



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of Earth's terrestrial, freshwater, and marine organisms, as well as the ecosystems of which they are part. Biodiversity is crucial to the future of all life on the planet and is also the foundation for the ecosystem goods and services that enable human societies to thrive. Biodiversity provides us with food, water, and materials, as well as services such as climate regulation, pollination, disaster protection, and nutrient cycling.

Biodiversity, thus, is fundamental to sustainable development. Managing and protecting this asset for current and future generations requires full engagement of governments at all levels, civil society organizations, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), and others.

The [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD), which came into force in 1993, is the global policy framework for action to maintain biodiversity for future generations. There has been some progress in conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and ecosystems at local and national levels over the past several decades but not at the scale necessary to stem the ongoing tide of biodiversity loss. Changing the trajectory of biodiversity loss means addressing its five main direct drivers: habitat change; overexploitation or unsustainable use; climate change; pollution, and invasive alien species. These critical drivers of biodiversity loss are intensifying, particularly habitat loss driven by the expansion of agriculture.

The GEF provides financial resources for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the CBD.

The goal of the GEF-8 (2022-2026) biodiversity focal area strategy is globally significant biodiversity conserved, sustainably used, and restored.

To achieve this goal, GEF-8 investments will focus on three main objectives:

1. Improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems.
2. Implement the Cartagena and Nagoya protocols effectively.
3. Increase mobilization of domestic resources for biodiversity.

The GEF has invested more than \$5.2 billion to conserve biodiversity and use it sustainably. This investment has leveraged over \$13.4 billion in additional funds, supporting 1,500 projects in more than 158 countries.

The GEF has supported the improved management of more than 2,500 million hectares of terrestrial and marine protected areas around the world, an area larger than the size of Latin America. We have also helped countries sustainably use and manage biodiversity across more than 543 million hectares of productive landscapes and seascapes.

Under the [Cartagena Protocol](#), the GEF has supported the development of [National Biosafety Frameworks](#) in 127 countries and their implementation. GEF support has also been critical in bringing the [Nagoya Protocol](#) into force by supporting countries to develop the needed legal and policy frameworks to be able to ratify the agreement. A growing part of the GEF portfolio is building country capacity for its implementation.

GEF-8 Provides New Opportunities for Implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy

In GEF-8, \$1.92 billion have been allocated to the biodiversity focal area making it the largest focal area of the GEF. The GEF-8 biodiversity focal area strategy reflects the priorities of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and responds to several major global studies on the biodiversity crisis, including the Dasgupta Review, the Fifth Global Biodiversity Outlook, and the 2019 [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#) global assessment.

Objective One of the strategy (improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems) marks a shift in the GEF strategy from previous phases. GEF-8 focuses on integrated landscape/seascape management approaches that use multiple tools and strategies to respond to the drivers of biodiversity loss within large landscape and seascape mosaics. This strategic shift reflects



the evolution of the GEF portfolio as countries are already blending protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures, sustainable use, and biodiversity mainstreaming approaches in the context of large-scale investments in landscape and seascape mosaics. This more integrated and complementary approach to protected areas management, sustainable use of biodiversity, and management of production landscapes/seascapes is likely to achieve more durable results in conservation, sustainable use, and restoration.

Objective Two of the strategy (implement the Cartagena and Nagoya protocols effectively) continues GEF support to capacity building for implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol.

In response to growing interest in domestic resource mobilization within the CBD processes, **Objective Three of the strategy (increase mobilization of domestic resources for biodiversity)** aims to help countries mobilize domestic resources through the development and implementation of biodiversity finance plans.

The GEF will also support development of biodiversity policy and institutional frameworks through enabling activities. This will include

revisions to the national biodiversity strategy and action plans, and national reports for CBD, the Cartagena Protocol, and the Nagoya Protocol.

The GEF-8 strategy will provide additional resources for the **Inclusive Conservation Initiative**. This initiative began in GEF-7 to support IPLC stewardship of over 9 million hectares in areas of high biodiversity importance. It will lead to the mitigation of 141 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Please see [GEF-8 Biodiversity Strategy](#) for a detailed description of programing and investment opportunities.

GEF-8 Integrated Programs

Eleven integrated programs (IPs) form part of the GEF-8 Programming Directions and strongly complement the GEF-8 biodiversity strategy (see table below). The IPs cover a wide array of thematic areas of direct relevance to the CBD and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. They provide countries with additional opportunities to address the key underlying drivers of biodiversity loss in comprehensive and integrated ways.

GEF-8 Integrated Program	Program Objective
Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes	Maintain the integrity of globally important intact tropical forests through conservation and effective governance.
Wildlife Conservation for Development	Conserve wildlife and landscapes by transforming the drivers of species loss and ensure that countries and communities benefit from conservation.
Blue and Green Islands	Incorporate the value of nature into national decision making and support Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to address development challenges of Small Island Developing States related to food security, adaptation, tourism, and urban development.
Ecosystem Restoration	Restore degraded ecosystems and generate multiple environmental and socioeconomic benefits through an integrated approach.
Food Systems	Catalyze the transformation to sustainable food systems that are nature- positive, resilient, and pollution-reduced.
Net Zero Nature Positive Accelerator	Accelerate implementation of nature-positive, net-zero pathways by investing in nature and new technologies.
Clean and Healthy Oceans	Contribute to a sustainable blue economy by curbing coastal pollution from agricultural, industrial, and municipal sources through infrastructure investments combined with NbS.
Greening Transportation Infrastructure	Enable countries to develop portfolios of transportation infrastructure projects at national or land/seascape levels that build in environmental sustainability from inception to provide biodiversity, avoided land degradation, and climate change mitigation benefits and outcomes.
Sustainable Cities	Advance integrated and systems-based approaches toward building net-zero carbon, nature-positive, inclusive and climate-resilient cities.
Eliminating Hazardous Chemicals from Supply Chains	Significantly reduce or eliminate the environmental degradation caused by globally significant supply chains, with a focus on fashion and construction.
Circular Solutions to Plastic Pollution	Catalyze circular economy approaches to reduce plastic production, consumption, and disposal focusing on packaging, particularly single-use related to the food and beverage sector.

LOOKING AHEAD

Collectively, these investments seek to deliver impact at scale by addressing key underlying drivers of biodiversity loss, as well as direct drivers/pressures, while responding to the priorities of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Collectively, these programming investments can deliver more returns per unit of investment through implementation of systemic responses to problems that emerge from more than one sector. We expect they will make significant contributions to halt biodiversity loss and maintain the ecosystem goods and services that biodiversity provides to society.

The Global Environment Facility is the world's largest funder of biodiversity protection, nature restoration, pollution reduction, and climate change response in developing countries. It finances international environmental conventions and country-driven initiatives that generate global benefits. The GEF partnership connects 184 member governments with civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and the private sector, and works closely with other environmental financiers for efficiency and impact. Over the past three decades, the GEF has provided more than \$22 billion in grants and blended finance and mobilized another \$120 billion in co-financing for more than 5,000 national and regional projects, plus 27,000 community-led initiatives through its Small Grants Programme.

