecosystems in the carbon cycle and including precise determinations of the climate effects of conservation and restoration of nature.
- Strengthen national, regional, and local management expertise and resources for mapping, protecting, and restoring carbon-rich habitats.
- Require that particularly carbon-rich and biodiverse areas are identified and protected in municipal and national climate plans, including areas in the ocean and the deep sea. Specifically, there must be requirements for the protection of wetlands and old-growth forests. This should be mapped out through a mechanism for accounting and budgeting for the impact on nature from area use.
- Increase recognition of the interconnectedness of the climate and biodiversity crises and prioritise actions that are beneficial for both climate and biodiversity, including integrating nature risk and climate risk into all land use and marine spatial planning.
- Ensure that nature-based climate actions or other initiatives addressing climate change do not have negative consequences for biodiversity or human rights, including Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Fulfil the commitments in the Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector under the climate agreement with the EU to reduce carbon emissions, while prioritising measures beneficial to ecosystems and biodiversity.

- Value the existing carbon storages (not only the sequestration) that are old and rich in biodiversity such as peatlands.
- Promote clear safeguards and guidelines for protection of biodiversity, human rights, and Indigenous Peoples' rights during discussions on nature-based climate action at the EU and global level.
- Urgently develop a United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution on criteria, norms, standards and guidelines for implementing nature-based solutions that protects biodiversity and respects and recognizes Indigenous Peoples' rights, human rights, youth inclusion and gender equality.
- Develop policies that ensure a fair and inclusive people-centred approach to climate action that also ensures biodiversity. This includes the promotion of human rights, Indigenous Peoples' rights, gender equality, community participation, youth participation and equity perspectives in climate commitments, decision-making and implementation.
- Work towards a fair phase-out of fossil fuels, including phasing out existing fossil fuel production, ending all new fossil fuel exploitation, and supporting a just transition which does not violate human rights or Indigenous Peoples' rights.
- In a just manner phase out fossil fuel subsidies and redirect these finances to climate action, such as sustainable renewable energy investment, and biodiversity resilience efforts.
- Guarantee sufficient and predictable climate finance that meets the evolving needs of developing countries and decide on its rules of implementation. These rules must make sure climate and biodiversity measures are in synergy and do not threaten each other's implementation and are in line with human rights, including Indigenous Peoples' rights.



Target 9: Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People

Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.

Introduction

Target 9 primarily concerns wild species management and encompasses various natural benefits provided by wild species to humans including as a food source, a source of income, and for recreation. Furthermore, the goal aims to ensure that those dependent on wild species as part of their livelihood, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, can engage in traditional and sustainable use of such natural resources. Both internationally and in the Nordic region the number of threatened species is constantly increasing, including species that are harvested through hunting, fishing, and other means.

In 2019, IPBES declared a crisis for nature and biodiversity. Despite the ongoing biodiversity crisis, hunting is allowed in national parks and nature reserves, endangered predators are hunted even within their prioritised areas, a number of threatened species are subjected to harvesting, and the number of prioritised species is very low. Countries need a major political effort for biodiversity and wild species, where the goal of the Bern Convention to create tolerance for wild animals is given high priority.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt legislation ordering the systematic consideration of species in area management and in all industries on land and at sea.
- Enhance mapping and knowledge base of wildlife populations to limit negative impact from hunting and fishing.
- Promote and implement ethical management practices when handling human-wildlife conflicts, and increase acceptance of and tolerance for wild animals. Hunting regulations should be tightened, such as reducing the duration of hunting season and banning the hunting of red-listed species.
- Promote non-extractive use of nature, such as nature tourism, bird watching and wildlife photography.
- Develop national policy instruments that support sustainable use and production by small scale farmers, subsistence farmers, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples.
- Strengthen legal protections for Indigenous Peoples' land and resource rights, ensuring their ability to continue their customary sustainable use and traditional occupations. Protect the customary sustainable use of wild species by Indigenous Peoples. Integrate the support for customary sustainable use, through traditional occupations of Indigenous Peoples, into national development plans, biodiversity strategies, and poverty reduction programs.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Strengthen Nordic, European and international cooperation to strengthen the biodiversity protection in fishing quota negotiations.
- Protect and ensure the customary sustainable use of wild species by Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of NBSAPs addressing this target both within and beyond national borders.
- Support international research initiatives to document traditional occupations and their contributions to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
- Integrate the recognition and support customary sustainable use through traditional occupations of Indigenous Peoples into national development plans, biodiversity strategies, and poverty reduction programs.
- Strengthen legal protections for Indigenous Peoples' land and resource rights, ensuring their ability to continue their customary sustainable use through traditional occupations.

- Support the development of policy instruments that support sustainable use and production by small scale farmers, subsistence farmers, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples.



Target 10: Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry

Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.

Introduction

Natural resources are the foundation of primary industries that provide people with food and materials. However, a steadily increasing population and growing ecological footprint are putting pressure on the utilisation of natural resources, and today, more than half of terrestrial ecosystems are negatively affected by human activity. Excessive exploitation of natural resources has negative consequences for both ecosystems and people's livelihoods. Operating nature-based industries on nature's terms involves preserving and enhancing natural resources. By conserving ecosystem functions, food security, food sovereignty and restoration of biodiversity are ensured.

The goal of operating nature-based industries on nature's terms affects sector authorities and nature management, as well as commercial and non-commercial enterprises such as fisheries, agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture. Many of these sectors have traditionally had broad mandates for impacting nature and self-regulation.

Today a large amount of land is used for animal agriculture, whether for production of animal feed or grazing, while only a small portion of land is used to produce food directly for human consumption. According to the IPCC's land report published in 2019[5], a dietary shift towards more plant-based foods will contribute to achieving 12 out of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Target 10 is a spatial target that requires more than routine sustainable management. It introduces requirements to report spatially on areas under sustainable management that conserve and restore biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices. This target requires going further than management on a single or multi species basis to contribute additional biodiversity safeguards for the ecosystem.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

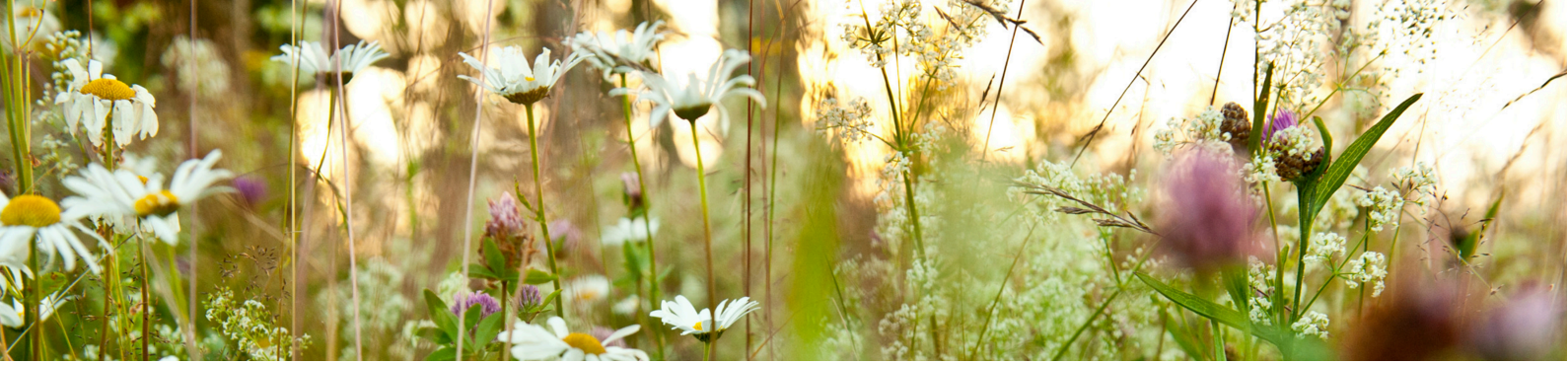
- Implement a moratorium on logging of all potential old-growth forests until their biodiversity values have been mapped and documented, and the issue of potential protection of the area has been resolved.
- Ensure a strict implementation of legislation prohibiting the selling of goods that are produced causing deforestation or forest degradation, abiding by the EU Deforestation Regulation.
- Significantly improve the incentive schemes for the management of species-rich cultural landscapes.
- Transition away from intensive monocultures to more polycultures and regenerative agricultural practices, for example by adjusting national food strategies to promote biodiversity and food sovereignty values and at the same time reduce harmful effects of global food chains.
- Increase production of crops intended for direct human consumption, in place of monoculture animal feed production.
- Incorporate legumes into polycultures in order to improve soil health and biodiversity.
- Develop a national plan to reduce environmental impacts from fish farming and replace it with more sustainable alternatives, promoting animal welfare.
- Identify and expand for use outside MPAs and OECMs existing management tools already being applied to implement an ecosystem approach in specific fisheries such as: gear restrictions to protect habitats or non-target species; spatial protections to protect vulnerable habitats, species and/or life stages.
- Include the carbon footprint from disturbance of the carbon storage on the ocean floor in fisheries management and other marine industries.

5. Special Report on Climate Change and Land — IPCC site

- Restore agricultural areas by increasing habitat variation and mosaic, for the benefit of pollinators, flowers and biodiversity in general.
- Develop and implement new and innovative close-to-nature forestry practices that integrate natural ecosystem dynamics and are more resilient in terms of climate change and biodiversity.
- Subsidise small scale sustainable, community and subsistence farming.
- Recognize and integrate Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and practices in land and resource management, including respect for traditional livelihood systems and territories, and traditional knowledge and practices about coexistence with wildlife.
- Encourage the diversification of crops and sustainable farming practices that promote biodiversity.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Be strong advocates by prioritising environmental concerns over economic interests in international negotiations.
- Develop and implement policies against intensive monoculture practices that jeopardise biodiversity.
- Utilise the position of religious leaders and other community leaders to promote behavioural change in patterns of consumption and other actions promoting the sustainable use of land and sea, among the population adhering to the ethos of religion.
- Communicate clear expectations of religious institutions and regal institutions, as large landowners and in their role as duty bearers, to contribute to the protection and restoration of biodiversity.
- Identify and expand the use of existing management tools already being applied to implement an ecosystem approach in specific fisheries such as: gear restrictions to protect habitats or non-target species; spatial protections (other than MPAs and OECMs) to protect vulnerable habitats, species and/or life stages.
- Increase recognition and respect of traditional livelihood systems and traditional lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples.
- Recognise and integrate Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and practices in land and resource management, including respect for traditional livelihood systems, territories, traditional knowledge about wildlife, and practices about coexistence with wildlife.
- Support agroforestry practices, utilising local tree species.



Target 11: Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People

Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.

Introduction

Ecosystem functions and services are often categorised into provisioning services such as food and materials, regulating services such as pollination, carbon sink and protection against extreme weather events, supporting services such as photosynthesis and the water cycle, and cultural services such as recreation and spiritual experiences.

The Aichi Target[6] on achieving more resilient ecosystems by 2020 and enhancing nature's carbon storage has not been met. Despite some restoration projects and the implementation of measures and instruments that positively contribute to the conservation of ecosystem functions, the general trend is that we are making ecosystems less resilient.

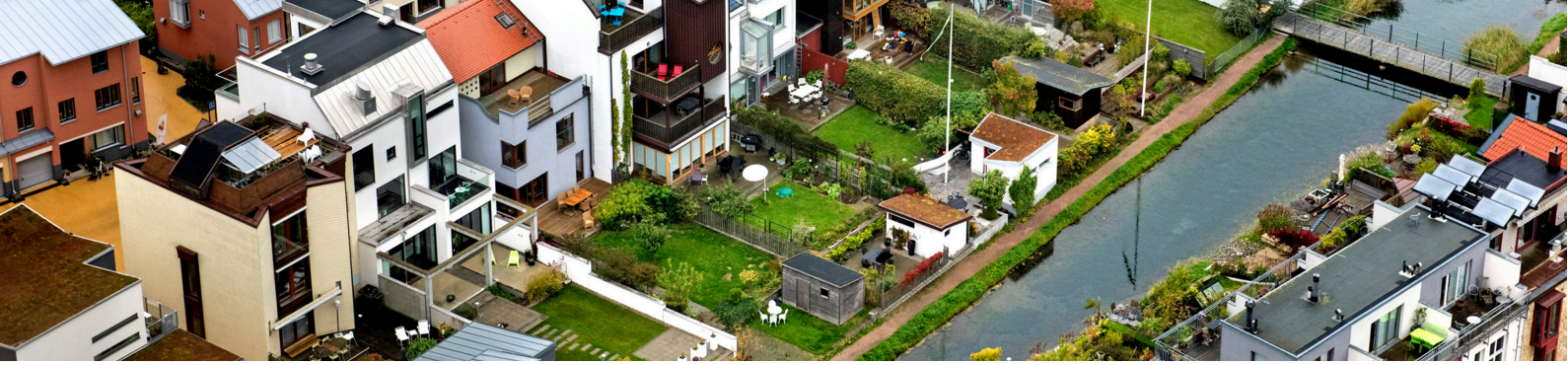
6. The Aichi Targets, https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Map and assess ecosystem services (known as ecosystem accounting) and develop goal indicators for ecosystem services to ensure adequate information in planning processes and that ecosystem services are considered in land use decisions.
- Develop and/or strengthen the implementation of national action plans for wild pollinating insects, including documentation of the effects of the implemented measures.
- Promote the enhancement of ecosystem services across industries with high potential for contribution, such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and urban planning.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Provide financial support and capacity building efforts to developing countries to restore and maintain ecosystem services.
- Utilise the Nordics position as major consumers to promote the enhancement of ecosystem services across industries with high potential for contribution, such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and urban planning.



Target 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity

Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.

Introduction

Access to nearby nature is of great importance for quality of life and health. However, this access can vary depending on where one lives and who one is, including socio-economic status, with differences both between cities/towns and within these areas. Several studies[7] show that increased proportions of trees, greenery, and flowing water in public urban spaces significantly enhance the quality of life for inhabitants through, for example, natural air purification, shelter, shade, local climate regulation, and as a home to diversity of wildlife. Well-designed urban vegetation zones along with properly managed streams, rivers, and wetlands will also be crucial for mitigating the impacts of extreme weather events and other effects of climate change.

7. Referenced in Vincenzo Giannico, Giuseppina Spano, Mario Elia, Marina D'Este, Giovanni Sanesi, Raffaele Lafortezza, Green spaces, quality of life, and citizen perception in European cities, Environmental Research, Volume 196, 2021

Particularly important for biodiversity is to retain and restore natural streams and green corridors of importance for wildlife migration, which connect larger patches of nature. For example, species like sea trout, salmon, and eels require the ability to migrate up and down rivers and streams, where many river delta areas are simultaneously attractive development areas. Waterways must be kept open and, if possible, restored.

The cultural landscape of riverbanks, gardens, and meadows contain rich biodiversity when managed correctly. Often, this is obtained by allowing areas to grow freely with natural seeding and flowering, while carrying out annual care that prevents overgrowth of the landscape or the takeover by non-native species. Additionally, restored and preserved nature provides a range of other ecosystem services, such as flood mitigation, water purification, air purification, and reduced temperatures (which can counteract urban heat island effects). Preserving and restoring nature in urban areas will therefore be beneficial for both biodiversity and the people who live there.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt national legislation establishing a universal right to access nearby nature, requiring municipalities to ensure that all residents have safe access and short distances to continuous hiking trails and nearby natural areas.
- Support local food system sustainability and national food security. By minimising transportation and increasing the percentage of consumption from locally produced food and small-scale farmers we can reduce the associated carbon footprint and ecological impact.
- Adopt national legislation protecting nature surrounding major population zones and establish fixed construction boundaries.
- Establish national guidelines for municipal area plans to draw clear construction boundaries to create buffer zones around rivers, streams, waterways and the sea to protect these against degradation, and ensure that these boundaries are not easily disregarded.
- Establish national guidelines for municipal area plans to protect old growth trees and urban green spaces.
- Require the planting of native species and diverse native flora to facilitate pollinators in publicly owned urban green spaces. When possible, include local communities in these initiatives.
- Improve the migration possibilities for fish in all big and small waterways through prioritised measures in the water management plans, e.g. by reopening rivers and streams, restoring previously existing waterways and wetlands, and knowledge exchange focusing on urban blue spaces.

- Ensure green spaces which support insects, amphibians and mammals. Methods include creating green corridors, maintaining existing green areas, regulating fishing, and regulating pleasure craft.
- Revise rules and building specifications to increase urban green space on roofs, facades, courtyards and other infrastructure.
- Support the creation and protection of socially inclusive green spaces, such as community gardens, to ensure both social benefits and environmental sustainability, these are of particular importance in dense cities.
- Integrate environmental education in school curricula, including nature-based solutions and nature's contributions to people.
- Take effective legislative, administrative and other measures to ensure that all children, without discrimination, are able to play and engage in recreational activities in safe, clean and healthy environments, including natural spaces, parks and playgrounds. In public planning, in rural and urban settings, children's views should be given due weight and the creation of environments promoting their physical and mental well-being should be prioritised.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Building upon the UN universal right to a healthy and sustainable environment, support a global recognition of a universal right to easy access to nature (having nature close by), requiring national and local authorities to ensure that every inhabitant has safe and accessible access to outdoor green spaces which prioritise nature and rich biodiversity.
- Increase awareness and implement international policies that highlight the connection between nature and improved health and well-being.
- Provide aid to local communities in cities and informal settlements in developing countries to allow them to create green social spaces and other green spaces.



Target 13: Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge

Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilisation of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.

Introduction

A fair and equitable distribution of the benefits from genetic resources is one of the three prime objectives of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and is primarily negotiated under the Nagoya Protocol.

The current system for benefit-sharing from the use of Digital genetic Sequence Information (DSI) is not satisfactory. Today, DSI is stored in resource banks, where there is often "open access", meaning it is free to download digital genetic sequence information for use in research, medicine development, and a variety of other purposes. With the changing technology the current primarily bilateral mechanisms for benefit-sharing of DSI have not been effective in ensuring that the source of the information receives a share of the benefits from its use. Without improvements to Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) mechanism related to the use of DSI it is not possible to implement the principle of fair sharing of benefits from genetic resources.

It needs to be acknowledged that "open access" does not equate to "equal access". To address the unequal distribution of DSI, access and availability needs to be improved, including by providing technical support and capacity building. Without such measures, the principle of open access will continue to reinforce the inequalities the mechanism seeks to address.

This goal concerns the fair and equal distribution of benefits from biological resources and thus does not directly impact how biodiversity and ecosystems is conserved or managed. However, there can be indirect effects as fair and equal distribution of benefits can contribute to sustainable management of nature.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Strengthen funding for national research institutions to support tracing of sequence origin, and encourage north-south institutional partnerships between relevant institutions.
- Establish national mechanisms to secure the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of DSI on genetic resources, in line with the third pillar of the CBD.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- During International negotiations, address the unequal distribution of DSI with the objective of improving access and availability, including by providing technical support and capacity building.
- Provide financial and technical assistance to low- and middle-income countries to facilitate the access to the use of digital sequence information, as well as increase the cooperation between research institutions across regions.
- Ensure that the new multilateral mechanism will share the benefits arising from the use of DSI fairly and equitably, while respecting and taking fully into account the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Ensuring the fundamental right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), in line with UNDRIP, as required in all instances where sequencing is done on the basis of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge.
- In international negotiations be proponents of the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, such as inclusion in the process relating to developing the multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism, and the decision of how to disburse and share the benefits arising from the use of DSI.
- Ensure that the sharing of benefits arising from the use of DSI is binding to Parties and users of DSI. (Whether the solution will be the establishment of a

new protocol, amending the Nagoya Protocol, or ensuring a binding nature if the mechanism is established under the COP).

- Take a clear position that any mobilisation of resources under the DSI multilateral mechanism should not be instead of the obligations under Article 20 in the CBD and Target 19.a in the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
- In international negotiations, push for a requirement of documentation for origin of sequences whenever relevant, as well as documentation that free, prior and informed consent is obtained where applicable.
- Support funding for origin tracing of existing sequences where the origin is not already established.



Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level

Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, and fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework.

Introduction

To achieve the objectives of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the Nordic countries, along with the world, face a fundamental transformation. We need to halt biodiversity loss, increase natural areas, reduce the footprint of production and consumption, redirect or eliminate biodiversity-harming financial flows, and simultaneously achieve our climate goals. This is an enormous task. To accomplish this, all relevant sectors must base their priorities on the need for this transition.

Although there are many examples of environmental requirements being incorporated into legislation and regulations, the current situation is that environmental considerations often lose out when faced with other priorities. Most ministries today work in silos for their own sector interests without incorporating environmental considerations and measures to the extent needed.

The state administration must work together to improve the state of nature and provide solutions on how the government's other activities can be conducted in accordance with environmental considerations. To succeed in this, all governments

must ensure that all relevant ministries are involved both in finding common solutions and in committing the entire government to follow the measures described. Mainstreaming biodiversity within and across all levels of society, governments, policies and legal framework is imperative.

We need a robust and unwavering environmental policy that can withstand challenges ranging from energy crises, social challenges, geopolitical shifts and economic crises. It is suggested that states may wish to set stricter regulations for business, including the financial sector, to ensure equality and that actions are in accordance with international agreements.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Develop national legislation requiring nationwide nature mapping.
- Develop national legislation regulating climate and ecosystem accounting.
- Regulate the relationship between developers and conductors of impact assessments. To ensure that competent, unbiased authorities order and set requirements for those conducting impact assessments, conducted at the developer's expense.
- Ensure coordination so that all sectors operate within the planning system to achieve holistic land management and the protection of biodiversity.
- Establish regional plans as a key provider of knowledge about natural values.
- Give regional planning authorities a clear role in the management of nature.
- Establish mechanisms for judicial review of administrative decisions to strengthen the protection of biodiversity, which make judicial review available and easily accessible to the public.
- Request the relevant national authority to routinely, in fixed intervals, report and review national goal achievements related to the fulfilment of international commitments on climate and biodiversity.
- Ensure that biodiversity is mainstreamed within and across all levels of government and all sectors, in particular the sectors with significant impacts on biodiversity such as the financial sector, energy, military, agriculture, fossil fuels, fishery, land management and forestry.
- Align all fiscal and financial flows to the GBF framework, which will, inter alia, require a multilevel review of existing policies and legislation to ensure conformity with target 14.
- Develop national policies ensuring that state funds (including pension funds) stop investing in fossil fuel companies and other companies that destroy the environment, harm biodiversity or violate human rights including Indigenous Peoples' rights.

- Integrate cultural and spiritual assessments as a standard component of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs), especially when Indigenous Peoples are identified.
- Ensure that age-appropriate, safe and accessible mechanisms are in place for children's views to be heard regularly and at all stages of environmental decision-making processes for legislation, policies, regulations, projects and activities that may affect them, at the local, national and international levels.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Push for the integration of criteria for the protection of biodiversity in trade agreements.
- In the risk assessment in all international development projects, include the potential impact on biodiversity and nature.
- Include environmental and human rights due diligence in all international investments made by the state.
- Establish legislation requiring environmental and human rights due diligence to be made by businesses.
- Develop national policies ensuring that state funds such as pension funds and investment banks stop investing in fossil fuel companies and other companies that destroy the environment, biodiversity, violate human rights or Indigenous Peoples' rights.
- Ensure that in development cooperation strategies and effort, biodiversity is both a main objective and integrated with other main objectives that are tightly related (such as gender equality, community participation, Indigenous Peoples' rights, climate change, agriculture and energy), to ensure synergies and/or prevent negative impacts.
- Foster regional cooperation among Nordic countries to harmonise ESIA standards, ensuring consistent inclusion of cultural, spiritual, and Indigenous Peoples' considerations across borders, strictly enforcing the principle of free, prior and informed consent.



Target 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts

Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions:

- ***a.*** *Regularly monitor, assess, and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions along their operations, supply and value chains, and portfolios;*
- ***b.*** *Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns;*
- ***c.*** *Report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable;*

in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production.

Introduction

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual overview of the global risk landscape is increasingly dominated by environmental issues. Nearly all of the most severe global risks are now linked to the environment and climate.

A key concept in addressing nature risk is double materiality. A company's activities impact nature, and changes in nature affect the company through their dependence on it. Currently, there is no standard for how companies should report on nature risk, i.e., their impact on and dependence on nature, but this is being developed internationally by the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), a large coalition of actors. Such reporting will initially be voluntary, and along with the fragmentation of reporting standards, this poses a risk that only the largest companies will have enough resources to understand and report on environmental risks.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Introduce mandatory environmental due diligence process and environmental risk reporting for companies including biodiversity loss risks, for example, using the international framework developed by the Task Force on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), for their entire value chain
- Base all objectives and action alternatives for reducing consumption on fair distribution, respect of human rights and quality of life, and the intrinsic value of nature, including drawing inspiration from nature's own cycles, systems, and symbioses, where almost all resources are utilised with minimal waste.
- Enforce strict conditions and regulations for national companies that contribute to environmental destruction and pose risks to biodiversity conservation in another country or globally.
- Enable businesses to regularly assess, prevent and mitigate, monitor and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies, and impacts on biodiversity. Require all large and transnational companies and financial institutions to do so, including along their operations, supply and value chains, and portfolios.
- Require an assessment and disclosure process that considers nature-related risks, impacts, and dependencies, incorporating a meaningful human rights and stakeholder engagement approach as recommended by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.[8]

8. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

- Recognise the important role environmental defenders play for biodiversity and fulfil the obligation of respecting, protecting and fulfilling their rights.
- Establish consistent and firm government regulations of the business and financial sectors.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Require companies to conduct a due diligence process where they identify and address risks and harms to human rights and the environment across their global chains of activities.
- Promote transparency and expectations on information sharing about human rights and environmental due diligence in line with the EU sustainability reporting directive and other relevant international agreements.
- Actively engage and push for a global legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to the environment, human rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights. Such an instrument must include sanctions for companies that fail to respect the environment and human rights despite a proper conduction of an environmental and human rights due diligence. It should also give affected communities and environmental defenders access to justice.
- Push for high ambitions in international negotiations on circular economy, promoting strong collaboration to reduce consumption in a fair way.
- Require that negative impacts on affected communities are integrated into the assessment, prevention, mitigation and disclosure process: guiding principles should be drawn incorporating the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Affected communities and environmental defenders should be consulted and asked for their consent.
- Push for the adoption of a COP decision at COP16 obligating at the very least large and transnational companies as well as investment banks to monitor, assess and report, and disclose in a fully transparent manner, their impacts on biodiversity.



Target 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Overconsumption

Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices, including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, including through halving global food waste, significantly reducing overconsumption and substantially reducing waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.

Introduction

According to the UN Resource Panel, the production of food, biomass, and materials accounts for 90% of nature and biodiversity loss, as well as 50% of global emissions. At the same time, land-use changes, such as deforestation, agriculture, and urbanisation, pose the greatest direct threat to biodiversity.

Despite innovations that have led to increased production efficiency, we continue to see material consumption grow in line with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth over the past decades, without signs of real decoupling. The footprint of businesses, associated with the linear use-and-dispose model and the perpetual growth paradigm dominating today's economic system, is a significant cause of biodiversity loss and land-use changes. Policies therefore have to incorporate measures to reduce consumption.

To make room for an economy with reduced material consumption, lower consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions, and responsible resource use, companies' business models must change. Therefore, barriers to increased reuse must be removed, and governments must pursue tax and levy policies that stimulate circular resource use. There must also be a general norm change in support of reduce and reuse.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Implement national guidelines that ensure longevity, reduce, reuse, and circularity in public procurement. Introduce requirements and set quantifiable goals for reduced consumption, increased product lifespan, reuse, and circularity in all public procurement and tendering processes.
- Implement policies that increase competence in circular procurement among purchasers, from national to local level.
- Implement policies that ensure recyclability of products, including policies to minimise the content of substances that make recycling difficult or environmentally hazardous.
- Establish producer responsibility schemes for more streams of goods, ensuring that businesses placing products on the market in the Nordic countries are responsible for environmentally friendly waste management and reducing the environmental footprint of their products.
- Introduce landfill taxes for critical minerals, residues from the mineral industry, and a ban on marine disposal of mineral waste and other environmentally harmful disposal methods, which also make it impossible to utilise residues.
- Establish ambitious requirements for reduced waste generation, reuse, and ultimately increased material recycling, to provide clear long-term frameworks that contribute to circular value chains and reduced footprints.
- Develop policies and schemes to improve waste management to ensure that more resources remain in the cycle, not the least for the construction sector, telecom and fashion industry.
- Establish a national, state-funded, neutral, unaffiliated collective information bureau that communicates the national nutrition recommendations and gives scientifically grounded information that facilitates sustainable and healthy diets.
- Limit the influence of commercial industries on school curriculums and ensure that all educational content is developed and reviewed by educators and subject matter experts without conflicts of interest.

- Prioritise urban sustainable food consumption, through farmers markets, local food rings, community supported agriculture and other direct-to-consumer sales, that adds value to sustainable produce and increases food safety and sovereignty. Also support the increase of sustainable urban food production, such as community gardens.
- Reduce the value-added tax for fruits, vegetables, and other vegetarian products (including vegetarian processed foods) and/or increase the value-added tax for meat.
- Develop a national action plan for a circular economy with the aim of contributing to achieving goals to reduce environmental and climate footprints, focusing on material and product flows with significant negative environmental or climate footprints, such as construction and housing, food and agriculture, transportation, and textiles. This action plan, which must take the form of a parliamentary white paper, should include an alignment of policy instruments, taxes, as well as integrating the goal of reducing footprints into all relevant public planning frameworks.
- Adopt a national goal to halve food waste, which will help reduce the environmental and climate footprint from food and agriculture.
- Increase awareness of the environmental and health benefits of incorporating more plant-based foods into daily diets.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Recognize the potential in faith-based organisations as carriers of ethical narrative capital with the potential to promote necessary lifestyle changes.
- Support local food system sustainability, emphasising locally produced organic food by farmers to reduce carbon footprint.
- Establish a system for including the global footprint from consumption in the Nordic countries in the national accounting and implement measures to decrease this footprint.
- Countries and the EU should refrain from entering and/or maintaining free trade agreements that are designed to encourage over-consumption. Such agreements have been shown to worsen ecosystem degradation, contribute to biodiversity loss, impede just transitions, and heighten risks for environmental and human rights defenders, as exemplified by the EU-Mercosur treaty.
- Enforce legislation like the EUDR, that demands countries to take responsibility for their global footprint and effect on biodiversity including reducing consumption.

- Commit to reducing the overall footprint of the Nordic countries through concrete measures, and advocate for the establishment of a reporting mechanism for efforts made by states in the global north to reduce their overall consumption.
- Develop global education campaigns to inform the public about the advantages of plant-based diets, focusing on positive messages around animal welfare, health and sustainability.
- Advocate for the introduction of subsidies and tax incentives for plant-based food production and products, alongside the promotion of policies that encourage the reduction of meat consumption through voluntary guidelines and awareness programs.



Target 17: Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology

Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention.

Introduction

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and various forms of biotechnology that alter the genetic material of species can have negative consequences for biodiversity, food security, and public health. An increase in both the use and pace of GMO release is expected, which in itself represents a risk factor. It is therefore crucial for all countries to have sufficient capacity, knowledge, and public frameworks capable of managing such risks.

Gene drives differ from other GMOs in that they are developed to spread in nature. Typically, the purpose is to eradicate or reduce populations to prevent disease spread or other harm. The uncertainty associated with release is significant, especially if gene drives are released into an ecosystem where there are few barriers to uncontrolled spread, or if the organism to be eradicated covers large land areas. The effect of this can disrupt ecosystem balance and degrade nature, leading to numerous negative consequences for other species and populations, especially if the species being eradicated is a keystone species.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Develop national policies that protect the genetic diversity of species and the no contamination of endemic species with GMOs.
- Develop national policies that protect the genetic diversity of species to support farmers in their independence from GMOs.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Support an international moratorium on the release of gene drives until more knowledge is available.
- Support research on alternatives to gene drives to address issues such as malaria.
- Contribute to the development of international guidelines for risk assessment of gene-edited organisms within the Cartagena Protocol.
- Support knowledge development and capacity building to developing countries on risk assessment and administration related to genetically modified organisms.
- Develop international policies that protect the genetic diversity of species and the no contamination of endemic species with GMOs.
- Develop international policies that protect the genetic diversity of species to support farmers in their independence from GMOs.



Target 18: Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity

Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least $500 billion per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Introduction

A number of global and regional institutions, such as the OECD, IMF, Eurostat, and the UN, have worked to raise awareness about the need to remove environmentally harmful subsidies. There is no international definition of environmentally harmful subsidies. By environmentally harmful subsidies, we mean here a grant, a tax exemption, or other financial support from public authorities that favours the production, sale, or consumption of items through processes harmful to nature. Put simply, it makes it easier for the producer, distributor or end-user to conduct such activities harmful to nature than it would be without this subsidy. The goal of eliminating environmentally harmful subsidies affects sector authorities and nature management, as well as commercial and non-commercial entities, such as agriculture, forestry, fishery, fossil fuels, transportation, aquaculture, and power and mineral development.

This target was not attained at the global level and was considered perhaps the target with least progress throughout that period. Target 18 provides a more concrete objective by specifying that by 2030, harmful incentives, including subsidies, must be eliminated, phased out or reformed by at least USD 500 billion per year, and by 2025 these incentives must be identified.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Immediately initiate national level analytical studies to identify biodiversity harmful incentives, including subsidies, by 2025, to ensure that each country contributes at the national level to the achievement of this global target.
- Critically review all national subsidies that may negatively impact nature, with an aim to eliminate or redirect, particularly within agriculture, forestry, oil, transportation, aquaculture, power, and mineral extraction.
- Shift subsidies from animal agriculture to plant-based production to minimise the artificially low price of animal products and reflect their true cost of production.
- Do not provide public support for full-scale business projects until land use planning and environmental impacts are clarified.
- Cut public funding for geological mapping for offshore oil and mineral extraction.
- Cut public funding for research and innovation into harmful extractive industries such as offshore oil and deep seabed mining activities.
- Design the financial sector's national framework to ensure that both investments and loans take nature into account.
- Establish a national support and compensation scheme for those who wish to transition their production from livestock to crops for human consumption, for example through a risk mitigation scheme for farms that want to test plant production.
- Support research, development and innovation of new plant-based food products and local untapped plant resources and allocate research funds to explore how more land can be utilised for the production of vegetables and legumes in the Nordic countries.
- Phase out subsidies for forest fertilisation.
- Reduce the risk in crop production by increasing funding for reparations in the case of crop damage following shifts to more sustainable production methods to encourage farmers to shift to more regenerative farming practices and increase production of food for human consumption.
- Ensure that no financial flows are invested in activities that either directly or indirectly violate Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Avoid public investments in industries that are harmful to biodiversity.
- Actively advocate for the elimination, phasing out or reform of incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in the EU and other international co-operations.
- Ensure that no financial flows are invested in activities that either directly or indirectly violate Indigenous Peoples' rights.



Target 19: Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity from all Sources, including $30 Billion through International Finance

Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, mobilizing at least $200 billion per year by 2030, including by:

- ***a.*** *Increasing total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least $20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least $30 billion per year by 2030;*
- ***b.*** *Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilisation, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances;*
- ***c.*** *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;*

d. Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards;

e. Optimising co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises;

f. Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth centric actions and non-market-based approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity;

g. Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use.

Introduction

While investments in measures that safeguard biodiversity are economically beneficial in the long run, the current state of nature requires very high initial investments. It has been estimated that at an average of least $700 billion USD per year will need to be mobilised by 2030 to achieve the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. For a long time, funding for environmental initiatives has focused on climate change, with climate action also being underfunded, rather than biodiversity loss, but these two crises must be addressed in conjunction. This necessitates increased financing for biodiversity. Target 19 calls for mobilising $200 billion/year, where $20-$30 billion per year should be mobilised from biodiversity-related international financial resources from developed country Parties to developing country Parties. Financing measures in developing countries will be crucial for the effective implementation of the GBF. The Nordic countries must contribute their fair share to financing measures to ensure the global implementation of the agreement.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Adopt a precautionary approach to payment for ecosystem services and offsetting mechanisms to limit the risk of escalating biodiversity loss nationally, regionally, and locally.
- Allocate sufficient funding through national budget processes to meet the financing targets of the GBF.
- Financially support the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans.

- Strengthen national contributions from Nordic states to the New York Declaration on Forests, The Glasgow pledge on ending deforestation and the SDGs on ending deforestation by 2030, in order to revive these targets internationally.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- All Nordic countries, and others in the position to do so, should mobilise at least 0,1% of GNI[9] to international biodiversity protection, in addition to funds allocated as ODA.
- Support the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans in low-income countries.
- Ensure that all projects that take place in or near Indigenous Peoples' territories, land and waters have a separate process for consultation and obtaining consent in line with the right to free, prior, and informed consent.
- Strengthen integration and synergies between actions under the climate change and biodiversity conventions, while keeping financial commitments and reporting separate and ensuring that climate co-benefits do not have an undue influence on priorities for the allocation of biodiversity finance.
- Contribute to the newly established Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) and make pledges during the ninth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-9), as these are important/main channels for support to the implementation of the GBF in developing countries.
- Prioritise, ensure and increase direct and equitable access of Indigenous Peoples and their organisations to adequate, new and sustainable financial resources.
- Target 19 must be implemented in accordance with the strong recognition of the contributions and rights of Indigenous Peoples, different value systems and the human rights-based approach in Section C of the GBF, especially in the implementation of Target 19.d.
- Find solutions for ensuring that the increasing volumes of biodiversity finance do not divert ODA from other pressing development objectives, including by:

    a. Ensuring that the reporting framework under the GBF provides guidance on the meaning of "new and additional" finance (additional meaning at least 0,1%) and addresses the issues of double or triple reporting of biodiversity finance as climate finance and/or ODA.

9. The 0,1% comes from calculating the size of GNI in OECD countries parties to the CBD (excl. USA), relative to the 30 billion USD need estimated for implementation of the GBF. (0,1% would render approximately 30 billion USD).

b. Suggesting new sources for public finance, such as taxes and levies on environmentally harmful activities, to ensure the polluters pay principle.
c. Ensuring that when ODA budgets are used for biodiversity finance, the people and communities mostly affected by biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are prioritised.

- Promote Target 19.f on collective actions and nonmarket-based approaches of resource mobilisation in the implementation of the GBF.



Target 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity

Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the Framework.

Introduction

In order to implement the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework, countries rely on sufficient knowledge about nature and the natural environment, which requires access to technology and other good tools, including nature monitoring and ecosystem-based management. This necessitates fostering collaboration in research and development, both between countries and across regions. Currently, expertise and capacity in this field vary greatly between countries and within countries.

Policy proposals for National Implementation

- Ensure predictable and sufficient funding for research institutions and other projects generating knowledge, working on biodiversity, both mapping, conservation and sustainable use.
- Enhance national policies and regulations to support the development, transfer, and adoption of biodiversity-related technologies and innovations, with full respect to the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples.
- Develop and support programmes, policies and measures that enhance the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes of individuals involved in biodiversity conservation, including policymakers, planners, practitioners, and the public.

Policy proposals for International Implementation

- Contribute to capacity building and knowledge sharing between countries to strengthen ecosystem-based research, monitoring, and management.
- Promote and participate in North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation initiatives to facilitate technology transfer, capacity-building, and joint research programs.
- Integrate religious literacy into relevant international cooperation to facilitate the contributions of faith-based organisations.
- Pursue efforts for research collaboration between universities and research institutions in the Nordic countries and countries in the Global South.
- Promote the global recognition and integration of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems into international biodiversity monitoring and management programs.



Target 21:
Ensure That Knowledge is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action

Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.

Introduction

The implementation of the Kunming- Montreal Biodiversity Framework requires knowledge-based changes in priorities at all levels, from top decision-makers to individuals. Currently, we see too often that considerations for nature and biodiversity are deprioritized in favour of other interests, based on weak knowledge bases. Increased knowledge and awareness can positively influence how biodiversity is weighed in decisions. To consider species, we must know where they occur. It is difficult to conserve a species we are not aware of. Knowledge about the distribution of species and the state of nature is constantly evolving, and data may become outdated after ten years. This means that to have an overview of the state of biodiversity, we must continuously survey our countries. At the same time, it is often older individuals who possess much of the knowledge about species in the Nordic countries, and there are challenges with both "shifting baseline syndrome", "species blindness," and a lack of knowledge about species, habitats, and their significance. To effectively conserve our natural resources, the level of knowledge about nature among the population must be strengthened.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Establish new research programs that strengthen knowledge about conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of nature.
- Support the extensive work of voluntary organisations in mapping and knowledge building.
- Enhance funding for interdisciplinary knowledge that compiles and utilises environmental data across indicators and influencing factors to describe the effects of measures at the ecosystem level.
- Ensure independence and sufficient funding for authorities and organisations responsible for developing national red lists and conducting environmental monitoring and reporting.
- Ensure continued, predictable, and increased support for, and collaboration with, civil society organisations working on political advocacy and information dissemination related to the themes of the Nature Agreement.
- Develop national standards for biodiversity data collection and management to ensure interoperability among different databases, tools, and platforms, facilitating the digitalization of existing biodiversity information and supporting implementation of open-access policies to facilitate easy, efficient, and timely access to data by all stakeholders.
- Facilitate media partnerships and support organisations that give training, mentoring and/or scholarships to journalists and social media influencers on biodiversity issues and public awareness-raising.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Mobilise support, both financial and capacity wise, for strengthening information sharing and transparency to ensure participatory management.
- Strengthen collaborative mapping programs of nature at sea to gain a better understanding of nature, habitats, and ecosystem functions in deeper marine areas.
- Support the development of global platforms that facilitate the sharing and integration of Indigenous knowledge into international biodiversity data systems and decision-making processes.
- Ensure that access to traditional knowledge, science, innovations, and practices of Indigenous Peoples is obtained with their free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC).



Target 22: Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all

Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.

Introduction

Ensuring trustworthy and inclusive governance processes regarding the use and conservation of nature is beneficial for everyone. Meaningful participation, with opportunities for involvement, decision-making, and having one's voice heard in matters that affect oneself, is important. However, this is implemented to varying degrees around the world. To ensure legitimacy and understanding of the management of nature and natural resources, politicians, authorities, and managers must include all relevant user groups.

To ensure local anchoring and legitimacy, it is important that all relevant actors and professional communities are involved as early as possible in the process. They must be provided with real decision-making power, involvement, and opportunities for participation in terms of time, capacity, and resource needs. Credible, knowledge-based, and independent impact assessments are also crucial for democratic trust in complex processes.

Some development and conservation projects have experienced unpredictable processes because stakeholders have not been adequately involved in the early stages. A consultation phase should be introduced where all relevant stakeholders are involved at an early stage. This way, assessments can be targeted earlier and better, and poor or irrelevant projects can be quickly discarded.

Not enough attention has been given to the gendered dimensions and effects of the biodiversity- and climate crises. Due to gender norms and uneven power dynamics cemented in social, economic and political structures, gender inequality persists in all spheres of public and private life. For these reasons, the biodiversity- and climate crises affects women and girls in unique and disproportionate ways. Furthermore, due to intersecting power relations, including sexual orientation and gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, class, age, ability, etc., loss of biodiversity and climate change affects women and girls around the world differently.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Establish national legislation and regulations ensuring implementation of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in all management that may or will affect Indigenous Peoples and their legal as well as traditional rights.
- Enhance participation in processes in local, regional, and national land management, including in impact assessment processes, where local and traditional area and ecosystem knowledge should be emphasised. Anchoring, legitimacy, predictability, and real decision-making must be ensured for all relevant stakeholders in all major processes, and they must be actively involved in the early consultation phase.
- Strengthen the capacity and competence for assessments in all projects at all levels of management that affect biodiversity, and involvement and decision-making will contribute to ensuring that the decision-making basis is as good as possible, based on professionally independent surveys and updated ecological assessments.
- Implement knowledge and certification requirements for the environments responsible for surveys and biological registrations. It is crucial for trust-based processes to avoid casting doubt on the quality and professional independence of assessments, biological surveys, and ecological assessments.
- Adopt a strategy to strengthen the inclusion of marginalised groups including Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes at all levels of management and policy formulation.
- Specifically indicate in their respective NBSAPs how they will contribute to the achievement of this target in the implementation of the whole GBF.

Policy proposals for International Implementation

- Establish mechanisms to ensure the full and meaningful participation by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the establishment of international projects that can have an effect on biodiversity.
- Establish mechanisms to ensure religious literacy when promoting biodiversity measures in contexts where religious and traditional leaders hold great authority.
- Ensure that their international biodiversity finance always applies a human rights-based approach, include gender equality and child rights perspectives, and aim for strong local ownership. All finance providers need to improve integration and monitoring of respect for human rights and full participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in all biodiversity related decision-making, projects, programmes and policies.
- Ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.
- Ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples as established under the UNDRIP, including the right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and their rights over land, territories and resources is acknowledged and respected.
- Advocate for the reformation of the International Seabed Authority to ensure a transparent, accountable, inclusive and environmentally responsible decision-making and regulatory process that fulfils the obligation to 'benefit (hu)mankind as a whole' and respects the Common Heritage of Mankind.



Target 23: Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action

Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their 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.

Introduction

There is a need to recognize the connection between gender equality and key environmental issues. The goal is to minimise the gap between these issues and maximise synergy, working together towards common goals and the implementation of the Biodiversity Agreement. It's important to acknowledge power imbalances and structural barriers that hinder the inclusion of entire communities. A holistic approach to implementation can help prioritise and amplify the voices of girls and women, especially those facing multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination. The aim is to create a supportive and inclusive approach with the goal of achieving gender equality in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair distribution of benefits derived from the use of genetic resources.

Policy Proposals for National Implementation

- Intensify efforts to build competence in both academic and policy-oriented environments regarding the role of women in biodiversity conservation.
- Build competence of female biodiversity champions and provide spaces for them to exercise advocacy and leadership.
- Increase attention on women's roles in supply chains based on biodiversity. Work should be done to include women in the implementation of the framework. By focusing on respecting, preserving, and safeguarding the traditional knowledge and methods of Nordic indigenous women, as well as their rights related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, this must be prioritised in the management tasked with implementation.

Policy Proposals for International Implementation

- Develop a strategy for gender responsiveness in all international projects aimed at biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity.
- The Gender Plan of Action should serve as a guide for Nordic countries' facilitating equal access to rights, including economic rights, education, training, information, and other necessary resources and technologies that contribute to the management, conservation, and sustainable use of biodiversity, should be prioritised through targeted measures in development cooperation.
- Increase the level of gender integration in biodiversity finance, including contributions to biodiversity projects with gender equality as a principal objective and gender transformative approaches.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABS	Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP 15	fifteenth Conference of the Parties
DSI	Digital genetic Sequence Information
ESIAs	Environmental and Social Impact Assessments
EUDR	EU Deforestation Regulation
FPIC	free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (sometime referred to as KMGBF)
GBFF	Global Biodiversity Framework Fund
GDP	gross domestic product
GMOs	genetically modified organisms
IBAs	Important Bird Areas
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IPBES	International Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature

KBAs	Key Biodiversity Areas
LULUCF	Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
ODA	Official Development Assistance for Biodiversity
OECMs	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
PAs	protected areas
ref	make reference to
TNFD	Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures
UNDROP	UN Declaration on the Rights of Farmers and Other Persons Working in Rural Areas
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
WEF	World Economic Forum

Organisations who have contributed to and/or supported this publication

AFRIKAGRUPPERNA

Ankarsiftelsen

BIODICE

BirdLife Norge

Creatura Think & Do Tank ry

Danmission

Danmarks Sportsfiskerforbund

Evangeliska Frikyrkan

Faculty of Science, University of Southern Denmark

Forests of the World

Framtidsjorden

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)

Landvernd (Icelandic Environment Association)

Liana ry

LL. BioEconomy, Research & Advisory

LM International

Mifuko Trust

Mirsal ry

Natur og Ungdom/ Young friends of the earth Norway

NOAH - for dyrs rettigheter

Nordic Foundation for Development and Ecology (NORDECO)

The Norwegian Grandparents Climate Campaign (GCC)

PMU

Randers Regnskov

SDU Citizen Science Videncenter

Siemenpuu Foundation sr

SMC - Faith in development

Spire

The Swallows India Bangladesh

Ungir umhverfissinnar

Verdens Skove/Forests of the World/Bosques del Mundo

WWF Finland

WWF Sweden

WWF Verdens naturfond

Coordinated by the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), CONCORD Sweden and The Danish 92 Group - Forum for Sustainable Development.

About this publication

Joint Nordic Effort for Biodiversity

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TemaNord 2024:539

ISBN 978-92-893-8053-9 (PDF)
ISBN 978-92-893-8054-6 (ONLINE)
http://dx.doi.org/10.6027/temanord2024-539

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Published: 25/9/2024

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