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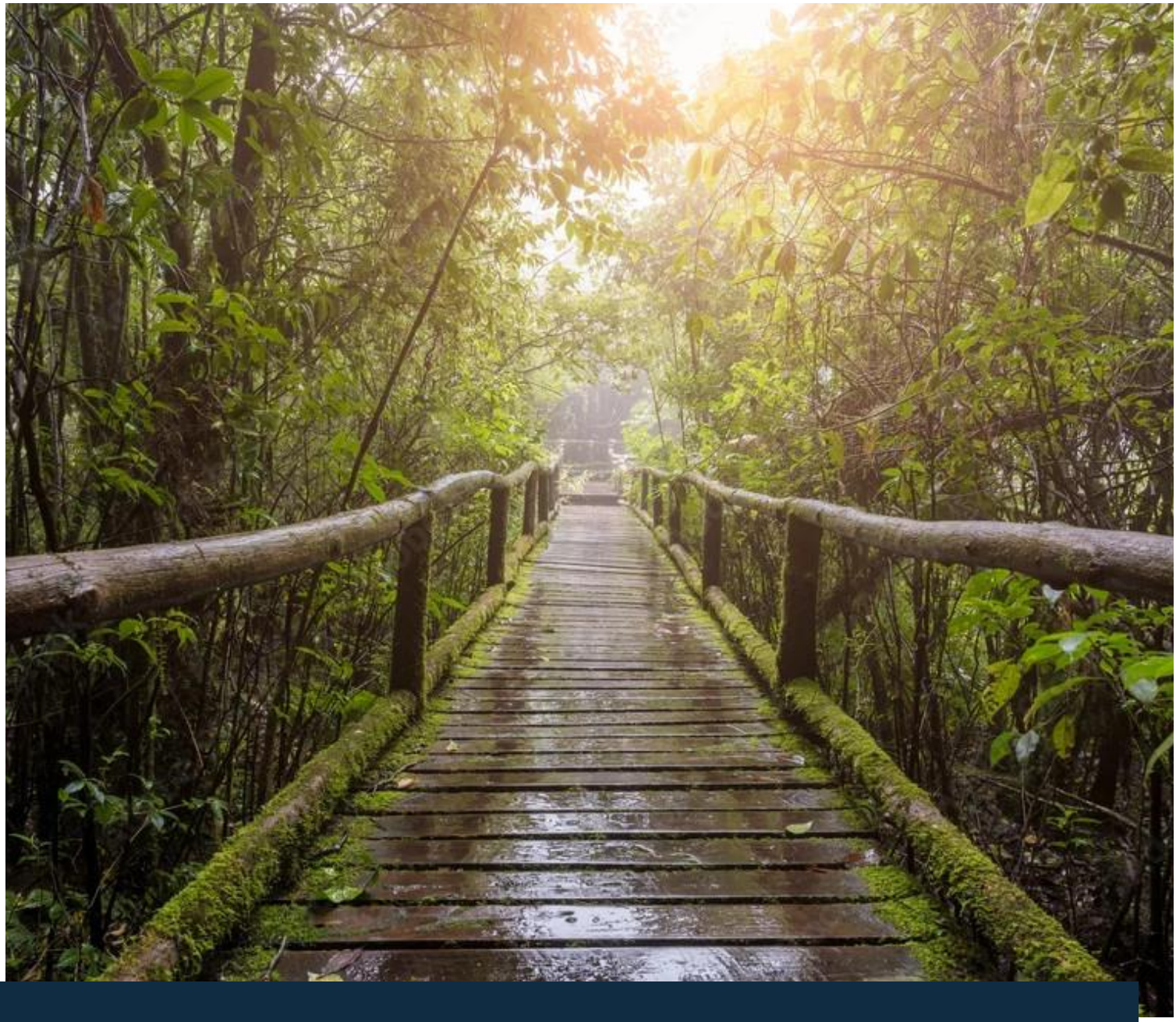

Towards successful policy coherence for biodiversity and climate

Learning from case studies

May 2025

DISCUSSION PAPER

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Key messages

Why is policy coherence for biodiversity and climate so vital?

- Synergies between biodiversity and climate action are essential for lasting impact. **Fragmented policy responses remain ineffective** in addressing the biodiversity and climate emergency, and risks trade-offs that undermine both agendas**.** Only integrated approaches can deliver effective and efficient solutions that maximize mutual gains.
- **Policy coherence** for biodiversity and climate means intentionally **aligning objectives**, **institutions, actions, monitoring, finance and governance structures** to avoid unnecessary duplication, minimize trade-offs, and leverage synergies.
- Decisions under the Rio Conventions **CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD recognize the need for integrated action**, but collaboration remains weak amongst these Conventions, international frameworks and other multilateral agreements and gaps remain in translating coherence into national and local implementation.

Key steps for aligning policy agendas for biodiversity and climate

- Achieving policy coherence requires **robust coordination and collaboration** across government levels and sectors. NDCs, NBSAPs, and NAPs often remain siloed, whereas aligning and cross-referencing them can reduce duplication and enhance effectiveness. Ensuring the systematic integration of such national strategies and action plans into the planning and decision-making processes of the sectors they address is key for their implementation.
- **Mainstreaming biodiversity and climate targets into sectors** such as energy, agriculture, transport and tourism, among others, requires addressing conflicts of interests and promoting synergies. This can be achieved for instance through joint assessment and coordinated regulatory measures.
- When translating international and national targets to **coherent subnational implementation**, success factors include bringing climate and biodiversity actors together, investing in capacity-building, providing sufficient resources, appointing regional facilitators and supporting locally-led initiatives.
- Protecting, restoring and sustainably using **ecosystems** present points of convergence for both biodiversity and climate action. Such **nature-based solutions** and **ecosystem-based approaches** simultaneously deliver benefits for nature and people, including climate change mitigation and adaptation services as well as enhanced food security, water resilience, and human health.

Cross-cutting levers to enhance coherence

- **Financial instruments and incentive structures must be better aligned with biodiversity and climate targets**. Coordinating public funding, from international finance to national budgets and local grants, mobilising private sector engagement, and removing harmful subsidies are crucial levers to support integrated action.
- **Strong research institutions and science-policy interfaces** are key enablers supporting evidence-based decision making. They should be backed by long-term visions, suitable mandates and political commitment to strengthen the biodiversity-climate nexus. Inter-

and transdisciplinary collaboration across science, policy and practice at all levels fosters knowledge exchange and capacity building. and builds resilience in policy implementation.

- **Meaningful stakeholder engagement and participation** is fundamental to success. Involving stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth early in decision-making and implementation processes ensures that policies are context-appropriate and socially just, as well as understood, accepted and more likely to achieve lasting outcomes. The success of policy coherence depends on equitable benefit-sharing across social groups.
- **Adaptive learning is a critical enabler of effective, responsive policy and implementation.** Enabling structured learning processes—through regular review of implementation, outcomes, and impacts—allows for timely adjustments and continuous improvement.

How can countries learn from each other?

- **International cooperation** can drive synergies between climate and biodiversity agendas by supporting integrated approaches, aligning financial flows, and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration. Through strategic investments, technical assistance, and knowledge exchange, international cooperation can help bridge policy silos, enhance coherence across NDCs, NBSAPs, and NAPs, and scale nature-based solutions that deliver benefits for people and planet.
- **Achieving policy coherence is an ongoing process** that requires continuous dialogue and negotiation to reconcile competing interests. This builds a culture of collaboration that must be supported by political will, strong institutional mandates, and ongoing capacity-building.
- **Learning from best practices and successful case studies** as highlighted in this paper provides an important starting point for developing effective and coherent policies, driving positive change for nature and people.

Kernbotschaften

Warum ist Politikkohärenz in Biodiversitäts- und Klimapolitik so wichtig?

- Synergien zwischen Biodiversitäts- und Klimapolitik sind für deren nachhaltigen Erfolg unerlässlich. **Fragmentierte politische Antworten auf den globalen Biodiversitäts- und Klimanotstand bleiben ineffektiv** und können dazu beitragen, beide Krisen weiter zu verschärfen. Nur integrierte Ansätze können effektive und effiziente Lösungen für die Umsetzung beider Agenden hervorbringen.
- **Politikkohärenz** für Biodiversität und Klima bedeutet, bewusst Ziele, Institutionen, Maßnahmen, Monitoring, Finanzierung und Governance-Strukturen aufeinander abzustimmen, um Redundanzen zu vermeiden, Trade-Offs zu minimieren und Synergien zu nutzen.
- Beschlüsse der drei Rio-Konventionen **CBD, UNFCCC und UNCCD erkennen die Notwendigkeit integrierter Maßnahmen an**, doch die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Konventionen, internationalen Rahmenwerken und anderen multilateralen Abkommen ist bislang schwach ausgeprägt. Auch die Übersetzung von Kohärenz in die nationale und lokale Umsetzung bleibt lückenhaft.

Zentrale Schritte für eine gemeinsame Ausrichtung in Biodiversitäts- und Klimapolitik

- Um Politikkohärenz zu erreichen, bedarf es einer **zuverlässigen Koordination und Zusammenarbeit über Regierungsebenen und Sektoren hinweg**. Durch eine gemeinsame Ausrichtung und verstärkte Querverbindungen zwischen den bislang meist nebeneinander stehenden nationalen Biodiversitätsstrategien und Klimaaktionsplänen (NBSAPs, NDCs und NAPs) können Redundanzen vermieden und ihre Wirksamkeit erhöht werden. Für eine erfolgreiche Umsetzung ist es entscheidend, diese nationalen Pläne und Strategien wiederum systematisch in die Planungs- und Entscheidungsprozesse der Sektoren zu integrieren, auf die sie sich beziehen.
- **Biodiversitäts- und Klimaschutzziele** in den Energie-, Landwirtschafts-, Verkehrs- und Tourismussektor sowie weitere **Sektoren zu integrieren** erfordert, Interessenkonflikte offen anzugehen und Synergien bewusst zu fördern. Dies kann zum Beispiel durch gemeinsame Bewertungsverfahren und koordinierte Regulierungsmaßnahmen erreicht werden.
- Zu den Erfolgsfaktoren bei der Übersetzung internationaler und nationaler Ziele in **kohärente subnationale Umsetzungsmaßnahmen** gehören das Zusammenbringen von Klima- und Biodiversitätsakteur*innen, Investitionen in Kapazitätsaufbau und Bereitstellung ausreichender Ressourcen, die Ernennung regionaler Koordinator*innen und die Unterstützung lokaler Initiativen.
- Der Schutz, die Wiederherstellung und die nachhaltige Nutzung von **Ökosystemen** bieten Konvergenzpunkte für die gemeinsame Erreichung von Biodiversitäts- und Klimazielen. **Naturbasierte Lösungen und ökosystembasierte Ansätze** bieten gleichzeitig Vorteile für Natur und Mensch; sie tragen u.a. zu Klimaschutz und Klimawandelanpassung bei und fördern zudem Ernährungssicherheit, resiliente Wasserversorgung und menschliche Gesundheit.

Übergreifende Hebel zur Verbesserung von Kohärenz

- **Finanzinstrumente und Anreizstrukturen müssen besser auf Biodiversitäts- und Klimaziele abgestimmt werden.** Öffentliche Finanzierung zu koordinieren – von internationaler Finanzierung bis hin zu nationalen Haushalten und lokalen Zuwendungen –, Engagement der Privatwirtschaft zu mobilisieren sowie natur- und klimaschädliche Subventionen abzuschaffen sind entscheidende Hebel, um integrierte Ansätze zu unterstützen.
- **Starke Forschungseinrichtungen und Schnittstellen zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik** (Science-Policy Interfaces) sind wichtige Wegbereiter für evidenzbasierte Entscheidungsfindung. Sie sollten durch langfristige Visionen, passende Mandate und politische Verbindlichkeit darin unterstützt werden, den Nexus Biodiversität und Klimawandel zu stärken. Inter- und transdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit zwischen Wissenschaft, Politik und Praxis auf allen Ebenen fördert Wissensaustausch, Aufbau von Kapazitäten und Resilienz in der Politikumsetzung.
- **Die wirksame Einbeziehung und Beteiligung von Interessengruppen** ist ein wichtiger Erfolgsfaktor. Stakeholder, Indigene Völker und lokale Gemeinschaften, Frauen und Jugendliche frühzeitig in Entscheidungs- und Umsetzungsprozesse miteinzubeziehen stellt sicher, dass Politik kontextbasiert und sozial gerecht ist, verstanden und akzeptiert wird und mit größerer Wahrscheinlichkeit bleibende Ergebnisse erzielt. Der Erfolg von Politikkohärenz hängt von einer gerechten Gewinnaufteilung zwischen gesellschaftlichen Gruppen ab.
- **Adaptives Lernen** ist ein entscheidender Faktor für wirksame, anpassungsfähige politische Beschlüsse und deren Umsetzung. Die Etablierung strukturierter Lernprozesse – durch regelmäßige Überprüfung von Umsetzung, Ergebnissen und Auswirkungen – ermöglicht Flexibilität und kontinuierliche Verbesserungen.

Wie können Länder voneinander lernen?

- **Internationale Zusammenarbeit** kann Synergien zwischen Klima- und Biodiversitätsagenden voranbringen, indem sie integrierte Ansätze unterstützt, Finanzströme aufeinander abstimmt und sektorübergreifende Kollaboration fördert. Durch strategische Investitionen, technische Unterstützung und Wissensaustausch kann internationale Zusammenarbeit dazu beitragen, politische Silos zu durchbrechen, die Kohärenz zwischen NDCs, NBSAPs und NAPs zu verbessern und naturbasierte Lösungen in die Fläche zu bringen, die Mensch und Planet zugutekommen.
- **Politikkohärenz ist ein fortlaufender Prozess**, der kontinuierliche Dialoge und Verhandlungen erfordert, um konkurrierende Interessen in Einklang zu bringen. Diese Kultur der Zusammenarbeit muss durch politischen Willen, starke institutionelle Mandate und den kontinuierlichen Aufbau von Kapazitäten unterstützt werden.
- **Das Lernen von Erfolgsbeispielen** wie den vielen Fallbeispielen in dieser Publikation ist ein wichtiger Ansatzpunkt, um wirksame und kohärente Politik zu entwickeln, die positive Veränderungen für Natur und Mensch bewirkt.

1 Introduction: Why is policy coherence for biodiversity and climate needed?

Our problems are connected, our answers are not.

The global climate and biodiversity crises are interdependent: they are largely driven by the same causes, including rising consumption of energy, unprecedented land use changes and overexploitation of natural resources (Pörtner et al. 2021). Moreover, both crises reinforce each other: climate change is one of the main drivers of biodiversity decline, while the loss and degradation of ecosystems accelerate emissions and deprive us of nature's ability to build resilience against climate impacts (IPBES 2019; IPCC 2022). Both crises must be tackled together for a synergistic response to the interlinked challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss (Pörtner et al. 2021).

Fragmented efforts that fail to address root causes cannot succeed. In fact, one-sided actions and policies aiming to mitigate climate change or adapt to it without any ecological safeguards can pose serious threats to biodiversity, exacerbating the problem further (Pörtner et al. 2021). Policymakers and practitioners therefore need to address climate change and biodiversity loss in an integrated manner, as fragmented or contradictory approaches can lead to wasted resources and inefficiencies. For example, large-scale monoculture bioenergy plantations aimed at carbon removal may undermine biodiversity, threaten food and water security, and ultimately fail to deliver the intended climate benefits (Stenzel et al. 2021). In contrast, coherent policies such as restoring ecosystems which both sequester carbon for climate change mitigation and provide critical habitats, can maximize synergies and enhance the effectiveness of interventions.

Biodiversity-climate synergies can be realized by jointly addressing the drivers and underlying root causes of biodiversity loss and climate change, such as unsustainable land use, overexploitation of resources, and pollution, as well as through implementing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches (BfN 2023, see Box 1). If implemented well, synergetic solutions for biodiversity and climate – including both mitigation and adaptation – can also provide benefits for other sustainability objectives, such as food security, water resilience and human health (IPBES 2019). Harnessing synergies between biodiversity and climate policy involves intentional coordination in developing and implementing international policy instruments as well as national commitments and strategies (Tsioumani 2024).

Box 1. Definitions

- **Synergies** are the result of joint action that goes beyond the sum of individual activities, making efforts more effective and efficient (UNEP 2010, cited in Tsioumani 2024). They occur when an intervention results in positive outcomes for several objectives (BfN 2023). Synergies are distinguished from **co-benefits**, which describe additional positive results an action has in fields that it did not directly target. **Trade-offs**, on the other hand, refer to a combination of positive and negative outcomes of an intervention, meaning that one objective is favoured at the detriment of another (BfN 2023).

- **Policy coherence** is the process of joint and integrated policymaking. It requires intentional coordination, mechanisms, and structures that promote horizontal and vertical cooperation between different levels of government and sectors of society (Terton 2021). Coherence helps to avoid duplication of efforts and enable effective use of financial and human resources (Terton et al. 2024).
- **Policy alignment** is the process of identifying synergies among policy processes with common objectives to increase coherence, efficiency and effectiveness for improved outcomes (Dazé et al. 2018).
- **Nature-based solutions** are actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits (UNEP/EA.5/Res.5).

Policy coherence can only have a sustainable effect when the benefits of policies are shared equitably across all segments of society, without exacerbating inequalities or burdens on vulnerable groups. Achieving coherence requires inclusive dialogue, meaningful engagement and effective coordination. These elements form the foundation for implementing policies successfully.

About this publication

This discussion paper primarily addresses national policy makers engaged in climate and biodiversity policy. It is based on the results of the international workshop “Successful Policy Coherence for Biodiversity and Climate - Learning from Case Studies” held on 22-25 April 2025 on the Isle of Vilm, Germany. It presents concrete case studies on enhancing policy coherence for biodiversity and climate from across the globe and across different governance levels. Based on these case studies and the expert discussions held during the workshop, the paper identifies success factors and derives recommendations and entry points to enhance policy coherence. The paper is structured along seven thematic sections: The first three sections adress policy coherence at different levels of government – international, national and local. The remaining four chapters present horizontal elements of policy coherence – sectoral integration, financing, institutional alignment as well as capacity building and communication.

2 Policy coherence in international frameworks

As national policy makers look to global conventions for direction, the coherence of these international frameworks is essential to enable integrated and ambitious action at all levels. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are foundational in guiding national climate and biodiversity efforts. Both conventions have made progress in integrating each other’s objectives:

- The CBD stipulates in its Article 22 that biological diversity should be considered in the realisation of other international legal obligations, including those under the UNFCCC.
- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), especially Targets 8 and 11, explicitly recognises the need to jointly tackle the biodiversity and climate crises using nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches.

- At the latest CBD COP, a Decision on Biodiversity and Climate Change was adopted (Decision 16/22). It urges parties to identify and maximize potential synergies between biodiversity and climate actions when implementing the GBF, and to avoid or minimize negative impacts of climate actions on biodiversity, among others. It also invites parties, observers and other stakeholders to submit their views on options for enhanced policy coherence, including a potential joint work programme of the Rio conventions.
- The UNFCCC, historically less open to biodiversity concerns, has recently increased its recognition of nature. Key milestones include the Glasgow Climate Pact (2021), the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (COP27, 2022), and the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience (COP28, 2023), all of which highlight the importance of protecting and restoring ecosystems in the context of climate action (Terton et al. 2024).
- The GBF is mentioned in the Global Stocktake and the negotiations on the Global Goal on Adaptation's monitoring framework include indicators on ecosystems. Synergies in the development and implementation of climate and biodiversity policies are addressed under the UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme (Terton et al. 2024).
- The Joint Liaison Group was established in 2001 by the secretariats of the UNFCCC, CBD and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to enhance coordination amongst the conventions and share information on work programmes and operations.

Despite these advances, significant gaps remain at the implementation level:

- Coordination between climate and biodiversity processes is often hampered by mismatched timelines, deadlines, and reporting cycles, limiting the integration of synergies in national policies.
- National implementation instruments such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are often developed in isolation, missing opportunities for alignment (see also Section 3).
- Intergovernmental science-policy platforms, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Science Policy Interface (SPI) of the UNCCD, operate independently of each other, reducing opportunities for knowledge exchange and joint solutions.

To further enhance policy coherence, the **following actions are recommended**:

- **Institutionalize policy coherence**: Reframe coherence not as an additional agenda item but as a guiding mindset throughout negotiations and implementation.
- **Strengthen science-policy interfaces**: Encourage cross-nomination of biodiversity experts to the IPCC and climate experts to IPBES, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange. Promote scientific collaboration between biodiversity and climate experts both within countries and internationally, and encourage increased engagement of the scientific community in policy processes.
  Harmonize monitoring and reporting: Support and further develop integrated monitoring and reporting systems for the GBF and Paris Agreement, enabling countries to track progress on shared objectives.

- **Align timelines and processes**: Coordinate the cycles of the Rio Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD) to facilitate participation and reduce resource constraints for policy-makers and experts.

Box 2. Examples of international initiatives and programmes providing support for policy coherence between international climate and biodiversity frameworks

- **Rio Conventions Joint Capacity-Building Programme**: Launched by the Rio Convention secretariats' Joint Liaison Group[1] in 2024, the programme hosts webinars and work-shops for synergetic implementation.
- **UNDP Nature and Climate Nexus Offer**: The United Nations Development Programme is supporting more than 40 countries in adopting aligned approaches in their updated NDC and NBSAPs.
- **GIZ/IKI BioClime project**: A support project for implementation instruments of the GBF and the Paris Agreement, currently supporting four countries and managing a technical report series[2].
- **Climate-Nature Coordination Platform** (CNCP): A platform supporting the goals of the COP28 Joint Statement for Climate, Nature and People[3] through promoting coordination and collaboration among implementing entities and country-led initiatives, such as matchmaking between the NDC Partnership and NBSAP Accelerator Partnership[4].
- **ENACT Partnership**: An initiative launched by the COP27 Presidency in partnership with Germany to promote the adoption of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for synergetic implementation across the Rio Conventions.
- **Net Zero Nature Positive Integrated Accelerator Programme**: A GEF-8 funded programme for 11 pilot countries on net zero nature positive investment pathways, featuring a Global Coordination Hub.

3 Aligning national strategies and action plans for biodiversity and climate

International agendas for climate and biodiversity policy provide the framework for national governments. The contracting states are obliged to transfer global agreements into national instruments by means of the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally determined contributions (NDCs), and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). The method of developing and implementing these instruments varies by country and depends on their specific governmental structures. In some cases, they are managed within the same governmental body, such as a ministry, while in others, separate entities are responsible. Regardless of the approach, aligning national strategies and action plans for biodiversity and climate can

[1] https://unfccc.int/about-us/about-the-secretariat/the-joint-liaison-group
[2] https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/synergies-biodiversity-climate-policy-frameworks
[3] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ziwBhNgAkXmavucv5mnD6agown-H3-vu/view
[4] https://ndcpartnership.org/news/global-action-tackle-climate-and-biodiversity-crises

significantly enhance overall effectiveness, reduce duplication, ensure co-benefits, and leverage synergies between the two agendas.

Sustainable (long-term) policy coherence between the biodiversity and climate agendas is essential for delivering lasting impact. The success of such alignment depends on several factors and circumstances, including political timelines, elections, and the availability of resources (both financial and human). Often it is difficult to align global agendas with national agendas (e.g. depending on election schedules and deadlines of submissions in the context of global frameworks), and not every country has the capacities to coordinate agendas effectively or even to formulate what kind of support they need to access funding to do so.

The following **success factors** for the alignment of national strategies and action plans for biodiversity and climate can be derived from the case studies presented below:

- **Creating an overarching policy document as guidance** for all activities related to biodiversity or climate, or even the biodiversity-climate nexus can be helpful to support decision making and the synergetic consolidation of NDC, NAP and NBSAP (see the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity, presented in Box 5). **Political will at national and subnational level is key**. It is extremely helpful to be able to count on high-level support (e.g. ministers and secretaries), regardless of whether both agendas are handled in the same ministry or not (see Mexico's case in Box 6).
- **Technical support via development cooperation and related funding** can help in facilitating the alignment of both biodiversity and climate change policy processes.
- Having the three **Rio Conventions coordinated by the same ministry** is not necessary but can facilitate good and easier collaboration between the respective secretariats or ministry departments. Centralized governance, too, can be a success factor for policy coherence (see Madagascar's and Brazil's examples in Box 3 and Box 4, and section 7).
- Strengthening the **cooperation between different ministries** contributes to a better knowledge exchange and integrated agendas. For this, sufficient coordination mechanisms are key (see Mexico's and Madagascar's examples in Box 6 and Box 3). A **dedicated national task force** can be created, with a mandate to identify synergies and avoid duplications in target settings.
- Aligning NAPs, NDCs, and NBSAPs means to cross-check them and identify common objectives and synergy potentials through **national dialogues** or other forms of **consultation processes** in a strategic manner. This enhances policy coherence, efficient implementation, and transformative action. It enables countries to present a unified front in addressing interconnected environmental crises and aligning local priorities with global commitments.
- Well-aligned national policies can include, for example, **targets and measures to address the common drivers** of biodiversity loss and climate change, to identify and **minimize trade-offs** and to **promote nature-based solutions** that simultaneously generate biodiversity and climate benefits.

- **If needed, conducting a study beforehand to assess synergy and coherence potentials** between NBSAP and NDC, NAP can be a good start for identifying priorities for joint actions and formulate recommendations, including options for strengthening intersectoral coordination (see Madagascar's process in Box 3). Potential trade-offs (e.g. biodiversity impacts of some climate change mitigation or adaptation pathways) need to be understood and recognized in order to avoid maladaptation.
- Aligning the agendas is a process that **requires time and continuous adjustments**.
- **Subnational governments' and local communities' involvement** are essential for the agenda's sustainability and integration in subnational land use planning. The role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in conserving biodiversity and in mitigating and adapting to climate change should receive special attention, and sufficient time and resources should be provided to ensure their involvement (see Brazil's process in Box 4).

Box 3. Case study: A study on alignment between the implementation of NBSAPs and NDCs in Madagascar

Madagascar developed a strategic approach to enhancing political and technical coherence between the climate and biodiversity agendas in the context of its commitments under the Rio Conventions, specifically the CBD and UNFCCC. As a starting point, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and the GBF/GIZ project conducted a study in 2024, aiming **to identify synergies and entry points between Madagascar's NBSAP and its NDC**. The study was based on desk research and consultations with institutional and community stakeholders and provides a set of concrete operational recommendations.

The produced report shows that Madagascar is strongly committed to both climate action – including climate change mitigation and adaptation – and biodiversity conservation, with a wide range of relevant policy and strategic frameworks: NBSAP (2015–2025), NDC-2 (2022), National Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development (PNEDD, 2015), National Climate Change Response Policy (PNLCC-R, 2021), National Adaptation Plan (NAP, 2021), National Action Plan for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (PANLCC, 2019), etc. Existing sectoral documents share common goals, particularly around the sustainable management of forest ecosystems and biodiversity, reforestation, REDD+, and climate-smart agriculture. The institutional context is conducive to synergy, with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) serving as a central actor for both conventions, supported by mechanisms such as the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Environment (CIME) and Sectoral Environmental Units.

The study highlights the **importance of involving local communities**, who play a key role in implementing environmental policies through natural resource management transfers. Their traditional knowledge serves as an information asset for biodiversity and climate planning and reporting. National and international NGOs (WWF, CI, WCS) as well as bilateral and multilateral cooperation partners (GIZ, AFD, USAID, UN etc.) actively support these efforts.

Synergies already exist in governance processes, international financing mechanisms (e.g., REDD+, GCF, FFEM), and monitoring and reporting systems.

The ongoing establishment of a National Biodiversity Platform could further enhance multisectoral coordination. However, challenges remain, notably the insufficient systematic coordination between MEDD departments and with other ministries, as well as the compartmentalization of actions based on donor mandates.

Sector by sector, the study identifies forests, agriculture, fisheries and coastal zones, energy, extractive industries, and tourism as priorities for joint NBSAP/NDC actions. It highlights nature-based solutions (NbS) as key tools for mitigation and adaptation. Examples of biodiversity-climate integration include resilient agriculture models, forest restoration, the PRE-AA (Atiala Atsinanana Emission Reduction Program) project, and the management of locally managed marine areas (LMMAs).

Finally, the study presents **key recommendations**, including strengthening intersectoral coordination, defining shared objectives, jointly mobilizing public/private financing, enhancing local actors' capacities, involving the private sector through Corporate Social Responsibility, and aligning monitoring and reporting processes. The document concludes that the synergy between NBSAPs and NDCs is essential for effective, inclusive, and sustainable governance in Madagascar.

Case study provided by: Rantonirina Rakotoaridera, MEDD, Madagascar

Box 4. Case study: Brazil: Integrating Biodiversity and Climate Policies (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Brazil undertook an innovative process to integrate its biodiversity and climate policies. Led by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MMA), the country launched the simultaneous revision of the **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)** and the **National Climate Change Plan (Plano Clima)**. This parallel approach enabled better alignment of goals, avoided overlaps, and fostered synergies between the two agendas.

As part of the NBSAP process, Brazil discussed alignment of the global targets of the GBF with the national aims through a broad public online consultation and a series of participatory sectoral workshops. The initiative was undertaken with **the collaboration of diverse stakeholders** — including subnational governments, the private sector, academia, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples, and local communities.

In parallel, Brazil also updated the Plano Clima, which includes seven sectoral mitigation plans, sixteen sectoral adaptation plans, and a set of cross-cutting strategies addressing key implementation mechanisms such as finance, governance, capacity building, and just transition. Notably, **the Plano Clima was designed as a multisectoral framework**, engaging various government ministries and sectors — including energy, agriculture, transport, health, and cities — in the effort to mainstream climate action across the national development agenda. Within this multisectoral structure, there was a **deliberate effort to integrate biodiversity considerations into sectoral plans**, ensuring that they were incorporated not only in the environmental plans, but also in broader discussions within the sectoral plans.

Importantly, **Plano Clima provided the basis for the development of Brazil's updated NDC**, which defines the country's mitigation and adaptation targets for 2035 under the Paris Agreement. This alignment has created a **strategic convergence between Brazil's climate objectives under the Paris Agreement and its National Biodiversity Targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD**, highlighting the country's **holistic approach** to addressing the interrelated crises of climate change and biodiversity loss in a synergistic manner.

Important synergies between the plans emerged through the strengthening of policies aimed at halting deforestation and restoring natural ecosystems, which generate co-benefits for both climate change mitigation and adaptation agendas, while also contributing to biodiversity conservation, food and water security — including **biodiversity adaptation** through the maintenance and recovery of **climate refugia** and **landscape connectivity**.

Furthermore, the **design and governance structure** of both policies allow for alignment with sectoral policies. The **Climate Plan is overseen by the Interministerial Commission on Climate Change (CIM)**, while the **NBSAP is guided by the National Biodiversity Commission (CONABIO)**. These cross-sectoral governance platforms help ensure coherence and institutional integration of climate and biodiversity agendas within federal planning.

This Brazilian experience offers a concrete example of how to build integrated environmental policies through participatory and inclusive processes, with strong institutional coordination, and a deliberate effort to bridge climate and biodiversity agendas across all sectors of government.

Case study provided by: Nadinni Sousa, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

Box 5. Case study: Policy coherence across the Rio Conventions: South Africa's approach

Ranked among the megadiverse countries in the world, South Africa's biodiversity and ecosystems provide a range of ecosystem goods and services which benefit human culture, well-being and health, support quality of life and drive economic activity. However, South Africa is not exempt from the effects of global change driving biodiversity loss, namely land degradation, biological invasions and climate change.

In 2023, the South African government adopted its **White Paper on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use** – the guiding policy document for all activities related to biodiversity. The White Paper promotes an integrated and participatory approach to reducing biodiversity loss. It was developed in a thorough consultative process and is informed by both science and concrete experiences from the implementation of activities aimed at the conservation of biodiversity and the enhancement of its resilience over time (**science-policy-practice continuum approach**). As part of exploring policy coherence nationally, South Africa aligned its White Paper with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), developing national targets for implementing the GBF and translating them into implementation strategies that contribute to the objectives of all three Rio Conventions.

In this context, ecosystem restoration through either biodiversity conservation or sustainable land management proved successful as a point of convergence for biodiversity and climate, enhancing the structure and functioning of ecosystems and contributing to carbon dioxide removal and sequestration. A sound foundation is laid to align South Africa's NDC, its NBSAP and its NAP adopting a similar bottom-up approach.

The example of the White Paper has shown that a thorough consultation process with all relevant stakeholders in the spirit of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach requires resources and time, but eventually pays out, providing guidance and ensuring acceptance for its implementation.

Case study provided by: Barney Kgope, DFFE, South Africa

Box 6: Case study: Advancing Policy Coherence in Mexico: Aligning National Biodiversity Targets with Climate Commitments

Context: Mexico's case offers a timely example of how national planning efforts for biodiversity and climate can move towards greater policy coherence. Following the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the Mexican government, through the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), launched a **participatory process to develop National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs)**. The setting is defined by the need to meet international commitments under the CBD and the UNFCCC, as well as to bridge traditionally compartmentalized policy processes. Recognizing the linked nature of the biodiversity and climate crises, Mexico used the target-setting process as a strategic opportunity to foster intersectoral discussion, institutional alignment, and reciprocal accountability, particularly among biodiversity and climate agencies. While SEMARNAT (Mexico's Environmental Ministry) and INECC (National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change) have actively participated in the establishment of Mexico's National Biodiversity Targets, **the next step will be to formalize collaboration between the biodiversity and climate teams**, with the aim to identify possible points of convergence—particularly in terms of finance, governance, monitoring, and reporting—between the ongoing biodiversity process and climate frameworks such as the NAP and the impending NDC 3.0. Creating this space for collaboration is critical to ensuring policy coherence and effective implementation across both environmental objectives.

What worked particularly effectively in Mexico was the use of a whole-of-government approach. The process encompassed over 35 federal government institutions, including significant actors such as the INECC and SEMARNAT's Directorate General for Climate Change Policies (DGPAC). **Technical conversations and intersectoral working groups** enabled the integration of biodiversity and climate concerns from the outset. The "Mexican-Bern" approach, a national adaptation of the Bern Process that emphasizes inclusivity, transparency, and iterative collaboration, helped to develop the process even further. These efforts have helped to ensure that biodiversity targets do not evolve in isolation but are informed by and aligned with existing climate policies, notably Mexico's NDCs. An essential factor contributing to this success has been the involvement of international cooperation partners.

Notably, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through the Early Action Support project, and the International Climate Initiative (IKI), through GIZ, have been indispensable allies in supporting and enabling the actions undertaken by Mexico.

Mexico's efforts provide several **lessons learned**. First, institutional coordination necessitates both a governmental mandate and technical facilitation; CONABIO's leadership under SEMARNAT's umbrella offered the legitimacy required to bring together various stakeholders. Second, constructing technical bridges—such as shared indicator systems, cooperative planning meetings, and capacity-building activities—proved critical in moving beyond discourse to operational coherence. Finally, integrating national target-setting into existing planning tools, such as the next National Development Plan, has created additional momentum for implementation. Other countries may benefit from taking a similar gradual and participative approach, integrating biodiversity and climate not only at the highest levels of strategy but also in day-to-day institutional collaboration. Mexico's experience demonstrates that, while coherence is complex, it can be fostered through **structured processes, inclusive engagement, and a common commitment** to systemic change.

Case study provided by: Andrea Cruz Angón, CONABIO, Mexico

Box 7. Case study: Synergies between biodiversity and climate change at the national level in Thailand

Thailand has revised its 5th NBSAP as a national framework for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. This revision aligns with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), translating 23 global targets into 12 national targets under three strategic areas: (1) Conserve, restore, and eliminate threats (4 targets), (2) Promote the bioeconomy (3 targets), and (3) Enhance capacity and participation (5 targets). The revised NBSAP was approved by the Cabinet on 29 October 2024.

Climate change is addressed under Target 4 of the NBSAP, which aims to reduce threats from climate change and air pollution. In parallel, Thailand developed and submitted its NAP to the UNFCCC in 2024. It identifies six priority sectors, with biodiversity considerations integrated across Natural Resources, Water Resources Management, Tourism, and Agriculture.

The **integration of NAP and NBSAP** is both technical and institutional:

- **Technically**, the NAP includes biodiversity-relevant indicators such as forest cover targets, the Thai Red list of threatened species index, and the Ocean Health Index. Measures also promote Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and other nature-based solutions.
- **Institutionally**, the Department of Climate Change and Environment (DCCE), the UNFCCC focal point, leads the NAP working group. The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), the CBD focal point, leads the natural resources sub-working group and collaborates with other sectoral agencies such as Department of National Park Wildlife and Plant conservation (DNP) and Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR).

Two key factors contributed to the success of Thailand's approach:

- **International cooperation** projects, such as the CCMB project by GIZ, have helped ensure alignment between DCCE's climate work and ONEP's biodiversity targets, facilitating integration between climate adaptation efforts and biodiversity goals. This has enhanced policy coherence and scaled up national-level impact. For example, the CCMB project is currently piloting the implementation of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) for marine and coastal areas. The pilot aims to generate technical and policy analysis to support the design of new or improved policy instruments. Lessons learned from the pilot will be used to develop recommendations for the management plans of marine and coastal OECMs, in collaboration with the implementing agency, DMCR.
- **Functional and inclusive NAP working group**: Though it took time to establish, the working group now ensures that all relevant agencies are informed about climate risks and participate in mainstreaming adaptation measures into sectoral plans. Through this process, data sharing, inter-agency coordination, and consensus-building were strengthened, resulting in practical frameworks with aligned indicators and targets.

Key lessons and recommendations include:

- Establishing cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms such as the NAP working group is essential to promote shared understanding and collective action between climate and biodiversity stakeholders.
- International partnerships can play an enabling role in bridging knowledge gaps and translating project outputs into national policies.
- Embedding biodiversity into climate adaptation planning—both through indicators and measures such as enabling ecosystem services and nature-based solutions, particularly EbA—provides concrete entry points for integrated action.

Challenges remain:

- Limited baseline data on biodiversity and the gap in ecological thresholds for ecosystems and key species hinder effective climate risk assessment, which can help interpret climate risks on biological aspects.
- Resource constraints and the lack of a clear financing mechanism limit the implementation of integrated actions.
- Balancing development priorities, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity conservation remains a challenge.

Moving forward, addressing these issues – particularly in terms of financing and data systems – will be crucial for sustaining policy coherence.

Case study provided by: Teerapong Laopongpith, DCCE, Pattarin Tongsima, ONEP and Pasu Kongapai, GIZ, Thailand

4 Translating international and national targets to local implementation

Tackling the global twin crisis of biodiversity loss and climate change requires well-aligned action on the ground. Therefore, international and national targets need to be reinforced in policies at lower levels and translated to suitable subnational and local implementation measures. At the same time, the needs and requirements of local actors must be known and addressed at higher levels of decision-making in order to create the right enabling conditions for effective implementation. Such vertical integration, combining both top-down and bottom-up components, is key for strengthening coherence across all scales.

The following **steps and approaches** can facilitate vertical integration in the context of biodiversity and climate change policies:

- **Bring together biodiversity and climate actors at all levels.** Facilitate communication and knowledge exchange across the respective government or administrative departments through suitable governance structures (see also section 7 on aligning institutions, especially the German IPBES-IPCC case study in Box 12). Where possible, formalize their collaboration in both the development and the implementation of subnational biodiversity and climate policies, e.g. at state, region, province or municipal scale.
- **Invest in capacity-building.** Provide subnational governments and administrations with the right tools and resources to understand and communicate the complex interactions between biodiversity and climate change, as well as to plan, implement and evaluate synergetic measures. As an inspiring example, subnational actors in Mexico were provided with a dedicated toolbox to support them in biodiversity mainstreaming (see Box 8). See section 8 for more examples.
- **Appoint regional facilitators**. These can serve as a key link between the national and local level, coordinating efforts and sharing knowledge and advice with project leaders on the ground. A good practice example are the regional networks promoting nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation in France, established under the Life ARTISAN project (see Box 9).
- **Co-design policies and make people part of implementation**. Engage local stakeholders as early as possible in the development of subnational biodiversity and climate action plans, to win acceptance and ensure that measures are well-adapted to their respective geographic, ecological, socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Address trade-offs transparently and develop joint solutions to maximize co-benefits and synergies. See section 8 for further details on facilitating stakeholder engagement.
- **Support locally led initiatives.** Start by finding out what is already happening on the ground. Identify local agents of change (e.g. landscape restoration initiatives implementing nature-based solutions) and ask them how they can best be supported. Understand which useful structures, processes or networks have already been established, and how they can be strengthened, formalized or scaled out. Give recognition to local ambassadors and strive to establish long-term, trusted partnerships.
- **Improve accessibility of financial resources to local actors.** Funding programmes should offer a high flexibility for project leaders, to allow for adaptive management. Ensure long-term availability of funds, including for monitoring, evaluation and maintenance tasks. (See also section 6 on financial instruments.)

- **Integrate biodiversity and climate targets into all relevant subnational polices**. Beyond biodiversity and climate policies, this also includes, for example, promoting nature-based solutions in coastal adaptation strategies, enhancing the role of green-blue infrastructure in urban planning, subsidising healthy plant-based meals in public schools, or setting ecological safeguards for the regional expansion of renewable energies. (See also section 5 on cross-sectoral collaboration.)
- **Utilise the concept of nature-based solutions** to translate intentions into concrete actions. NbS can act as operational tools to fulfill national biodiversity and climate commitments through locally relevant projects of various types and scales (like wetland restoration, agroforestry, or unsealing soils). Standards of practice, case studies and criteria for NbS implementation are widely available (e.g. the IUCN Global Standard on NbS).
- **Be conscious of spatial scales**. For example, wetland restoration measures should take the whole catchment into account. Planning measures at landscape level can help to bring together local stakeholders, address multiple land use interests and needs in an integrated manner, and implement holistic nature-based solutions.

Box 8. Case study: A Toolbox for biodiversity mainstreaming in Mexico – Supporting subnational actors

Context: As part of Mexico's efforts to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) collaborated with Expertise France to create a dedicated toolbox to help subnational actors to mainstream biodiversity. One of the most difficult problems in reaching national biodiversity targets is their implementation at the subnational level, where local governments frequently suffer capacity constraints, fragmented institutional duties, and political instability as a result of frequent administrative changes. Recognizing this, CONABIO created an online, modular resource geared primarily toward local governments, technical staff, and decision-makers. The toolbox addresses a vital window of opportunity generated by the need to maintain success over political cycles, offering assistance to help institutionalize biodiversity action in local governance.

What Worked Well? This effort relies on CONABIO's 20-year collaboration with subnational governments through the State Biodiversity Strategies (Estrategias Estatales de Biodiversidad, EEB) Initiative, which promotes local implementation of the CBD. Because of this volunteer effort, CONABIO has collaborated with 28 of Mexico's 32 states, published 28 State of Biodiversity Reports, and supported 19 state biodiversity strategies. Recognizing the need to improve the operationalization of these initiatives, CONABIO co-designed the toolkit with local public policy professionals, many of whom had previously worked as environmental authorities. Their territorial expertise helped design a practical structure, which was subsequently tested with a focus group of contemporary state authorities. Notably, Module VIII focuses on continuity mechanisms, providing practical tools for mitigating institutional discontinuity, including recommendations on internal agreements, stakeholder coalitions, and the formalization of biodiversity roles within local administrations.

Lessons and Recommendations: One of the key takeaways from this instance is the need of creating tools that not only help planning but also promote political durability and institutional memory.

Mexico's toolkit provides a replicable model for other countries looking to turn national biodiversity commitments into long-term subnational action. Its modular structure, based on real-world experience and enriched by continual input, reveals that enabling long-term implementation necessitates more than just technical knowledge; it also necessitates political transition methods. Anchoring the toolbox in current planning tools and utilizing it to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration can considerably increase its effectiveness. Key recommendations for other nations include co-designing content with practitioners, investing in institutional resilience mechanisms such as those described in Module VIII, and ensuring that guidance materials address both the technical and political realities of subnational government. To learn more about this strategy, interested institutions and stakeholders can examine the toolbox, available at: https://cooperacion.conabio.gob.mx/toolbox/.

Case study provided by: Andrea Cruz Angón, CONABIO, Mexico

Box 9. Case study: Regional Facilitation under the Life ARTISAN Project in France

Life ARTISAN is an 8-year project involving 28 French partners. It is designed to promote **Nature-based solutions** (NbS) for climate change adaptation throughout France. To achieve this goal, ARTISAN has three levels of governance: the local level with 10 pilot sites implementing concrete NbS projects, the regional level with 14 regional networks on NbS for climate change adaptation, and finally the national level in charge of studies, tools, training, events, support for national policies related to biodiversity and adaptation, and coordination of all partners. These three levels are interconnected.

Regional facilitation quickly proved to be one of the most significant levers for spreading a "culture of NbS" among decision-makers and administrative staff. As a result, they are more likely to consider projects to restore or preserve ecosystems with the aim of reducing climate risks, before considering civil engineering solutions, which are of course sometimes necessary and unavoidable to protect lives and infrastructure.

Thanks to regional events, workshops, training courses, technical exchange days and numerous interventions with local players (particularly local authorities), regional coordinators have been able to reach over 20,000 people in 4 years, create a regional dynamic between biodiversity and climate players around NbS, integrate these solutions into calls for projects and planning documents, advise project leaders in their search for funding and ensure the quality of projects.

Although they had difficulty in mobilizing stakeholders at the start of the project in 2020, they now feel that the notion of NbS is relatively well understood and that they can focus their efforts on how to implement them. The fact that these facilitators themselves form a network, led by the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB), is a success factor, as they have been able to strengthen their mutual knowledge, share their difficulties and exchange tools and good practices developed locally. They have also contributed to a number of deliverables produced at national level, enriching them with regional success stories and ensuring that these products are relevant to local authorities and actors wishing to implement NbS.

The presence of **ARTISAN pilot sites** in their regions has enabled regional facilitators to observe the real obstacles and levers to implementing NbS projects, which has also helped them to raise awareness.

What's more, the project leaders from the pilot sites have become true ambassadors for NbS, and their elected representatives frequently talk to other elected representatives about their positive experiences. On the other hand, the link between the regional and the national levels has also enabled advocacy work with national institutions, which has increased the visibility and impact of the regional facilitator work. The Ministry of the Environment, itself a member of the ARTISAN project, has taken up the subject and is now helping to maintain NbS facilitation in the regions. This subtle **multi-level cooperation** has provided concrete avenues for improving coherence between biodiversity and climate policies at local level and national levels (notably the French NAP).

In 2026, the regional facilitator posts will evolve towards more thematic positions, more specific to regional issues, and will focus more on project support, in order to further spread NbS and accelerate the implementation of projects aimed at reducing the climate risks faced by regional inhabitants and players, and to which the authorities have to respond.

Case study provided by: Amaury Parelle and Natalia Rodríguez Ramirez, OFB, France

5 Aligning sectoral policies beyond biodiversity and climate

Aligning sectoral policies to leverage positive outcomes for biodiversity and climate has multiple dimensions. It includes integrating different economic and societal sectors when designing and implementing climate and biodiversity policies. It also involves mainstreaming biodiversity and climate aspects in different sector policies as well as fostering cooperation among different sectors to support environmental and social goals.

It is crucial to coordinate the policies and activities of sectors such as energy, transportation, water, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, nutrition, trade, and finance, ensuring that they do not harm the climate or biodiversity but support its protection, restoration and/or sustainable use instead. For example, a forestry policy should consider greenhouse gas sink function and biodiversity of forests; a transportation policy promoting electric vehicles should be complemented by energy policies that support renewable energy sources, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting ecosystems. By creating coherence across sectors, countries can avoid conflicting objectives, maximize positive impacts for biodiversity and climate, recognize sectoral interconnectedness, increase efficiency, and ultimately promote sustainable development. This requires identifying both synergies and conflicts, as well as addressing them in inclusive and participatory processes that acknowledge the diversity of perspectives, knowledge systems and values. Jointly developing a shared vision and instruments creates ownership over both the strategies and their implementation (Cardona Santos et al. 2023). Assigning clear responsibilities across sectors and levels increases effectiveness in implementation (Sarkki et al. 2016).

To identify and utilize entry points to reach alignment between sectoral policies and biodiversity and climate goals the following **steps and approaches** could be taken:

- **Conduct a comprehensive assessment:** Begin by analysing existing policies across sectors to identify overlaps, gaps, conflicts, and potential synergies with both biodiversity and climate objectives. Understanding the current institutional landscape, as well as risks, opportunities and benefits related to biodiversity and climate, helps in designing targeted interventions and to increase the evidence base – as demonstrated by the FAO projects described in Box 10 below or the case study from Madagascar in Box 3.
- **Foster cross-sector collaboration:** Create platforms or committees that bring together representatives from different sectors, ministries and agencies – including environment, agriculture, energy, water, security, and urban planning. Regular communication and joint planning from the beginning help to create cohesive strategies and policies that address multiple goals simultaneously. The cross-sectoral working group established in Mexico (Box 6), the cross-sectoral governance structures overseeing the implementation of Brazil's climate plan and NBSAP (Box 4), as well as Thailand's NAP working group (Box 7), are inspiring examples of successful coordination mechanisms.
- **Develop integrated policy frameworks:** Design overarching policies or master plans that coordinate policies across sectors to maximize synergies and explicitly incorporate biodiversity and climate considerations. This might involve updating existing policies or creating new ones that set clear, measurable goals. Prescribe cross-checking for compliance and synergies with other policies when developing new policies or legislation. A prominent example of seeking alignment with other sectors is the EU Nature Restoration Regulation[5], adopted in 2024.
- **Implement incentive mechanisms:** Introduce financial incentives like grants, subsidies, or tax breaks for practices that promote sustainability and motivate sectors to adopt environmentally friendly approaches. For example, supporting farmers who adopt conservation agriculture or businesses investing in renewable energy. (See section 6 for further details on financial instruments.)
- **Establish regulatory measures:** Set regulations and standards that enforce environmentally friendly practices and promote biodiversity and climate resilience, such as protected areas, emission limits, or land-use planning and restrictions. Ensure these regulations are aligned across sectors to prevent conflicting policies. Revise and develop new legislation to eliminate harmful subsidies (see also Box 11 on harmful subsidies).
- **Build capacity and raise awareness:** Train policymakers, stakeholders, and communities on the importance of integrated approaches. Education fosters support and encourages adoption of sustainable practices. Mexico's toolbox for subnational governments provides an example for this (see Box 8), for more details see section 8 of this paper.
- **Develop monitoring and evaluation systems:** Create integrated data collection, monitoring and reporting systems to track progress across sectors, identify success factors, conflicts or gaps, and adjust policies accordingly to stay aligned with biodiversity and climate targets. Use data to adjust policies and strategies as needed.

[5] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-regulation_en

- **Engage stakeholders and the public:** Involve sub-national entities, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, businesses, NGOs, and civil society in planning and decision-making across all sectors. Their participation ensures diverse perspectives and that policies are practical, equitable, and supported. (See section 8 for further details.)
- **Pilot and scale up:** Start with pilot projects to test integrated approaches, learn from experiences, and then expand successful strategies more broadly.

Box 10. Case study: Policy coherence in agrifood systems

Context: The transformation of agrifood systems can support the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity while also achieving synergies with climate change mitigation and adaptation and ensuring food security and nutrition. However, agrifood stakeholders remain insufficiently involved in the development and implementation of national climate and biodiversity policies, such as NDCs and NBSAPs. Many strategies continue to focus primarily on conservation, often neglecting the sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources across key sectors such as crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.

The **FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors** seeks to reverse this trend by promoting sustainable agricultural practices that reduce negative impacts on biodiversity and contribute to its conservation, enhancement, and restoration. This work is led by the FAO Biodiversity Mainstreaming Unit, which supports member countries in developing policies, action plans, and technical standards that encourage the sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture. The Unit is implementing the project "*Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors"* in Lao People's Democratic Republic, Uganda, and Madagascar.

Action taken: In Madagascar for example, the project conducted a comprehensive analysis of national policies, strategies, and action plans to evaluate the integration of biodiversity in agrifood systems, identify gaps and inconsistencies, and explore opportunities to align biodiversity objectives with agriculture, climate, and land degradation priorities. This analysis was jointly led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, with technical support from FAO. To strengthen the role of agrifood stakeholders in policy development, a series of **nationwide workshops** engaged 323 stakeholders, including other ministries, local authorities, civil society organizations, and farmers. The analysis reviewed 40 policy documents relevant to the crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and aquaculture sectors, as well as those related to sustainable land management and climate change. It included a review of the level of alignment with the three Rio Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD), and of interactions between national policies and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The findings revealed that many agrifood policies do not explicitly address biodiversity or recognize its role in food and agriculture. The analysis also found that the two other Rio Conventions (UNFCCC and UNCCD) are not fully considered in the national agrifood sector framework documents. Based on these gaps, the analysis recommended **enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration**, and the revision of agrifood sector policy and strategy documents to align them with the GBF and other national documents such as the NDC and NAP.

The policy analysis culminated in the publication of a "**Roadmap on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors**[6]", which was formally endorsed by the three collaborating ministries. The Roadmap outlines strategic priorities to integrate biodiversity considerations into agricultural sector policies and practices and serves as a **guiding framework for aligning national efforts with international biodiversity commitments**, both at the policy and field level. It has since been referenced in Madagascar's national biodiversity targets and is informing the ongoing revision of the country's NBSAP.

Key lessons learned include the value of cross-sectoral collaboration, evidenced by the **joint endorsement of the Roadmap** by the three ministries, and the importance of inclusive, multi-stakeholder processes and awareness raising on the role of biodiversity for food and agriculture. The formal endorsement of the Roadmap by multiple ministries underscores the government's commitment and provides a model for other countries seeking to promote the sustainable use of biodiversity across development sectors through **coordinated, participatory action**.

Case study provided by: Imogen Brierley and Richard Niyomugabo, FAO

6 Strengthening policy coherence through financial instruments

Policy outcomes and impacts are strongly dependent on the resources allocated to a policy's implementation. Financial instruments are thus one of the cross-cutting levers that can help promote policy coherence between biodiversity and climate, as they shape the way policies are implemented.

Across the Rio Conventions, Parties have agreed upon ambitious mobilisation targets to protect and restore nature and human livelihoods. More funding overall is needed to meet these targets and tackle the multiple crises, and it needs to be optimised to be more efficient and leverage co-benefits and synergies while minimising trade-offs.

There are opportunities and **entry points** for policymakers and other actors at all levels that can support policy coherence for biodiversity and climate **using financial instruments**:

- **Align and re-focus international financing:** Coherence at the international level promotes coherence nationally. International financial institutions, including multilateral funds and development banks, should coordinate their funding portfolios, investment priorities and criteria to promote synergies for biodiversity and climate and eliminate trade-offs, accelerating the implementation of integrated response actions as identified in the IPBES Nexus Assessment addressing water, food, health, biodiversity, and climate (IPBES 2024a). The Secretariats of the Rio Conventions, as well as other relevant international actors, should develop guidance for countries to coherently develop their national financing plans and strategies.

[6] FAO Roadmap on Mainstreaming Biodiversity: https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/GSP/INSII/extra/Intégrale_Feuille_de_route_Madagascar_VF_compressed.pdf

- **Align national budgeting:** Governments should align national budget allocations for different sectors to promote policy coherence for biodiversity and climate, including the respective targets and indicators. Madagascar, for example, is envisaging a green budgeting approach by applying a specific nomenclature allowing for the identification, monitoring and evaluation of expenditures related to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- **Make public funding coherent:** Governments should design public funding programmes to promote coherence and synergies for biodiversity and climate, while excluding funding for siloed activities that produce negative trade-offs. A dedicated funding programme focusing on biodiversity and climate, such as the Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity (ANK) in Germany (see Box 12) or Slovenia's National Climate Fund (see Box 13), promotes synergies at the level of implementation and can help enhance awareness and acceptance among stakeholders.
- **Funding mechanisms should consider spatial and temporal scales** as well as different budgetary requirements, allowing support for small, medium and large projects as well as for short-, mid- or long-term processes; for instance, with its ANK, Germany combines a range of different funding tools for a variety of target groups. Overall, a landscape finance approach, as suggested by Bertels et al. (2023), can help coordinate funding mechanisms of different scales, increase resilience and maximise synergies for biodiversity, climate and society.
- **Create impact through small grants for local actors:** As outlined in section 4 above, the implementation of policies cannot be successful without local actors, and consequently they also play an important role promoting coherence. Experiences e.g. from the German ANK demonstrate that small-scale, easily accessible financial support for local governments and communities can have a great impact promoting measures for biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation/mitigation, and that the demand for such grants is high. Key success factors are simplified administrative processes, easy-to-use reporting formats and accompanying targeted capacity-building measures.
- **Enhance sustainability of funding:** Experience has shown that not only overly complicated bureaucratic procedures, but also a lack of human resources limits the capacities of local governments to access funding and implement activities. Project-based funding must therefore be complemented by sustainable, long-term funding for administrative staff working in the environment sector at the local level.

- **Encourage private sector engagement:** Experiences from NbS projects in the Alpine region have demonstrated that a combination of public funding and private resources can be a success factor (see Marzelli et al., 2025, for details). In order to diversify funding sources, the private sector should be involved to complement (but not replace or reduce!) public funding and should be supported to develop funding approaches that promote synergies for biodiversity and climate. Governments can provide support by identifying suitable entry points (e.g. ecosystem restoration), help attract investments by promoting valuation of ecosystem services and assist by de-risking. When developing strategies for private sector involvement, make sure to leverage existing trends and initiatives, such as the increased investment in restoration in the insurance sector (see e.g. the Nature Restoration & Conservation Insurance Initiative led by SCOR[7]).
- **Develop sustainable finance taxonomies** that include both biodiversity and climate aspects, providing guidance for investors to support biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and promote synergies between them. Climate is often part of taxonomies in infrastructure, fisheries etc., but biodiversity is often neglected.
- **Eliminate harmful subsidies:** Governments should create legal obligations across sectors to reduce, and eventually eliminate, environmentally harmful subsidies in annual budget allocations, following up on international commitments e.g. under the Paris agreement and GBF (see also Box 11). This requires the effective involvement of the ministry of finance and other relevant sector ministries (e.g. agriculture, transport) and must be complemented by other fiscal measures to ensure livelihood security, such as tax incentives for biodiversity- and climate-friendly practices or payments for ecosystem services. International backing can be leveraged e.g. from the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action[8], which has been joined by more than 90 countries since its launch in 2019.
- **Engage all stakeholders and communicate well:** Ownership and political will at all levels is key for policy coherence to play out – this is also true for financial approaches and instruments. Budgeting strategies, public funding programmes, approaches promoting private sector involvement and fiscal reforms all require well-designed communication and participation strategies from the onset. The implementation of measures relies on political will and acceptance at the local level; for instance, Germany's attempt at reducing fossil fuel subsidies in the farming sector remained unsuccessful also due to shortcomings in communication and involvement of affected stakeholders. For more details on communication, see section 8.

Box 11: The case for reducing harmful subsidies – global facts and figures

According to the IPBES Transformative Change Assessment (IPBES 2024b), explicit subsidies to sectors directly driving nature's decline ranged between $1.4 and $3.3 trillion for 2023. This includes $440-1260 billion granted to the fossil fuel sector and $520-851 billion to the agricultural sector, followed by infrastructure, forestry and fishery subsidies.

[7] Nature Restoration and Conservation Insurance Initiative: https://www.scor.com/en/nature-restoration-conservation-insurance-initiative
[8] Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action: https://www.financeministersforclimate.org/

The same economic sectors create environmental impacts in the form of air and water pollution or soil degradation that are not accounted for in market exchanges (i.e., they generate negative externalities), and that were estimated to amount to $10.7 trillion per year in 2023. Our current economic system therefore drives the destruction of nature, despite depending on it - over half of the global GDP ($105.6 trillion annually) is generated by sectors moderately or highly dependent on nature. Global spendings for biodiversity conservation only amounted to $135-156 billion in 2023 (IPBES 2024b).

Target 18 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework aims to reduce harmful incentives by at least $500 billion per year by 2030, and to scale up positive incentives for biodiversity. This is mirrored by the decision on the first global stocktake of the UNFCCC (2023), where Parties agreed to take actions to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies as soon as possible.

Box 12: Case Study: German Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity

Context: Recognizing the need to tackle the biodiversity and climate crisis in synergy, the German government adopted the Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity (Aktionsprogramm Natürlicher Klimaschutz – ANK) in 2023. The ANK aims to significantly improve the general condition of ecosystems in Germany, by strengthening their resilience, restoration and protection. It includes 69 measures within a total of ten fields of action, such as peatlands, forests, wilderness and urban areas. The ANK aims to provide financial incentives for the voluntary implementation of nature-based climate action at scale, while also supporting education and information activities, large research projects and monitoring. From 2024 to 2028, a total of 3.5 billion EUR is earmarked for its implementation.

Implementation structures: A variety of institutions are involved in the ANK's implementation. The Action Plan was developed in lead by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMUKN). The Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) guides its implementation, supported by an interdisciplinary Scientific Advisory Board. In October 2023, the Centre of Competence for Nature-based Climate Action (KNK) was established as a central focal point for topics related to nature-based climate action in Germany. The KNK coordinates advice on nature-based climate action at federal level, offers information about available funding, provides science-based subject-specific information, and organises networking events for stakeholders and interested parties. One of its functions is to offer advice about the various ANK funding programmes, which are rolled out through different funding banks or other partners. Moreover, hitherto thirteen ANK regional offices were set up at the level of the federal states in 2025, serving as focal points for regional and local stakeholders. These will play a key role in further raising awareness and acceptance for nature-based climate action, providing information and advice, and helping to promote best practices.

What worked well? The ANK is unique in promoting NbS for climate and biodiversity holistically and at scale, based on sound science and backed by substantial federal funding. Its implementation measures are complemented by a range of public outreach activities, networking events and capacity building offers.

Both the KNK and the ANK regional offices stand ready to provide information and support to a wide range of stakeholders, aiming to engage with federal, state and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, researchers, land users, land owners, and the wider public.

As of May 2025, a total of 16 ANK funding programmes were launched and more than 9.000 projects accepted. Support is provided, for example, to local actors striving to rewet peatlands, agricultural businesses purchasing soil conserving machinery, or municipalities implementing nature-based climate action. In the latter case, municipal authorities are offered grants covering up to 90% of implementation costs. The demand has been so high that this programme was recently extended with a second funding call focusing on unsealing land.

Case study provided by: Simone Wulf, BfN and Maika Müller, KNK

Box 13. Case study: The Slovenian National Climate Fund: investing in our future

Slovenia, a geographically diverse European country of high biological and ecological diversity, is experiencing the tangible impacts of climate change, which are already altering ecological balances and natural carbon sinks. The climate change prognoses indicate an escalating threat to Slovenia's diverse ecosystems and their endemic species, from the delicate Alpine habitats and vast forests to the unique Karst landscape.

Recognizing this imperative, Slovenia has established its **National Climate Fund** as a dedicated financial mechanism to address the pressing challenges of climate change and accelerate mitigation and adaptation.

The National Climate Fund was established under the **Environmental Protection Act** and has been a vital financial instrument in Slovenia since 2013. The Climate Fund is governed and managed by the ministry responsible for climate, energy and environment, involving other key national government ministries and agencies. This national structure ensures that the allocation of funds and the decision-making processes for project funding are aligned with Slovenia's overarching climate policies and are conducted with transparency and accountability to the Slovenian public.

The **revenues of the fund are generated from carbon taxes** and its primary objectives are to support Slovenia in achieving its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and to enhance the nation's resilience to the unavoidable impacts of climate change across various sectors. The amount of available funds can vary depending on the price of CO2 allowances in the carbon market of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS); its annual budget usually ranges between 150 and 200 million EUR. The fund places a strong focus on decarbonisation, but adaptation and disaster risk reduction – about 20% of the budget – are becoming increasingly important. The fund prioritizes key thematic areas, including the deployment of renewable energy sources, enhancing energy efficiency in buildings, promoting sustainable transport, supporting more climate-resilient agriculture and forestry, managing water resources effectively, and, crucially, supporting the conservation of Slovenia's rich biodiversity.

Adaptation to climate change is predominantly supported through measures of flood risk management, climate-resilient agriculture and forestry, and a variety of biodiversity-related projects tailored to the nation's unique ecological context. These include measures to manage the impacts of climate change on inland and coastal wetlands, the prevention and control of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, enhancing and evaluating ecosystem services, measures to conserve and restore extensive grasslands, research and monitoring of biodiversity changes across Slovenia etc. **Nature-based solutions**, dedicated to flood risk management and biodiversity, particularly in low-lying coastal areas which provide flood protection from the acceleration of sea-level rise for species and people, are supported through the climate fund, alongside traditional activities such as salt production.

In conclusion, integrating biodiversity conservation into Slovenia's national climate action efforts is paramount for a sustainable future. Despite the progress, Slovenia faces challenges in effectively funding biodiversity through the National Climate Fund, such as balancing priorities with other climate action areas. Through continued commitment and strategic investment, while recognizing the role that healthy ecosystems play in mitigating and adapting to climate change, Slovenia can forge a path towards a climate resilient and environmentally sound future for generations to come.

Case study provided by: Katja Vrtovec, Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia

7 Aligning institutions to promote policy coherence

Governmental institutions (ministries, agencies, local authorities etc.) and associated structures (public research institutions, science-policy platforms etc.) play a crucial role in fostering policy coherence as they steer the design, implementation and regulation of policies, laws, and administration. Aligning institutions for biodiversity and climate policy coherence should include the inter-department alignment within governments at all levels (see section 5) as well as public-private and science-policy alignment in order to support governments technically and scientifically and to ensure coherent, informed and science-based decisions. Furthermore, institutions at the national and subnational levels can promote climate and biodiversity policy coherence particularly when processes at the international level are too slow or fail to do so.

By building on the existing institutional landscape, aiming for a better institutional alignment must not always be costly, especially when such processes are complemented by a strong and clear mandate that prevents duplication of work. For the coordination across institutions challenges occur mainly because institutions “think” and work only within their own space using different languages (i.e. definitions) and/or different data or monitoring systems.

For the further alignment and coordination of institutions in favour of biodiversity and climate policy coherence, the **following recommendations** can be made:

- **Support institutions through strong political will**, particularly at the highest level, and a shared vision within and across institutions to ensure that biodiversity and climate policies are mutually supportive and to promote collaboration.

- **Equip institutions with a clear and strong mandate:** All stakeholders should know the specific scope of their mandate within the institutional arrangement. The clearer the scope of the mandate, the better institutions can support governments. A strong mandate can lead to more resilience and continuity within and across institutions to promote policy coherence when facing changing political situations. The German Coordination Offices for IPBES and IPCC provide an example for a solid and continued institutional arrangement fostering policy-science cooperation (see Box 15). The establishment of the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Environment (CIME) in Madagascar (see Box 3) demonstrates how intersectoral institutions can support ministries to foster policy coherence.
- **Support regional networking and cultural as well as technical exchanges** across institutions at all levels to promote the alignment of language, data and monitoring systems.
- **Strive for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches** to support decision-making. In this way, possible trade-offs can be identified and reduced and negative effects on certain social groups can be minimized
- **Facilitate information exchange and data access** across institutions. The centralisation and accessibility of data is key to ensure both effective learning and accountability (Cardona Santos et al. 2023). The integrated decision-support system SIIVRA in Colombia provides an example for collaboration across governmental research institutes, building on up-to-date biodiversity and climate data (see Box 14).
- **Promote adaptive learning.** Enabling structured learning processes—through regular review of implementation, outcomes, and impacts—allows for timely adjustments and continuous improvement. This requires effective monitoring and evaluation to track progress. Joint learning across institutions, sectors, disciplines and segments of society fosters innovation, strengthens accountability, and ensures that actions remain aligned with evolving knowledge, priorities, and conditions.
- **Align funding and join forces.** Balancing institutional resources as well as co-funding of institutions by different ministries can help foster power parity and coherent agendas. The German Coordination Offices for IPBES and IPCC serve as an example for aligned co-funding for institutions through different ministries (see Box 15).

Box 14. Case study: The Integrated System of Vulnerability, Risk, and Adaptation to Climate Change (SIIVRA) – bringing together biodiversity and climate data in Colombia

The Integrated System of Vulnerability, Risk, and Adaptation to Climate Change (SIIVRA) is a key **tool for decision-making related to biodiversity and climate change** in Colombia. Developed by the government Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM) and supported by other National Environmental System (SINA) institutes, this system helps assess the potential impacts of climate change on species distribution and ecosystem services. The SIIVRA integrates various **bioclimatic models**, using biodiversity data (such as species of agricultural, cultural, and endemic interest) and climate grids (temperature and precipitation) to prioritize species based on their vulnerability. The Humboldt Institute on Biological Resources Research contributes to the biological components of this tool, especially in defining species priorities and modelling impacts on biodiversity.

The SIIVRA provides a detailed set of **functionalities in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services**. It identifies species of fauna and flora that may be negatively impacted by climate change and highlights invasive species that could potentially benefit from altered environmental conditions. Additionally, the system recognizes the **socio-ecological conditions** and characteristics that make certain ecosystems more susceptible to the effects of climate change. This includes understanding the vulnerabilities of socio-cultural, political, and administrative systems, which play a critical role in managing and responding to environmental challenges.

In its **assessment of climate change**, SIIVRA also allows for the evaluation of progress in climate adaptation efforts. The system includes fine-scale **species vulnerability maps**, developed in collaboration with the Humboldt Institute, that offer detailed coverage at the municipal level in Colombia. These maps are generated from distribution models and serve as the foundation for the development of vulnerability indicators. As part of the update to the Comprehensive Territorial Climate Change Management Plans, these maps will provide vital data for improving climate resilience across the country. The SIIVRA continues to support decision-making processes related to the conservation of biodiversity and the adaptation of ecosystems and communities to climate change impacts.

Case study provided by: Carlos Adolfo Hernandez Mercado, Humboldt Institute, Colombia

Box 15. Case study: Cooperation between the German national coordination offices for IPBES and IPCC

This case study illustrates the institutional arrangements in Germany for scientific and technical matters related to IPBES and IPCC, which support policy coherence for addressing biodiversity issues and climate change.

The **German coordination offices for IPBES and IPCC**, established in 2014 and 1998, respectively, are hosted by the DLR Project Management Agency (DLR-PT) in Bonn and Berlin. They support the German government on the basis of robust science on climate and biodiversity. Both coordination offices are mandated and co-funded by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and the respective National Focal Points (NFPs): Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN) for IPBES, and Federal Foreign Office (AA) for IPCC.

Since their establishment, the two national coordination offices have been in close contact and are effectively coordinating the implementation of the following objectives: Facilitate the assessment and transfer of the policy-relevant knowledge on biodiversity and climate change, including the consideration of other relevant knowledge systems as appropriate, into policy processes; Promote the scientific quality of IPBES and IPCC assessment reports; Communicate the findings of IPBES and IPCC, e. g. translate the approved Summaries for Policymakers (SPM) of IPBES and IPCC into German; Strengthen the contribution of research in Germany to both processes, e. g. also by communicating knowledge needs.

To this end, they:

- Scientifically advise and assist the German Government on all IPBES and IPCC-related matters;
- Support researchers and early career individuals in Germany in contributing to IPBES and IPCC as authors, experts or fellows
- Continuously inform national policy and science fora as well as other stakeholders about procedures and activities of both processes as well as facilitate access to IPBES and IPCC products

The German IPBES and IPCC coordination offices thus promote the integration of national expertise into international scientific assessments of climate change and biodiversity issues and disseminate respective results of IPBES and IPCC to the German public.

The two national coordination offices have **jointly provided scientific and technical support** to the German government, thereby emphasizing the interconnectedness of the acute crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. Their **solid mandates** and continued engagement with the policy fora and national expert communities have fostered the development of sustainable and strong national knowledge-sharing networks which contribute significantly to activities of IPBES and IPCC. As the procedures and structures of the IPCC and IPBES differ slightly, both coordination offices work together to continuously raise awareness of these differences in the science and policy forums and **ensure mutual understanding** of each other's processes. This helps identifying opportunities for coherent science-policy work on biodiversity and climate change.

This case study shows that developing and aligning national institutional arrangements to promote policy coherence on biodiversity, climate or other related environmental issues within existing institutional settings can be a very effective and efficient approach to provide long-term scientific and technical support to a government in its science policy deliberations.

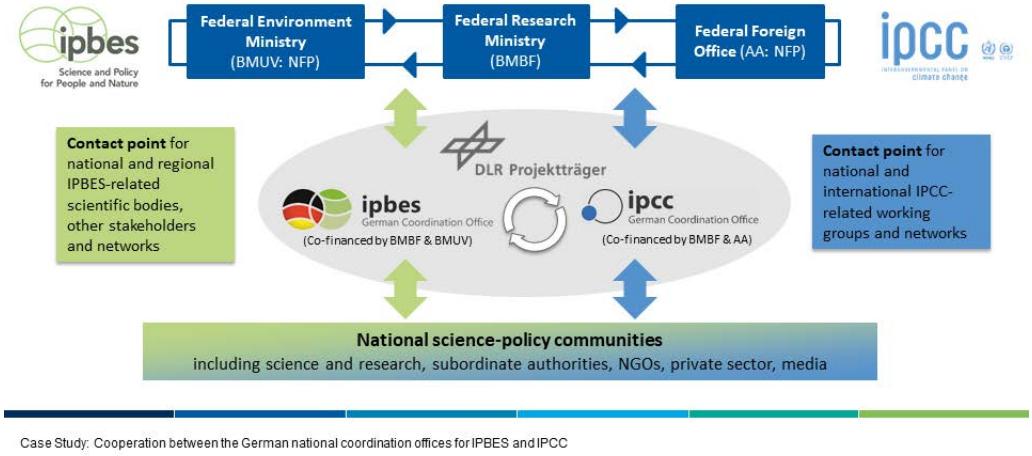

Figure 1. Schematic description of how the IPBES and IPCC national coordination offices provide scientific and technical services to the German government.

Case study provided by: Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, IPBES Coordination Office, and Thomas Reineke, IPCC Coordination Office, Germany

8 Raising awareness, building capacities, facilitating engagement and improving communication

It has become clear throughout the previous sections of this paper that policy coherence can only be achieved when the key actors and stakeholders are involved, equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, and committed to the endeavour. A strategic approach to communication, awareness raising and capacity-building is therefore indispensable when aiming for policy coherence at all levels and across different sectors.

The success of **engaging government actors** in the alignment of structures and processes relies on their comprehension of biodiversity and climate issues, but also on their attitudes and interests. Awareness-raising and capacity-building for policymakers on the interdependencies between biodiversity and climate change and their implications for different sectors can foster greater understanding of the need for policy coherence. This is particularly important to bridge knowledge gaps across sectors and levels of governance. To be effective, joint efforts should be designed in a strategic manner, backed by an assessment of vested interests and pathways of influence, as well as dialogue and negotiations fostering mutual understanding and the development of joint visions, and hands-on support.

Recommendations here include:

- **Start by understanding interests, attitudes, needs and barriers**. When certain actors (policymakers, institutions, or entire sectors) show reluctance to engage in alignment efforts, it is important to find out why. Directly exploring their perspectives can uncover barriers and help find actionable solutions to promote joint work for policy coherence.
- **Provide tailored training to government officials.** Help expand their comprehension of biodiversity and climate issues and offer the right tools and tailor-made support for the concrete challenges they are facing in their work. As one example, the nature conservation agency Natural England employed climate change coaches to provide training modules and help its staff feel more comfortable and equipped for climate influencing, developing a range of helpful soft skills and educating internal climate coaches. The Mexican biodiversity mainstreaming toolbox (see Box 8) provides another inspiring example of an online training tailored to local governments and technical staff.
- **Provide sector-specific guidance.** This could include guidance on access to funding, technical expertise, or achieving co-benefits in target setting. Such support can make cross-sector collaboration more feasible and appealing.
- **Explore the potential of complementary tools for gaining interest and support:** funding dedicated research, tailored and less conventional communication tools and engagement formats (participatory story-telling, landscape walks, art-based approaches etc.)

Yet, coherent policy-making for biodiversity and climate needs to go even further – beyond the **whole-of-government approach towards a whole-of-society approach**. Successful implementation of any policy greatly depends on its societal acceptance. While investing in communication, stakeholder engagement and policy co-design may require additional resources upfront, these investments ultimately streamline implementation, minimize trade-offs, and

lead to more impactful and sustainable outcomes[9]. The following recommendations can provide guidance for this:

- **Make people part of the process** by promoting inclusive governance. Engage all relevant stakeholders and knowledge holders from different sectors, disciplines and segments of society as early as possible in policy development, throughout implementation and in revision processes. Acknowledge and integrate their different forms of knowledge. Bring Indigenous Peoples and local communities to the table and ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are suitably addressed in policy decisions. Communicate trade-offs transparently and develop joint solutions for a just transition (see section 4 for details on engaging local stakeholders).
- **Re-think consultation.** Where possible, move beyond formal consultation procedures in policy-making for biodiversity and climate. Instead, aim for active participation and even co-design to promote a sense of ownership, establishing meaningful two-way communication through dialogue formats, workshops, iterative processes etc. A good-practice example is the development of the German National Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, for which participation of the public and stakeholders played a central role throughout the process. This participatory approach will be continued as the key principle during its implementation, i.e. through dialogue and target-oriented communication addressing both relevant stakeholders und the public. South Africa's White Paper on the conservation and sustainable use of its biodiversity, too, underwent a thorough and iterative consultation process before being adopted by the cabinet (see Box 5).
- **Ensure the uptake of recommendations** emerging from participatory processes. Dialogue alone, without systematic and institutionalized mechanisms to integrate recommendations into policymaking, undermines both the willingness to participate and the sense of ownership over implementation.
- **Provide information and support to agents of change.** This includes concrete information on how to access funding and other assistance. For example, the French ARTISAN project (see Box 9) has developed a well-designed communication strategy engaging actors across the sub-regional and local levels, providing hands-on advice, concrete examples and networks to initiate and support projects that promote synergies for biodiversity and climate. For instance, each nature-based solution presented at its interactive website[10] includes concrete case studies of how it can be implemented, cost estimations and recommendations for funding sources. The Competence Center of the German ANK (see Box 12) can serve as an additional example.
- **Demonstrate benefits.** Assess and widely communicate the multiple socio-economic benefits of proposed synergetic measures. Nature-based solutions are often especially suitable for this, since they can yield a wide range of co-benefits. Showcase and give recognition to successful examples (e.g. demonstration sites) to gain acceptance for scaling up action.

[9] This is also in the call for a "global mutirão" introduced in the second letter of the UNFCCC COP30 President in May 2025: https://cop30.br/en/news-about-cop30-amazonia/second-letter-from-the-cop30-presidency-moves-from-vision-to-action-with-details-on-the-call-for-a-global-mutirao-against-climate-change

[10] https://fr.zone-secure.net/170194/2079850/%22%20/l%20%22page=12

- **Cultivate champions.** When it comes to the demonstration of benefits, a communication strategy sensitive to specific target groups, and building on trust among peers, is key. This includes involving members of these very target groups as "champions" to support communication within their networks. For instance, farmers are often best placed to inspire replication from other farmers, and forest owners can best convince other forest owners, based on their shared subjective realities, priorities and ways of communication.
- **Build a joint vision of the future.** Consider investing into a wider societal dialogue to discuss the interconnected challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change and develop a joint vision for a more sustainable future. Such a widely accepted guiding vision would be a powerful tool for aligning policies and achieving true and meaningful coherence. The IPBES Transformative Change Assessment (IPBES 2024b) provides details on how such joint visions can facilitate transformative change.

9 Conclusions

The interdependent emergencies of biodiversity loss and climate change urgently demand an integrated policy response. Promising examples of initiatives to improve policy coherence exist. Yet, more must be done to streamline and up-scale them, especially through strategic communication with relevant actors and stakeholders and by showcasing successful approaches. This discussion paper aims to contribute to this process by highlighting international case studies across different levels of governance.

Drawing on international examples and case studies, the paper identified key success factors for realizing policy coherence. These include the coordination of policy cycles, the alignment of relevant legal frameworks, institutional alignment, integrated assessments and the development of integrated monitoring and reporting systems at the international and national levels. Aligned financial instruments and incentive structures can further catalyse coherent action and ensure the sustainability of interventions.

The importance of capacity-building, stakeholder engagement, and the empowerment of local actors has emerged as a recurring theme, underscoring the need for both top-down guidance and bottom-up innovation. Stakeholder engagement across policy and institutional divides appeared as the dominant factor for successful policy coherence. Countries would benefit from practical guidance on how to efficiently and effectively design and set up such meaningful stakeholder engagement processes. Striving for whole-of-government and whole-of society approaches is ambitious, but it has proven necessary in complex settings.

Ecosystem restoration emerged as a prominent sector of convergence to achieve both climate and biodiversity objectives. The implementation of nature-based solutions is a practical and effective operational tool to harness synergies, translating high-level commitments into tangible outcomes on the ground.

Ultimately, achieving policy coherence is not a one-off task but an ongoing process that requires political will, robust institutional mandates, and a culture of collaboration across disciplines and sectors. The experiences and case studies presented here offer concrete entry points and recommendations for national policymakers seeking to strengthen synergies between biodiversity and climate agendas. By learning from these examples and investing in mechanisms that foster integration, countries can move closer to addressing the root causes of these crises and building a resilient, sustainable future for both people and nature.

List of case studies

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)
ANK	Aktionsprogramm Natürlicher Klimaschutz – Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity (Germany)
BfN	Bundesamt für Naturschutz - German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Forschung, Technologie und Raumfahrt - German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space
BMUKN	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Klimaschutz, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit - German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCMB	Climate, Coastal and Marine Biodiversity
CI	Conservation International
CLIMSES	Climate Solutions & Ecosystem Services Unit (Spain)
CNCP	Climate-Nature Coordination Platform
CONABIO Brazil	National Biodiversity Commission
CONABIO Mexico	National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
DCCE	Department of Climate Change and Environment (Thailand)
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (South Africa)
DG ENV	Directorate General for Environment (European Union)
DGPAC	Directorate General for Climate Change Policies (Mexico)
DLR-PT	Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e.V. Projektträger (German Project Management Agency)
DMCR	Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (Thailand)
DNP	Department of National Park Wildlife and Plant Conservation (Thailand)
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation

ENACT	Enhancing Nature-based Solutions for an Accelerated Climate Transformation
EU ETS	European Emissions Trading Systems
EUR	Euro
FAO	Food and Agriculture organization (United Nations)
FFEM	French Facility for Global Environment
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
IDEAM	Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales (Colombian Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies)
IKI	Internationale Klimaschutzinitiative (German International Climate Initiative)
INECC	Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático - Mexican National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KNK	Kompetenzzentrum Natürlicher Klimaschutz - German Centre of Competence for Nature-based Climate Action
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area
MEDD	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Madagascar)
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NbS	Nature-based Solution
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NBT	National Biodiversity Target

NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECM	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
OFB	Office Français de la Biodiversité - French Biodiversity Agency
ONEP	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (Thailand)
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SEMARNAT	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales - Mexican Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources
SIIVRA	Sub-Sistema Integrador de Información sobre Vulnerabilidad, Riesgo y Adaptación (Colombia)
SINA	Sistema Nacional Ambiental (Colombia)
SPI	Science-Policy Interface
SPM	Summary for Policymakers
UFZ	Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research (Germany)
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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Policy coherence is key to effectively address the interdependent crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. This paper presents tangible case studies of coherent policy action for biodiversity and climate. It showcases entry points and lessons learned for enhancing coherence across different levels of governance, as well as success factors for cross-sector collaboration, coordinated finance, institutional alignment and meaningful stakeholder engagement.

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