



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

Biodiversity



MAIN ISSUE

Biodiversity is the variability among 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 an indispensable asset that makes critical contributions to sustainable development. Managing this asset requires full engagement of governments at all levels, civil society organizations, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities, 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.



WHAT WE DO

The GEF provides financial resources for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the CBD. The goal of the GEF's biodiversity strategy is to maintain globally significant biodiversity in landscapes and seascapes.

To achieve this goal, GEF-7 investments focus on three main objectives:

1. Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes;
2. Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species; and
3. Further develop biodiversity policy and institutional frameworks.

Support is primarily focused on 1) sustainably managing biodiversity in productive landscapes and seascapes and ensuring that any impact caused by productive sectors on biodiversity is avoided, or substantially reduced or minimized; 2) enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of protected area systems; 3) supporting the complete and effective implementation of the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols; and 4) improving biodiversity policy, planning, and review.

RESULTS

The GEF has invested more than US\$3.5 billion to conserve biodiversity and use it sustainably. This investment has leveraged over US\$10 billion in additional funds, supporting 1,300 projects in more than 155 countries.

GEF funds have improved the management of more than 860 million ha of protected areas and parks around the world, an area larger than the size of Brazil. We have also helped countries sustainably use and manage biodiversity within more than 350 million ha of productive landscapes and seascapes.

The GEF has supported the development of National Biosafety Frameworks in 126 countries, and their subsequent implementation under the Cartagena Protocol. GEF support has also been critical in bringing into force the Nagoya Protocol, and a growing part of the portfolio is building country capacity to implement the Protocol.

GEF-7 Provides New Vision and New Opportunities

In GEF-7, \$1.29 billion have been allocated to the biodiversity focal area making it the largest focal area of the GEF.

The GEF-7 biodiversity focal area strategy is implemented through these programming options under the following three objectives:

Objective 1. Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes

- Biodiversity Mainstreaming in Priority Sectors (Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Tourism, Extractives, Infrastructure)
- Global Wildlife Program
- Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting
- Sustainable Use of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources
- Inclusive Conservation

Objective 2. Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species

- Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species
- Improving Financial Sustainability, Effective Management, and Ecosystem Representation of the Global Protected Area Estate

Objective 3: Develop biodiversity policy and institutional frameworks

- Implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Implement the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing
- Improve Biodiversity Policy, Planning, and Review

Please see GEF-7 Biodiversity Strategy for a detailed description of programing and investment opportunities: <https://www.thegef.org/publications/gef-7-biodiversity-strategy>

The GEF-7 biodiversity focal area strategy investments are being supported by an array of associated programing strategies that also fully embody integrated approaches to achieve biodiversity conservation and sustainable and that



address some of the most critical drivers to biodiversity loss through creative programming options that bring together new arrays of stakeholders and new responses to long-standing and intractable challenges.

These new investments are referred to as “Impact Programs” and they seek to address underlying drivers of global environmental degradation. They include the following programs which are most germane to the CBD:

- The *Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program* aims to transform food value chains by supporting countries to meet their growing food demands through higher productivity gains from crops and livestock, while at the same time avoiding the potential resulting loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, erosion of crop and livestock genetic diversity, overexploitation of water resources, overuse of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and inefficient practices that lead to GHG emissions, food loss and waste.
- The *Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Impact Program* recognizes the importance of forests for their role in sustaining biodiversity, their ability to provide a range of important environmental services and their potential to contribute to many countries’ sustainable development plans. The SFM Program will focus on biomes of global importance for biodiversity and humanity: the Amazon biome, the Congo Basin, and Drylands, which will include forests and trees outside forests in dryland landscapes, where transformative impacts and multiple environmental benefits can be achieved.
- Through the *Sustainable Cities Impact Program*, the GEF will also promote integration of biodiversity conservation priorities into urban planning, specifically to safeguard globally significant biodiversity and associated ecosystem services affected by urbanization.

In addition, GEF support through the International Waters Focal Area will help establish new coastal and marine protected areas, improve the management effectiveness of existing

coastal and marine protected areas, promote sustainable fishing practices, and strengthen ecosystem governance both at national and regional level to maintain productivity while sustaining biodiversity within fisheries.

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 biodiversity mainstreaming agenda of the CBD. In their entirety, this set of programming options directly support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, 2011–2020, particularly with regards to the increasingly important biodiversity mainstreaming agenda. All 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 that they will make significant contributions to help halt biodiversity loss while maintaining the ecosystem goods and services that biodiversity provides to society.

The Global Environment Facility was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to help tackle our planet’s most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has provided **over \$18.1 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$94.2 billion in co-financing** for more than **4500 projects in 170 countries**. Today, the GEF is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues.

