



# GEF-8: Moving Toward an Equitable, Nature-Positive, Carbon-Neutral and Pollution-Free World

## Overview

Despite some improvements over the last decade, many **indicators of planetary health** are headed in the wrong direction. Environmental threats from climate change, biodiversity loss, chemical pollution, and pressures on forests, land, oceans, and wildlife are undermining human development, livelihoods, and social justice.

- The loss of **biodiversity** and its associated ecosystems services threatens human well-being.
- The **oceans** are under increasing threat from **climate change** and associated acidification, loss of coral reefs, overfishing, and pollution.
- **Freshwater systems** are being depleted rapidly, threatening livelihoods and triggering conflicts.
- Global **forest** loss and possible tipping points in the Amazon can trigger unexpected and irreversible global damage to the environment.<sup>1</sup>
- In addition, **hazardous chemicals** remain a significant threat to human health, ecosystems, and biodiversity.

<sup>1</sup> <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/12/eaba2949>

At the same time, the world still faces one of the greatest health and economic threats in a generation: the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges are a stark reminder that the well-being of humanity is dependent on a healthy planet. The systemic nature of environmental challenges also calls for solutions to be integrated. To that end, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) anchors its overall approach on interdependency between people and the planet. This interdependency is key to ensuring that GEF investments are targeted toward tackling the breakdown in food, energy, urban, health, and natural systems that underpin human development. The GEF is therefore well-placed to harness its comparative advantage as “integrator” across multiple dimensions. The eighth replenishment cycle from 2022-2026 (GEF-8) will support transformative change to economic systems to address the risk of emerging diseases and pandemics.

## A Pathway to Transformative Change for Blue and Green Recovery

GEF-8 focuses on integration for both impact and scale, consistent with global aspirations to seek bold results by 2030 and beyond (Figure 1). By integrating actions across sectors, focal areas, or drivers, it can address drivers of environmental degradation at global or regional scales; avoid leakage and promote policy coherence; and work across scales and sectors. Transformative investments will promote greater private sector engagement, as well as innovations and measured risks for higher returns. Ultimately, this approach will strengthen resilience in the face of uncertainty and build economic systems and financing to sustain impact. In this way, we can help create a Healthy Planet for Healthy People.

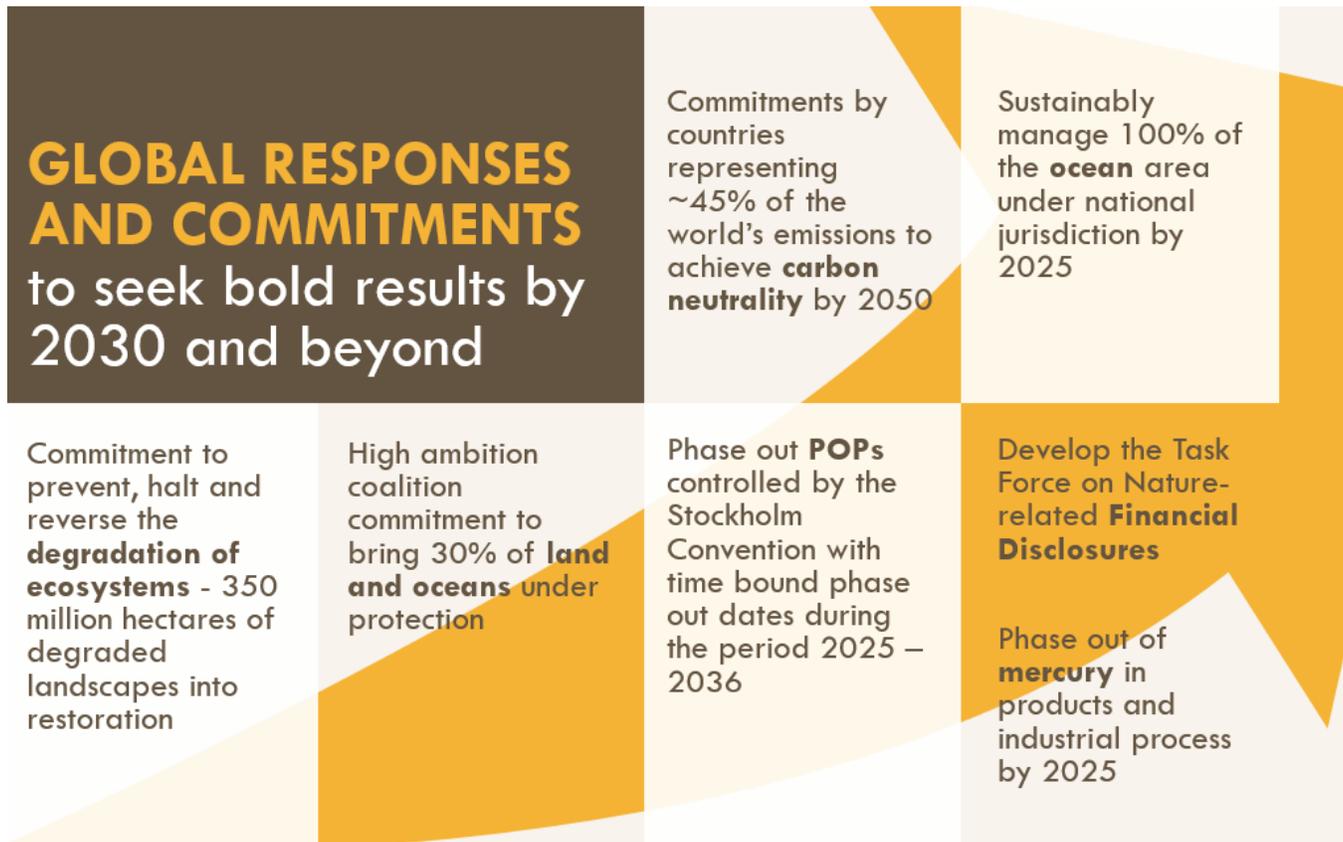


Figure 1. Global Responses and Commitments to Seek Bold Results by 2030 and Beyond

## Healthy Planet, Healthy People

The *Healthy Planet, Healthy People* framework explicitly recognizes that human health and well-being depend on a healthy environment. It relies on linkages between biodiversity and ecosystem services with food security and human health; between abundant and clean freshwater and human health; maintenance of a stable and livable climate and human health; a clean and hazardous chemical-free environment and human health; and healthy oceans that can provide sustainable and resilient livelihoods and food security for people. With this in mind, the GEF has set the following goals through 2030:

- **Scale up “green” and “blue” recovery** actions in priority landscapes and seascapes through post-COVID-19 strategies by state and non-state actors.
- Provide incentives and improved policy options to **promote innovations and behavior change** for sustainability and resilience in target systems.

- **Transform target systems** by maintaining and enhancing natural capital and ecosystem services through Nature-based Solutions.
- **Promote circularity in value/supply chains** to increase efficiency and reduce or eliminate negative externalities like pollution.

GEF-8 will deploy funds from a record replenishment in 2022 to promote a green, blue, and resilient recovery. GEF-8 will invest in both integrated programming and specific focal areas. All told, 11 integrated programs will deliver global environmental benefits across multiple focal areas (Figure 2). At the same time, GEF-8 will continue to invest resources in single focal areas to support the goals of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

# GEF-8: HEALTHY PLANET, HEALTHY PEOPLE

*Unified action towards 2030 Goals and Commitments*

## FOCAL AREAS

Biodiversity

Climate change mitigation

Land degradation

International waters

Chemicals and waste

## INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

Food Systems  
Ecosystem Restoration  
Sustainable Cities  
Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes  
Circular Solutions to Plastic Pollution  
Blue and Green Islands  
Clean and Healthy Ocean  
Greening Transportation Infrastructure Development  
Net-Zero Nature-Positive Accelerator  
Wildlife Conservation for Development  
Elimination of Harmful Chemicals from Supply Chains

## GLOBAL PROGRAMS

Mobilizing the Financial Sector for Environmental Goals through Blended Finance

Community Action for Global Transformation - Small Grants Program and Beyond

## CROSS-CUTTING

Circular economy • Nature-based solutions • Gender responsiveness • Resilience • Private sector engagement

Figure 2. The Healthy Planet, Healthy People Framework

## Integrated Programming

GEF-8 will support integrated programs that can “move the needle” toward systems transformations. This framework positions the GEF well in its work to help developing countries pursue transformational change in key systems in line with national priorities. Collectively, the proposed 11 integrated programs address major drivers of environmental degradation and/or deliver multiple benefits that fall under the GEF’s mandate. Many priorities also make use of increasingly more relevant global or regional platforms that are attracting a multitude of stakeholders and resources in response to political commitments.

## Individual Focal Area Investments

Investments in specific focal areas respond to guidance from the different MEAs. The integrated programs will deliver substantial global benefits across the different focal areas, while some issues are best addressed through distinct investments in specific focal areas.

## Global Programs

To rapidly scale up investment in the environment and meet the unfolding environmental crises and tipping points, global leaders, the private sector, the financial sector, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are converging in their calls for action. The GEF Blended Finance program is an effective tool to help mobilize private investment but still represents a small portion of total global investment. Similarly, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) plays a critical role in mobilizing grassroots and community action for global transformation.



The Global Environment Facility is the world's largest funder of biodiversity protection, nature restoration, pollution reduction, and climate change response in developing countries. Through its network of 184 member governments, it works with civil society, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, and other environmental financiers towards achievement of international environmental conventions and country-driven initiatives. 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. In June 2022, donor governments pledged \$5.33 billion to the GEF for its next four-year operating period (GEF-8). Much of the funding will be delivered through a set of 11 integrated programs that address multiple environmental threats at once.

OCTOBER 2022