

Global Biodiversity Framework: A New Deal for Nature



IFAD Briefing Notes bring lessons learned through the interaction of data, operations and evidence, and benefit from the advice of the Knowledge Unit.

COP15 and the role of IFAD

The COP15 conference concluded in Montreal with a promising outcome: **a once-in-a-decade agreement to protect wetlands, rainforests, grasslands, and coral reefs by 2030.**

The viability of smallholder agriculture is undermined by biodiversity loss. IFAD recognizes biodiversity loss as one of the greatest threats to smallholders.

The Global Biodiversity Framework: a systems approach to Biodiversity

Complex interactions between science, society, and economics systems make biodiversity conservation a challenging task.

Systems thinking can support more integrative biodiversity interventions, to avoid silos and create shared understandings of how to conserve biodiversity[1]. Climate change is likely to become the dominant driver of biodiversity change in the next few decades, outweighing demography, urbanization, economic development, technology and innovation[2].

This is an excellent recognition that reversing the damage done to nature is the goal, not just slowing it down. The aim of Target 10 is to "Make sure that agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry are managed sustainably" and Target 14 is to "Ensure biodiversity is fully integrated into policies, regulations, and planning". In addition to these, greater focus on nutrition, a better understanding of health, and inclusion of agroecology in the agreement are all relevant to IFAD's mandate.

1. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/environmental-conservation/article/abs/biodiversity-revisited-through-systems-thinking/35D2F7BA5B0916C976251F52BC543DBC>
2. State of the Global Environment, UNEP, 2019, p. 146.
https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27659/GEO6_CH6.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

IFAD works with women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and the private sector to tackle climate change, poverty alleviation, economic development, and nutrition issues. Thus, the Fund is uniquely positioned to develop interrelated and cross-linked solutions to combat biodiversity loss.

Supporting biodiversity finance for the 30X30

By 2030, countries are committed to protecting 30% of their land and water under the 30 x 30 pledge of the COP15 agreement. Target 2 commits parties to restore 30% of degraded ecosystems to generate ecosystem services, ecological integrity, and connectivity.

Currently only 17% and 10% of planet's terrestrial and marine areas are protected, so the 30x30 pledge represents significant progress. 30x30 must safeguard Indigenous Peoples' rights, but also include them effectively and fairly in the management of resources and financial decision-making.

Smallholder farmers, especially women and Indigenous Peoples, often use traditional knowledge passed down through centuries to conserve biodiversity, utilising practices such as agrobiodiversity and seed saving. Through its Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF), IFAD provides grants for Indigenous Peoples to design and implement effective and appropriate solutions in favour of biodiversity, based on their traditional values and knowledge of nature.

This year's call for project proposals at IPAF specifically targets advancing Indigenous Peoples' conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and for adaptation and resilience to climate change. Making Indigenous Peoples and local communities central to conservation efforts is the most effective and efficient way to preserve biodiversity as many of the world's biodiversity hotspots are located on their lands.

With 30% of its climate finance dedicated to nature-based solutions, IFAD also can design and execute projects as an aggregator of finance. IFAD's integrated approach where nature and climate go hand in hand in project design can not only support the 30x30 restoration target, but also potentially open up hundreds of green jobs.

A new biodiversity fund takes the framework beyond rhetoric

Discussions around how to close the enormous finance gap dominated the conference. In the final agreement, countries decided to create a new fund within the UN's main existing biodiversity financing mechanism and commit to a new fund as soon as possible. Rich countries agreed to provide \$30bn of aid for biodiversity by the end of the decade as well as at least 200 billion USD per year by 2030 through both ODA, domestic resource mobilization, and innovative public-private finance mechanism. Parties also agreed to significantly reduce harmful subsidies.

These commitments raise broader questions around the borders between biodiversity and climate finance.

There is a proposed 2025 revision of the global climate finance target, and many countries will be revisiting their NDC targets in the coming years. The extent that climate finance is intermeshed with funds for biodiversity can be difficult to determine, and both would greatly benefit from clearer ways to measure specificity in their targeting. While the creation of a new fund specifically for biodiversity at COP15 is welcome, as was COP27's new Loss and Damage Facility, practical delivery requires clarification. A fund being established within a pre-existing institution will likely help it to come online swiftly, but with the creation of a new fund the responsibility of coordination also increases. IFAD intends to leverage its own financing with these two new funds in coordination with each other thereby creating maximum impact for people and nature.

Tracking biodiversity finance and IFAD leadership

Finance for biodiversity has a huge need for innovation. COP15 saw high levels of private sector engagement which included several platforms and alliances promoting financial tracking and mandatory targets for disclosure of nature impacts. All recognize the inherent risks associated with biodiversity destruction and the opportunity in biodiversity solutions. Finance streams from large and transnational companies and financial institutions are targeted in Target 15.

This enhanced enabling environment sets the scene for IFAD to further mobilize public-private partnerships and mobilization of diversified resources, and play a role in matching supply of finance with the needs of countries.

Through its Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP), IFAD has facilitated shifts from unsustainable extractive livelihoods to regenerative ones, supporting approaches which include agrobiodiversity, agroforestry and nature-based solutions such as cropland and mangrove restoration.

Through a model which blends climate finance from multiple development partners with agricultural investments financed by IFAD, the programme has supported activities which contribute to meeting the GBF's targets on sustainable agriculture (**Target 10**), climate change mitigation and adaptation (**Target 8**) and involvement of Indigenous People's knowledge (**Target 20**).

Lack of effective monitoring, planning, reporting, and review frameworks are widely acknowledged as contributing to countries not meeting any of the Aichi targets. A new Nature-based Solutions Finance Tracking Methodology and a Biodiversity Core Indicator have been developed by IFAD to measure biodiversity improvements at ecosystem-level, in response to the need. In aligning its financial flows with a pathway towards biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and restoration, IFAD is ahead of the curve.

Way forward

To stay within sustainable planetary boundaries, climate change and biodiversity loss must be addressed together. An integrated, streamlined, and synchronised approach across nations, societies, and corporations is required.

There are still many questions regarding the tools and processes that countries have available to allocate and combine funds, and ensure that countries are able to focus adequately on biodiversity and climate change.

Several plans may refer to the same sectors of society but target them differently. At COP15, the Executive Secretary asked all parties to review existing programs and policies and

align them to facilitate the convention's implementation. To link climate change and biodiversity loss, NBAPs, NDCs, and NAPs need to work together in a cohesive manner. Policies, finances, and programs that address climate change and biodiversity must be coordinated synergistically, and global threats require globally organised responses.



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