





## **FOREWORD**

Nature is the bedrock of our economic system, yet we are steadily eroding its capacity to support us.

Over \$58 trillion, or more than half of global GDP, depends on healthy ecosystems. At the same time, nature-related risks, including biodiversity loss, climate breakdown and ecosystem collapse pose material threats to financial stability and value chains. These risks are growing, yet finance continues to support activities that harm nature.

The biodiversity finance gap – the shortfall between the financial resources needed to halt and reverse nature loss and the funding currently available – stands at \$932 billion annually, while less than 3% of global climate finance currently targets nature-based solutions.

Bridging the gap requires a radical shift in how and where capital is deployed to redirect negative financial flows toward investments and solutions that benefit people and nature.

This guide offers a solution: the Landscape Finance Approach – a place-based framework that connects and enhances ecological resilience, social development and financial performance.

Landscapes are where nature loss occurs and where it can be reversed through an inclusive conservation plan and coordinated investment. By identifying and aligning investments in priority landscapes, stakeholders can mitigate risk, access new markets, and support measurable outcomes for people and nature.

With over 20 years' hands-on experience in investing in and

conserving landscapes, WWF, Conservation Capital and the Sustainable Finance Coalition have come together to collate and share best practices, learnings and insights.

The Landscape Finance Approach is a four-step pathway: understanding nature risks and opportunities, matching opportunities to finance interventions, implementing finance interventions holistically, and scaling to additional landscapes.

It is a proven strategy for change, tested through innovative financial interventions such as performance-linked bonds, including the Rhino Bond, and blended f inance mechanisms like the Dutch Fund for Climate and Development, as well as place-based strategies for sustainable commodities, carbon finance initiatives, and debt-fornature swaps.

This practical guide offers a starting point to help investors, corporates and policymakers move from isolated transactions to coordinated landscape-led investment. With less than five years left to deliver on global goals on nature, climate and development, we must act now, at scale.

Aaron Vermeulen, Leader, WWF Global Finance Practice

Giles Davies, CEO, Conservation Capital

Candice Stevens, Founder & CEO, Sustainable Finance Coalition

## INTRODUCING THE LANDSCAPE FINANCE APPROACH

Nature is critical to our well-being and prosperity. Over US\$58 trillion of global GDP (55%) is moderately or highly dependent on nature.

However, we continue to exert unsustainable pressure on our natural resources, undermining both biodiversity and climate stability. The 2024 global Living Planet Index shows that monitored wildlife populations declined by an average of 73% between 1970 and 2020, while ecosystems in many parts of the world are in crisis.

Over the past decade, there have been growing efforts to promote a more nature-positive economy from governments and the private sector through instruments including the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the Taskforce on Naturerelated Financial Disclosures (TN ve signed the Finance for Biodiversity Pledge, committing to assess and report on nature-related risks and impacts from their financing activities. In addition, more than 620 organizations representing over US\$17 trillion in assets under management are now registered as TNFD Adopters (Source: TNFD); while 16 asset managers have pledged to mobilise private capital into nature through the Natural Capital Investment Alliance (Source: GFI Investing in Nature).

Even so, there is still a huge amount to do: an additional US\$932 billion per year is needed to close the biodiversity finance gap between now and 2030 (Source: Paulson Institute). Compounding the challenge, there's an urgent need to radically reduce financial flows with a direct negative impact on nature and climate: these currently amount to some US\$7 trillion annually, a total more than 30 times greater than is used for nature-positive investments (Source: UNEP State of Nature Finance). Redirecting these resources toward

Redirecting these resources toward nature-positive, climate-resilient investments would not only close the biodiversity finance gap but also accelerate global efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

This is a critical moment to ramp up nature and climate investment on a much larger scale – but key challenges remain, including an insufficient pipeline of bankable or investable opportunities, unfriendly regulatory environments, fragmented and small-scale projects, uncertain risk-return profiles, a lack of clear impact metrics, and insufficient data.



#### FINANCING GREEN AND GREENING FINANCE

Finance interventions in this context include both direct investment mechanisms and systemic actions that enable inclusive conservation. An inclusive conservation approach seeks equitable, effective and sustainable outcomes for development, biodiversity and climate. The LFA combines two sets of interventions:

- Financing Green: Increasing finance for nature-positive outcomes by investing directly into bankable and non-bankable opportunities that address the needs of a landscape, primarily through private finance and private sector engagement, alongside other public and philanthropic sources of finance.
- Greening Finance: The transformation of the broader financial system to enable and accelerate investments that deliver environmental and social benefits, while phasing out finance for harmful activities.

These levers are mutually reinforcing and should be implemented in parallel to be most effective: integrating nature and climate considerations into the financial system will drive greater demand for nature finance, while the growth of green businesses and investable opportunities will accelerate the mainstreaming and allocation of nature finance across the financial sector.

To accelerate nature finance at pace and scale, efforts must be anchored at the landscape level, where integrated, place-based solutions can generate systemic impact across ecosystems and communities.

This requires a systematic approach that both mobilizes new capital for nature (*Financing Green*) and aligns existing financial flows with nature-positive investment (*Greening Finance*) for nature and people. By bringing together multiple stakeholders under a joint action plan and governance structure, this comprehensive set of interventions and approaches forms what we call the Landscape Finance Approach (LFA).

The LFA is a systematic approach to mobilising finance at scale and aligning financial flows for the benefit of people and nature through a comprehensive set of finance interventions in a landscape. The LFA offers a holistic, comprehensive, scalable way to transform today's fragmented, transaction-based nature finance environment. It has a range of benefits for different stakeholders:

• Banks and institutional investors see small, risky one-off projects aggregated into landscape-level portfolios; due diligence and monitoring costs are lowered through shared data infrastructure; and grant, concessional and commercial

capital are blended, hence mitigating risk which improves the risk adjusted rate of return.

- Corporates gain diversified revenue streams from nature that stabilise cash flow and secure supply chains.
- Governments and regulators
   see policy risks fall as land-use
   plans, tenure clarification and
   fiscal incentives are aligned
   across ministries; while regional
   economies benefit from long-term,
   place-based investment.
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities transition from ad hoc, surfacelevel consultations toward the cocreation of landscape programmes with good governance and benefitsharing frameworks that foster social licence and deliver equitable, locally grounded outcomes.
- Philanthropic investors see greater leverage in money invested, with capital acting as a catalyst to help crowd-in private investment and develop a bankable project pipeline.
- Development finance institutions (DFIs) derive more value by providing first-loss capital, guarantees and concessional lending to de-risk portfolios as they can crowd-in commercial investors anchoring long-term, scalable investment in nature-positive and

TABLE 1:
Key challenges in nature finance, and the benefits of a Landscape Finance Approach

ТҮРЕ	KEY CHALLENGES IN NATURE FINANCE	BENEFITS FROM APPLYING A LANDSCAPE FINANCE APPROACH
FINANCIAL	Unstable or risky revenue streams: Income streams often depend on a single commodity (e.g. timber, carbon credits), risking cash-flow volatility.	Potential for a combination of multiple income streams (e.g. biodiversity credits, conservation bonds, ecotourism, payments for ecosystem services), smoothing and derisking the overall revenue profile.
	Small ticket sizes and fragmented projects: One-off projects are too small to attract institutional capital.	Aggregation and pooling: A bundled "landscape-level" portfolio enables minimum investment thresholds and reduces due-diligence costs per dollar invested.
	Costly monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV): Individual projects/sites require bespoke data collection, driving up transaction costs.	Shared monitoring infrastructure: Standardised MRV platforms across the landscape reduce unit costs, improve transparency, and enable digital traceability of impact.
	Insufficient pipeline of investment-ready projects: Existing opportunities require more support to achieve bankability.	Origination and capacity-building: Grants, technical assistance and origination platforms (e.g. one umbrella special purpose vehicle or project developer) can be used to nurture multiple early-stage concepts into fully structured, investable opportunities.
	High up-front capital requirements and long payback periods: Restoration or ecosystem-based enterprises often take 3–10+ years to generate returns.	Blended finance and risk-sharing instruments:  Concessional grants, first-loss capital or guarantees can crowd-in commercial capital, bridging the gap between early-stage feasibility work and longer-horizon revenue streams.
ІМРАСТ	<b>Limited long-term impact from a single transaction</b> : One-off investments rarely create systemic change.	Holistic, systemic impact framing: Transactions are embedded within wider landscape goals, so investors can see if their capital helps move the needle on a broader suite of outcomes, not just a single metric.
	Insufficient engagement of local people: One-off transaction approach may not build deep or lasting community relationships.	Inclusive governance and benefit-sharing: Investment structures are co-designed with local landholders, Indigenous groups and community representatives, embedding long-term revenue streams and ensuring social licence to operate.
ENABLING CONDITIONS	Challenging enabling conditions and policy/regulatory uncertainty: Misaligned regulations and shifting environmental rules increase transaction risk.	Multi-stakeholder coordination and policy dialogue: Regional authorities, ministries, NGOs and the private sector can work together to align land rights, zoning and fiscal incentives, reducing regulatory risk and improving stakeholder management in the landscape and beyond.

dy MacDonald / WWF-US

### WHAT IS A LANDSCAPE?

A landscape is a geographically defined area that is shaped by the interaction of natural ecosystems and economic activities, typically including multiple land uses, stakeholders and ecological functions.

In recent years there has been an increasing shift toward a landscapescale approach to conservation, moving beyond the boundaries of single sectors, stakeholder groups, or individual land management units.

To align with this evolution, there is a pressing need to transition finance toward landscape-scale financing, enabling integrated, cross-sectoral investment strategies that

can deliver systemic and sustainable impact. Currently, many of the activities which help people and nature are financed through one-off transactions but these transactions remain fragmented, risky and too costly. While this approach has contributed to unlocking around S\$200 billion annually for nature-based solutions, it faces significant challenges,

detailed in Table 1. The LFA helps investors and other stakeholders overcome many of these barriers by aggregating opportunities and capital, aligning priorities and reporting frameworks, and establishing transparent, accountable governance structures to create the conditions necessary for scaled and sustained investment in nature.

**CLIMATE RISKS** 

#### KAFUE FLATS

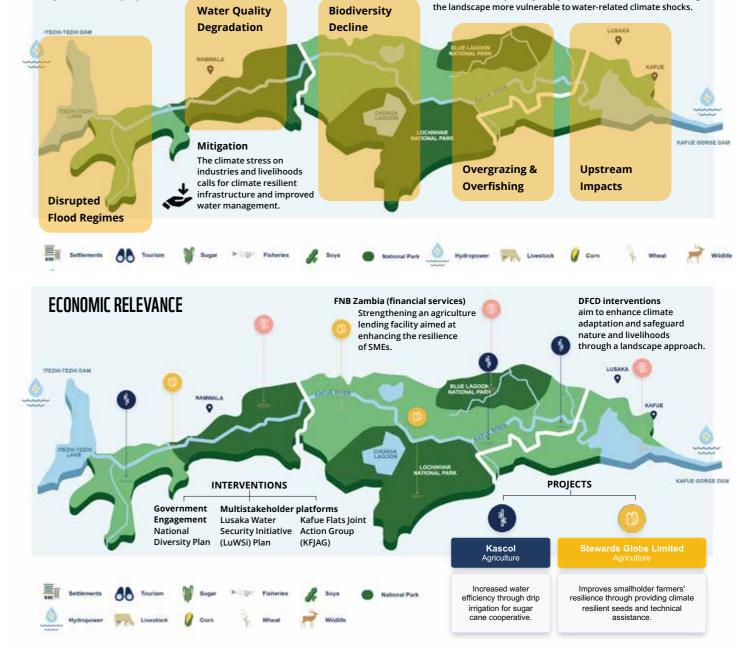
The Kafue Flats is a biodiverse landscape in South Central Zambia, covering 6,500km². Around 300,000 residents depend directly on the wetlands for their livelihoods. The landscape faces multiple climate pressures which targeted investment from the Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD) aim to mitigate see maps below for further detail.

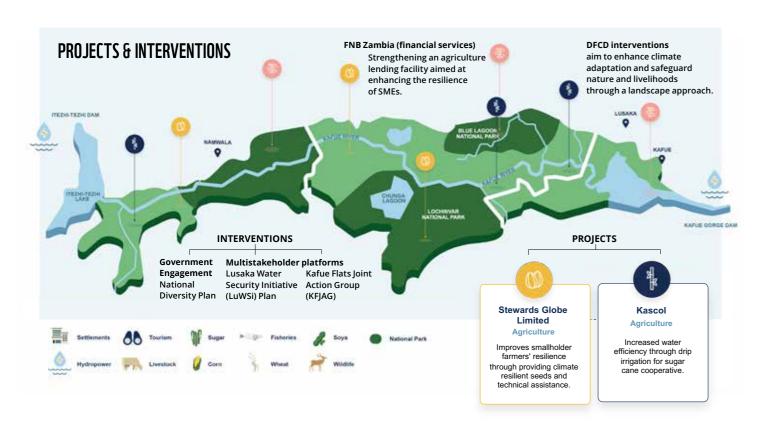


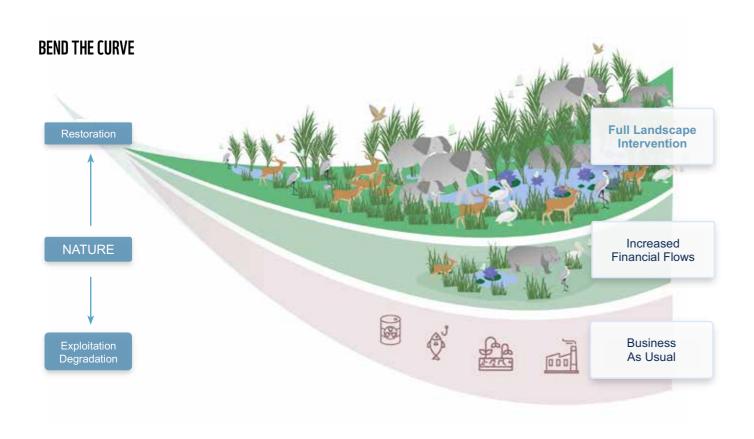
Wetlands are the primary ecosystem in the Kafue Flats, rendering



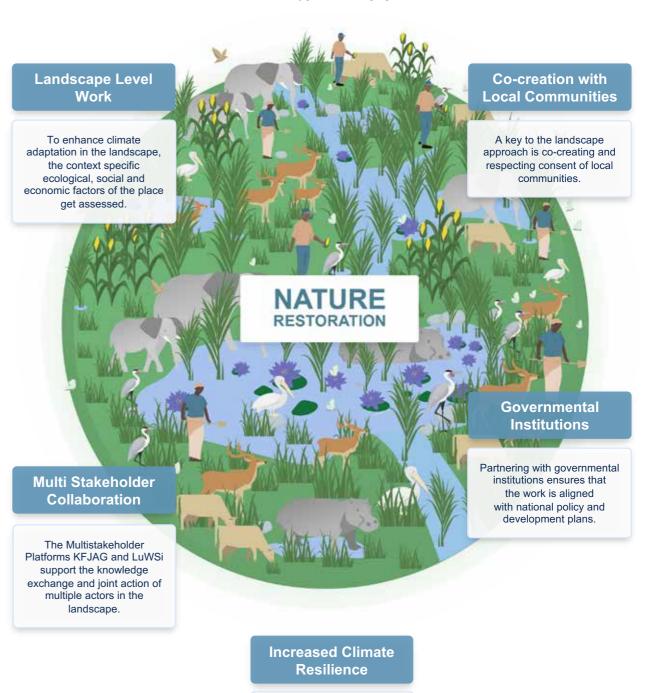








#### LANDSCAPE APPROACH



Through financial investments and technical assistance, DFCD supports early-stage initiatives to build more climate resilient infrastructure and livelihoods.

# APPLYING THE LANDSCAPE FINANCE APPROACH

The LFA involves three key steps.

Understanding the primary threats for nature, climate and people within a landscape and developing an inclusive conservation plan that addresses them. The plan should cover both bankable and nonbankable opportunities and their cost and expected impacts, as well as interventions focused on improving enabling conditions.

Matching finance interventions to bankable and non-bankable opportunities. Market testing should ensure investee readiness, market demand, alignment with landscape priorities and stakeholders, and favourable enabling conditions.stakeholders, and favourable enabling conditions.

Implementing finance interventions. There should be clear governance in place, access to appropriate forms of finance, and support available through origination facilities, pilots and technical assistance.

NGOs, project developers, banks and investors, corporates, governments and regulators, DFIs, multilateral development banks (MDBs), and philanthropic/impact funds are all stakeholders in the LFA process, and all have important roles to play.

## GREENING FINANCE – UNDERSTANDING

For financiers, including corporates, philanthropies, commercial banks, development banks and institutional asset owners, Greening Finance is not only about managing risk, but about unlocking investment opportunities in land, nature and climate resilience.

Today it is critical that investors engage early in landscapes where they can unlock new opportunities and contribute to a nature-positive pathway while at the same time reduce the exposure to high financial risk. This will allow them to shape markets, secure supply chain resilience, and build differentiated value for investors and clients. Nature-related risk is not isolated to a company's assets; it may affect anyone interfacing with the broader ecosystem. Unlike risks related to greenhouse gas emissions, nature-related risks (and the impacts and dependencies that cause them) are largely defined by the geographic context in which they take place. This context includes factors such as the vulnerability of species and ecosystems, the timing of impacts or dependencies, the extent to which local ecosystem thresholds

have been transgressed, and impacts of other stakeholders on the same ecosystem. For example, the extent of risks faced by an organization that uses water may largely be defined by the extent of water scarcity and by the behaviour of other water-users in the landscape in question. Understanding nature-related risks and exposure, and which landscapes to prioritise for engagement, can be a starting point for financial institutions (FIs) and corporations.

Investors and corporates are addressing their impacts and risks by adopting Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) recommendations and setting targets through the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN). A growing number of organizations have undertaken assessments to understand their nature-related dependencies, impacts and associated risks, following guidance, frameworks and tools such as the TNFD LEAP Framework, ENCORE, the WWF Risk Filter Suite and SBTN Guidance.

Other initiatives include the Natural Capital Investment Alliance (Source: GFI Investing in Nature).

## 1. UNDERSTANDING NATURE FINANCING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Every successful application of the LFA starts with a deep understanding of the place, people and nature concerned. This must inform an inclusive conservation plan that provides a comprehensive account of the threats and drivers of biodiversity loss within the landscape, maps the full range of actors and economic activities involved, and assesses their dependencies and impacts on nature. These essential guiding documents are developed in close collaboration with local communities, NGOs, corporates, governments and other stakeholders. They offer a strategic pathway to reduce pressure on nature, restore ecosystems, and build long-term ecological resilience while upholding human rights and promoting equitable outcomes. NGOs or regional authorities usually take the lead in developing conservation plans (see WWF's Sustainable Finance for Conservation Playbook for a detailed and practical guide on how to formulate an inclusive conservation plan at a landscape scale).

**Opportunities for interventions** across a landscape can be nonbankable or bankable, as well as those focused on improving enabling conditions. Non-bankable opportunities prioritise environmental and social outcomes without generating direct financial returns. These include initiatives such as protected area development, wildlife corridor infrastructure and land restoration, and often rely on public or philanthropic capital due to their limited revenue potential. Bankable opportunities are solutions for environmental challenges that at the same time generate a return on the money invested, bridging the gap between conservation goals and investment mandates. These include bankable nature solutions, nature-based solutions, restoration-linked enterprises

and trade-based solutions, and are usually funded through a combination of finance interventions. Sourcing opportunities through a landscape lens rather than as individual transactions ensures a holistic view of nature risk and baseline conditions, and exposes the potential negative externalities of investment decisions (see WWF's Bankable Nature Solutions Blueprint for a deep dive into the subject).

The next step is to understand the financing requirements for the inclusive conservation plan. Many of the opportunities will need new sources of finance to fill current funding gaps. An inclusive conservation plan should include details of the finance required to implement the opportunities, the funding allocations expected for different recipients, and any potential returns that could be generated. Understanding the financial profile of a given solution will determine its suitability for different financing interventions.

For corporates and financial institutions, LFA conservation plans show where nature-related dependencies and risks are concentrated. In the same way that climate risk assessments inform netzero strategies, inclusive conservation plans help define what opportunities address key landscape needs, which are feasible and investable, and who to partner with to execute them. By incorporating spatial data, local stakeholder dynamics and ecosystem thresholds, they allow financiers, corporates and policymakers to move from reactive to proactive investment. For each stakeholder the conservation plan becomes a shared reference point for aligning capital, policy and outcomes at the landscape level.

Ol Pejeta straddles the transition zone between Kenya's arid Laikipia Plateau and the wetter foothills of Mount Kenya, protecting 90,000 acres of savannah, riverine forest and wetlands. Key threats to the landscape include rangeland degradation from surrounding pastoral expansion, rising human-wildlife conflict, and the poaching-driven collapse of rhino and elephant populations.

The conservation plan prioritises (i) securing wildlife corridors and community conservancies in the wider Laikipia ecosystem; (ii) restoring over-grazed grasslands through rotational livestock management and carbon-credit-funded re-seeding; and (iii) expanding black rhino and northern white rhino populations as a flagship tourism and species-recovery opportunity.

Ol Pejeta's journey reflects the sequenced capital model, where different finance instruments are layered over time as the landscape matures. Initial land acquisition was financed through a zero-coupon redeemable share – an innovative hybrid instrument backed by grants and patient capital. As the conservancy scaled its operations, it layered in concessional debt and equity to expand tourism, livestock, and ecological restoration enterprises. Today, Ol Pejeta generates diversified cash flows from ecotourism, carbon credits and conservation-linked real estate. This model offers a replicable roadmap for landscapes with bankable assets and a phased development strategy, but where capital must be carefully matched to risk and maturity.

• To find out more about the LFA in OI Pejeta, please see the LFA Supplement for more details.



#### **UNDERSTANDING FINANCE INTERVENTIONS: TOOLS AND SOURCE MATERIALS**

WWF Inclusive Conservation Plan Guide	Key guidance on good practices concerning inclusive, rights-based approaches to conservation.
WWF Risk Filter Suite	Supplies spatial data layers to target high-risk landscapes.
SBTN Guidance	Framework for science-based target setting for freshwater, land and oceans, which can be aligned with landscape KPIs.
TNFD LEAP Framework	Provides the "Locate-Evaluate-Assess-Prepare" workflow to map nature-related dependencies, impacts risks and opportunities.
ENCORE	Helps financial institutions take their first steps towards understanding their dependencies and impacts on nature.
CDP	Offers a disclosure platform that collects and shares company ESG data.

### 2. MATCHING FINANCE INTERVENTIONS TO LANDSCAPE NEEDS

Once opportunities are identified in the landscape, the next step is to match the right mix of finance interventions to the specific opportunities.

Different finance mechanisms – from grants and blended finance to carbon markets and insurance – suit different types of opportunities. Matching finance interventions to landscape opportunities involves understanding which of them are viable, for investors and investees alike.

For some opportunities, existing finance instruments (e.g. loans, equity, microfinance) will be sufficient if they can leverage additional concessional and commercial capital. In other cases, new finance interventions are needed. These may take the form of **innovative** instruments (e.g. impact bonds, venture debt, land value capture, tax incentives, environmental credits), strategies (e.g. blended finance through stacking different capital types such as grants, concessional loans, guarantees, equity or commercial debt, or incorporating revenues from carbon credits. biodiversity credits, or other ecosystem service payments), or vehicles (e.g. conservation trust funds) through which capital can be deployed effectively.

Table 2 (p19) shows a range of finance interventions that may be used in an LFA context. Note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Once the appropriate mix of financing interventions has been concluded, market testing is key to inform their detailed design and implementation and determine early viability.

Key success factors include:



#### **GREENING FINANCE - MATCHING**

Many nature-based solutions are underfunded not because they lack impact but because the financial ecosystem surrounding them is underdeveloped or misaligned. Sovereign risk remains a primary barrier preventing large financial institutions from investing in developing countries, as it reflects potential adverse impacts from macroeconomic factors, political instability, regulatory changes, and broader social conditions. These challenges are further compounded where countries lack supportive regulations such as green bond frameworks, sustainability-linked lending criteria, or taxonomies, where investors face heightened uncertainty and fragmentation. However, legal and regulatory enabling conditions can reduce risk and redirect flows of negative financing. The UNDP's BIOFIN supports the development of government biodiversity finance plans and mapping of harmful incentives for 133 countries, with the intention of increasing public capital for nature finance (Source: BIOFIN). WWF's Greening Financial Regulation Initiative engages central banks, financial regulators and financial supervisors, encouraging them to integrate climate and nature considerations into their decision-making, mandates and operations.

Governmental Greening Finance interventions include halting and repurposing harmful subsidies, promoting green public procurement standards for sustainable commodities and infrastructure, making nature-related due diligence and disclosure mandatory, providing frameworks for the establishment of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and 30x30, and creating additional synergies between National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) which can align conservation goals across priority landscapes. Central banks, meanwhile, can mandate nature-related risk disclosures, include nature risks in stress testing for banks and insurers, and adopt sustainable finance guidelines that influence Fls' lending and investment mandates.

Matching interventions involves aligning impact, timing, stakeholders and systems.

acqueline Lisboa / WWF-Brazil

 Alignment with a landscape's ecological and social priorities based on the conservation plan.

This is essential to mitigate the risk of unintended consequences, leakage effects or negative externalities. WWF's experience in tropical forest landscapes highlights that without integrating community land rights and ecosystem diversity into finance mechanisms, projects can undermine both conservation goals and local livelihoods downstream. This underscores the importance of maintaining a landscape-level perspective when designing and implementing nature finance interventions.

The readiness of the investee or implementing partner. The lack of financial expertise at a landscape level remains one of

- the most significant challenges to nature financing. For finance to flow effectively into nature-based investments in landscapes there need to be strong, committed teams that have financial know-how and the capacity to raise, receive and manage flows of capital on the ground. Working through comanagement models with sustained long-term engagement increases the chances of success.
- Availability of data, information and systems. Key to several finance interventions is the need to prove measurable outcomes and impact. The ability to gather, code, store, analyse and report on data and information from the ground is imperative for success. Existing systems should be leveraged as much as possible.
- Market or demand-side signals for the outcome from the intervention. These could include strong demand for sustainable commodities from an off-taker, carbon credit pre-purchase agreements, or established frameworks for payments for ecosystem services. This is especially important for opportunities that depend on price premiums to reach necessary return profiles.
- The enabling environment and institutional policy framework. Clear policy frameworks and enabling conditions for different types of interventions including land rights and green taxonomies reduce investment risk and unlock potential

#### LFA CASE STUDY: JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUCK NATIONAL PARK, BHUTAN

Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park, covering some 1,730 km2, is one of Bhutan's largest and most ecologically significant protected areas, supporting rich biodiversity including endangered species like the red panda, Bengal tiger, and snow leopard. Threats to the National Park include overgrazing, poaching, deforestation, and habitat degradation from hydropower development.

A comprehensive and inclusive conservation plan focuses primarily on community development and habitat restoration.

The development of a conservation financing strategy was guided by Conservation Capital's structured Nature Financing Activation methodology. Following a stakeholder-driven

assessment process, three core financial instruments were identified and fleshed out. With Bhutan's public debt at approximately 125% of GDP, restructuring even a small proportion of its US\$1 billion multilateral debt could mobilise significant capital for conservation and nature-based enterprise development, so a debt-for-nature swap was identified as an opportunity. Alongside this, carbon credit generation and protected-area user fees were identified as viable pathways for ongoing revenue, given Bhutan's carbon-negative status and high-end tourism model. These instruments were identified for their ability to generate sustained funding while respecting Bhutan's conservation integrity and community development goals.



#### TABLE 2:

A range of finance interventions that may be used in the Landscape Finance Approach.

#### FINANCE INSTRUMENTS, STRATEGIES AND VEHICLES

Debt: Commonly referred to as a loan, this financial instrument involves an organization providing capital to an individual, company or project under the condition that the funds will be repaid over a specified period, typically with interest. Unlike publicly traded securities, loans are generally held privately by one or a limited number of entities.

Equity: Funds provided to a company or project in exchange for ownership shares. Equity investments are typically return-seeking, either through a portion of the cash generated, or an increase in company value. Equity investments can be both public and traded on markets, and private.

Blended finance: Blended finance refers to the strategic use of public, philanthropic and private sector capital to mobilise investments for projects or initiatives that have both financial returns and positive social or environmental impacts. Blended finance mechanisms aim to de-risk investments in socially and environmentally impactful ventures, making them more attractive to private sector investors while leveraging public resources to achieve sustainable development goals.

Project finance for Project finance for permanence (PFP) is an approach designed to secure policy changes and funding to achieve specific conservation and community development goals over a long timeframe. PFP aims to ensure ecological, social, political, organizational and financial sustainability. Initial funding from donors and grants typically transitions to domestic sustainable funding sources, with the donor funds managed by an independent fund administrator and disbursed when stakeholders meet agreed milestones.

Impact bonds: An impact bond is a results-based financial instrument that links investor returns directly to measurable outcomes, helping channel funds into projects that deliver clear environmental or social benefits. Rather than relying on upfront grants or traditional donor funding, impact bonds begin with private investors who invest capital. If independently verified outcomes are achieved, investors are repaid - often with a return or coupon - by an outcome payer.

Carbon credits: A financial instrument used to incentivize the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by providing funding to those who implement projects that reduce emissions or increase carbon sinks. WWF advocates for beyond value chain mitigation actions (contributions approach), contributing to global climate action and to support broader environmental and social goals.

Biodiversity Instruments to allocate funds to projects with a measurable positive impact on biodiversity (e.g. species, credits: ecosystems, genes) in exchange for certified credits. A biodiversity credit is a certificate that represents a measured and evidence-based positive biodiversity outcome from nature restoration, conservation or stewardship activities, that is not purchased for the purpose of offsetting residual negative impacts caused to biodiversity.

with a biodiversity

Carbon credits with a biodiversity premium are verified emissions reduction or removal units generated from nature-based projects - such as forest conservation, reforestation or regenerative agriculture - that deliver premium: measurable, additional biodiversity benefits alongside carbon outcomes.

Tax incentive: A tax incentive safeguarding nature is a type of environmental fiscal benefit, with the aim of disincentivising harmful actions and incentivizing sustainable land and resource use. Appropriate legal and fiscal conditions need to be in place for tax-based finance instruments to be effective.

Venture debt: Venture debt is a form of financing designed to support the growth of early-stage enterprises. Essentially a repayable loan, venture debt can help finance nature-based businesses that hold potential for generating measurable environmental and social outcomes, without diluting the equity holdings of mission-driven founders. Debt structures can be tailored to the unique cash-flow patterns and impact cycles of these enterprises, aligning financial sustainability with long-term conservation goals.

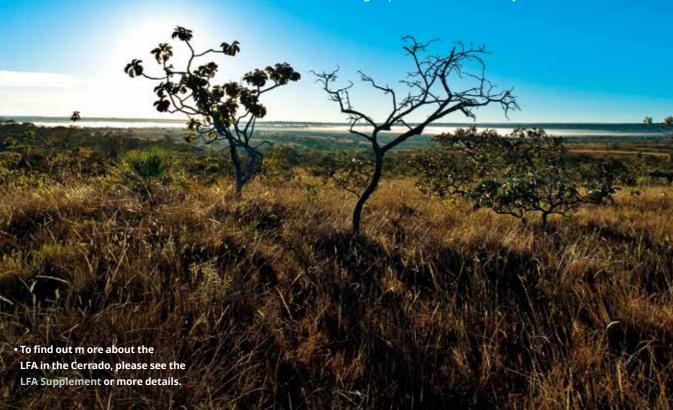
Land value Land value capture (LVC) leverages the increase in the value of land proximate to core nature landscapes under capture: active conservation management. As these landscapes become ecologically healthier and more physically attractive, land values tend to rise. Capturing this increased value through strategic sales, leases or the transfer of economic rights can generate ongoing funding for conservation. Traditionally, LVC has been a government mechanism where public investment, often in urban or peri-urban contexts, generates revenue through increased property taxes such as capital gains tax and stamp duty equivalents. However, LVC can also be adapted and leveraged by private conservation initiatives.

#### LFA CASE STUDY: THE CERRADO, BRAZIL

Brazil's Cerrado is a vast tropical savannah extending over 2 million km2. It's a critical watershed, feeding eight of the country's major river basins, but it's also one of the least protected regions in Brazil. The Cerrado faces substantial pressure from large-scale land conversion, mostly for soy: ~50% has already been cleared, and a further 72,000km2 of conversion is expected by 2030.

WWF's inclusive conservation programme aims to reduce land conversion by increasing the productivity of current agricultural land in the Cerrado, moving agriculture to previously degraded/consolidated land, expanding protected areas, and fostering sustainable businesses.

The finance strategy in the Cerrado focuses on blended finance mechanisms to shift land-use behaviour. Key interventions include concessional debt and the Responsible Commodities Facility - a collaboration between public, private and NGO actors - which channels capital into green receivables instruments that offer better loan terms to farmers who avoid native vegetation conversion. These are paired with microfinance for community cooperatives and an exploration of project finance for permanence to secure longterm protection. Rather than pooling capital in a new fund, this model works through existing agri-finance structures but ties them to landscape-level KPIs and MRV standards aligned with the conservation plan. Concessional capital, technical assistance and buyer guarantees all help de-risk early transactions, while the facility's design enables scalability through replication across Brazil's soy frontier.



#### MATCHING FINANCE INTERVENTIONS: TOOLS AND SOURCE MATERIALS

The Sustainable Finance Conservation Playbook	A step-by-step guide on how to finance for land, water and seascapes through a more holistic approach.
The Finance Solution Inventory	The Finance Solution Inventory holds knowledge resources that describe different types of finance solutions targeted toward conservation, and their building blocks or conditions of success.
FIND Scorecard	The FIND Scorecard is used to screen finance solution opportunities at the landscape scale using 12 criteria aligned to 1) Case for Impact, 2) Management and Execution, and 3) Enabling Environment.
FIND Assessment Tool	The FIND Assessment Tool is used to guide a detailed assessment of individual finance solutions with expert review.

## 3. IMPLEMENTING FINANCE INTERVENTIONS IN A LANDSCAPE

Implementing the LFA is not a onesize-fits-all process. Landscapes differ in the maturity of their inclusive conservation planning, their institutional capacity, the scale of their financing gaps, and pipeline readiness. To accommodate this diversity, the LFA offers a flexible set of implementation pathways that enable capital to flow in different ways. Some are lighter touch, coordinating separate investment flows without bundling capital; others involve more formal structuring, dedicated credit lines or pooled financing facilities. All are valid, and most landscapes evolve from one model to another over time. Key implementation pathways include the following:

- Project-by-project alignment: Individual deals are financed independently, but each aligns with the same inclusive conservation plan, stakeholders and reporting metrics.
- This model works best when multiple funders are already active in a landscape, and a shared coordination forum or governance structure exists or can be developed by a single organization.
- The Lower Kafue Basin in Zambia exemplifies this approach, where AB InBev and WWF co-developed water-stewardship projects under a basin-wide strategy.
- Sequenced and layered capital:
   Individual investment opportunities are structured as a capital 'ladder', starting with technical assistance grants, moving through concessional capital, and eventually scaling with commercial finance. Opportunities are financed separately with no single convener.
- Ol Pejeta in Kenya demonstrates this model, having evolved from donor-supported land acquisition

to a self-sustaining mix of ecotourism, livestock, and real-estate revenue supported by various finance tranches over time.

#### Lead-anchor platform:

A capable local institution such as an NGO, trust or multi-stakeholder coalition originates and coordinates multiple investments, manages data, and ensures community benefitsharing. Importantly, this platform does not pool capital itself; it guides aligned flows.

- Conserve Global has a portfolio of potentially 14 tailored financial mechanisms supporting community conservancies across several countries.
- Programmatic credit window: A local or regional financial institution opens a dedicated green lending line or guarantee facility for landscapealigned investments.
- In the Brazilian Cerrado, the Responsible Commodities Facility channels capital through receivables instruments for deforestation-free soy production.
- Pooled landscape facility:

A dedicated special purpose vehicle (SPV) or blended fund finances a portfolio of projects within the

- landscape. This model allows capital to flow through a central vehicle, balancing different return and risk profiles across interventions.
- The ARPA for Life initiative in Brazil is a collaborative effort between Brazil's federal government, state agencies, private institutions, and civil society including WWF. Pioneering the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) model, it has secured long term funding for conservation, channeling donor, government and multilateral funds into an independent facility with a permanent endowment structure.
- Public-budget mainstreaming:
   Landscape finance is embedded
   within a sovereign fiscal
   framework. This might involve
   earmarking revenues from taxes
   or issuing green bonds, with
   funds channelled into payments
   for ecosystem services (PES) or
   conservation-linked infrastructure.
- Costa Rica's national PES
   programme, funded inpart
   through a fuel tax, is a longstanding
   model of how public budgets can
   be stable and scalable sources of
   finance for nature.



### **KEY SUCCESS FACTORS**

The most influential factor of all in implementing a successful LFA is a strong and credible implementing party. Across all pathways, certain enabling conditions consistently drive effective implementation. First, a credible, costed conservation plan anchors all decisions and attracts investors, reassuring them they will be part of a well-thoughtthrough initiative. Second, inclusive governance and community benefitsharing – whether through board seats, trusts, or revenue allocations - create legitimacy and long-term buy-in. Third, capital must be sequenced: concessional finance plays an essential role in unlocking commercial flows. Fourth, origination support in the form of technical assistance and pilots can de-risk and improve return profiles. Fifth, MRV systems lower transaction costs and increase transparency. Sixth, tenure and policy clarity are nonnegotiable; without them, even the best-structured deals stall.

The implementing party must be able to absorb, manage and deploy funds effectively and deliver measurable conservation and community outcomes. Conservation Capital's Resilience+ framework emphasises that investable counterparties must

operational competence: they must have a clear mandate, show institutional resilience, trusted leadership, financial acumen, and strong stakeholder and community legitimacy. Strong governance structures are also needed, to align relevant stakeholders around the landscape's conservation plan. This means clearly defining roles and maintaining the flexibility to adapt as landscape outcomes evolve. Governance must also enable oversight and adaptive management, with legal structures that uphold conservation plan goals. Where these conditions are not yet fully in place, targeted support can progressively build the capacity of the implementing party.

Origination platforms, pilots, and technical assistance are also key to implementing the LFA. Ten years ago, many nature finance efforts faced significant hurdles due to the lack of investable projects or mechanisms to systematically identify, structure and prepare opportunities for investment. In response, organizations such as WWF, Conservation Capital, the

origination platforms, dedicated facilities designed to build robust pipelines of bankable opportunities by financing pilot projects and providing technical assistance to make initiatives investment-ready.

These early-stage efforts are typically supported by concessional capital (see box above), which plays a critical role in de-risking investments. Pilots are especially important for generating data on risk-return profiles, while technical assistance helps accelerate returns by supporting the transition to more sustainable production models and the professionalization of investees. The Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD) exemplifies this approach: through its Origination Facility, co-managed by WWF and SNV, DFCD provides grants and technical assistance of up to €400,000 to early-stage projects that are near bankable, helping them become investable. The facility has supported more than 30 companies and catalysed over €1 billion in as agriculture, forests, freshwater and oceans.

#### CONCESSIONAL CAPITAL: CATALYSING INVESTMENT AT SCALE

Concessional capital - whether in the form of grants, guarantees, first-loss capital or long-term patient funding - is often key for unlocking investment in landscapes. These instruments help absorb early-stage risks, fund pilots and technical assistance, and support the transition to sustainability where commercial finance alone is not viable. This is especially important in the LFA, where investments span multiple sectors, actors and timeframes. Different types of concessional capital serve distinct roles:

- Guarantees have been catalytic in funds like the AGRI3 Fund, Asia Climate-Smart Landscape Fund, and Seychelles Blue Bond, crowding-in private capital by offering downside protection. The Blue Outcomes Fund is designing similar mechanisms to finance marine ecosystem restoration in high-risk settings.
- First-loss capital, as used in the World Bank's Wildlife Conservation

Bonds, enables flexible, revenue-based financing for early-stage, communityled enterprises. However, the experience also shows the importance of safeguards, such as reserve accounts or guarantees, when lending to ventures without collateral.

- Long-term concessional funding is key for durability and scale. In Herencia Colombia's project finance for permanence, a US\$245 million transition fund provides stable capital over 20 years for Indigenousled restoration, conservation and community enterprise across 32 million hectares.
- Financed technical assistance can offer benefits to projects of all sizes. In Colombia, DFCD's investment in Alimentos Secos (ALSEC) combined grants with technical assistance for smallholder suppliers, lowering risk and strengthening the value chain.



#### **GREENING FINANCE -IMPLEMENTING**

Greening Finance is critical at the implementation stage, influencing lending practices, procurement rules and investment mandates. For FIs, this includes improving internal policies and due diligence, capacitybuilding with clients, working with their corporate clients' suppliers to change production methods to be more sustainable, and setting and tracking nature-related metrics and targets.

Viewing portfolios and value chains through the landscape lens can also support a shift towards alignment with local conservation plans, which in turn reduces nature-related risk exposure. **For corporates** this means looking into value chains where significant portions of goods come from, identifying exposed landscapes and focusing on supporting suppliers and other stakeholders in that landscape to transition to better practices. For FIs, it means setting internal guidelines, investment practices that include nature considerations, and working directly with clients to transition to more sustainable practices, with a focus on investees that have marketing, production or sourcing activities concentrated in the same landscape.

While individual policies, risk management interventions or innovative financial transactions offer a step in the right direction, some businesses and FIs have started to acknowledge that responding and contributing to a net-zero, resilient, nature-positive future requires a fundamental change in how their organizations operate. Transition planning is an emerging approach for corporates and FIs to help unlock such transformative action and avoid the risks associated with the continued degradation of nature and climate change. It does so by identifying a consistent set of actions, strategies and accountability mechanisms, embedded within and across the organization. Such plans include plans to contribute and respond to nature-related objectives in priority places and landscapes. The presence of organizations with such plans in a landscape enhances support for landscape interventions and increases available finance opportunities. Disclosure of such plans by corporates is critical for FIs to assess whether their clients are shifting business operations to support net-zero and nature-positive objectives in landscapes.



## IMPLEMENTING FINANCE INTERVENTIONS: **TOOLS AND SOURCE MATERIALS** WWF Bankable An introduction to Bankable Nature Nature Solutions: Solutions demonstrating what **Origination** bankable projects are and how Facilities and WWF can work across different Methodology landscapes to overcome various challenges. It aspires to show global landscape practitioners, investors and investees that Bankable Nature Solutions can be a promising solution, helping to upscale projects and to achieve more impact. **SFC - Solution** A coordinated approach to specific **Incubators** finance solution investigations to test viability and to ensure strategic implementation which can efficiently unlock new finance. SFC - Solution Uses standard momentum **Implementation** milestones (timeline of deliverables and progress markers) to practically action the development and activation of a finance solution. **Conservation** Diagnoses readiness and **Capital** robustness of counterparties; flags **Resilience+ Tool** operational gaps before investor engagement. **Conservation** Provides expert deal structuring, Capital investor syndication and financial **Transaction** close support; translates technical **Advisory** concepts into investor-ready **Services** term sheets. 24 FINANCE FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

### LFA CASE STUDY: CONSERVE GLOBAL – NAMIBIA, ZAMBIA, MOZAMBIQUE

Conserve Global works across under-protected buffer zones that connect national parks to surrounding communities. In **Kunene** (Namibia), threats include prolonged drought, rangeland degradation and rising human-wildlife conflict, undermining pastoral livelihoods and wildlife corridors. In **Tondwa** (**Zambia**), key pressures include encroachment from agriculture, illegal logging, and weak local governance. The **Futi Corridor** (**Mozambique**), linking Maputo Special Reserve to Tembe Elephant Park, is a vital transboundary elephant route threatened by habitat fragmentation and a lack of viable local income streams.

Conservation plans in each site focus on supporting community-led conservancy models with clear land tenure and diversified nature-based income. Conserve Global serves as a lead-anchor platform, helping communities formalise conservancies, build capacity, and co-design investment-ready interventions.

The finance strategy reflects limited prior investment, strong community presence, and high biodiversity value. A portfolio of several finance mechanisms operates across three landscapes. These include human-wildlife conflict insurance, biodiversity/nature credits and dedicated environmental funds, chosen to diversify income, improve risk management, and match the capacity and institutional conditions on the ground. Each mechanism is tailored to local threats and designed to transition communities from grant reliance to investable conservation models. Rather than managing a pooled fund, Conserve Global focuses on originating and structuring multiple landscape-aligned deals – such as biodiversity credits, insurance mechanisms, and conservation enterprise funds – supported by technical assistance and stakeholder convening. Each investment flows independently, but benefits from a common framework of governance, legal support and ecological metrics anchored in the conservation plan. This work is complemented by the Finance Model established by the Sustainable Finance Coalition to help unlock sustainable finance for landscape conservation.

 To find our more about the LFA in Conserve Global landscapes, please see the LFA Supplement for more details.



# SCALING THE LANDSCAPE FINANCE APPROACH

Beyond its application in specific locations, the Landscape Finance Approach provides a wider opportunity to drive transformative impact, through effective scaling within and across landscapes, and into national fiscal and financial systems.

This can be achieved through supporting implementing parties to build communities of investors, regulators and corporates who understand the potential of the LFA; and by scaling Greening Finance solutions that improve enabling conditions to further scale LFA approaches.

## organizations

First, when implementation

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{are developed and supported} so \\ \end{tabular}$ 

they can credibly take on capital and scale opportunities, they become key agents in scaling the LFA. Building up the expertise and capabilities of implementing parties in landscapes – who are often local communities, micro-enterprises or conservation organizations – may be required so they can effectively take on finance, reduce risk, and scale with safeguards. This is the most critical area of work to scale the LFA.

Second, developing ecosystems of investors, corporates, philanthropic institutions and other local and international organizations who understand the business and nature case for the LFA is also critical. For example, supporting local and regional banks who develop financing instruments for sustainable activities such as regenerative agriculture or sustainability-linked bonds is vital for scaling up the amount of capital that can be deployed. Developing partnerships with champion corporates who are serious about

taking on Scope 3 and in setting opportunities throughout their supply chains in a systematic approach is also important.

As investors and corporates enact key

operational changes this can lead to wider system change. For example, enhanced due diligence on land-use change piloted in one landscape may inform broader exclusion criteria, influence supplier requirements, or support shared data infrastructure across portfolios. Over time, such practices contribute to sectoral standards, regulatory proposals, and common investor protocols. Investor or company action drives policy and regulatory evolution. When early movers demonstrate what's possible – such as deforestation-free supply chains or outcome-based finance structures – they generate the evidence base for governments and regulators to act. For instance, landscapes where financial actors apply risk-screening tools or enforce nature-aligned investment conditions can become proof points for broader policy change, from disclosure rules to tax incentives.

Governments play a key enabling role in driving scale by integrating nature into **national fiscal and financial systems**. One example of this is through eco-compensation mechanisms, such as China's national system that channels funds to upstream watershed stewards, Peru's MERESE programme that enables

downstream water-users to pay for sustainable practices, or Colombia's ecological compensation framework and emerging biodiversity credit pilots that offer context-specific ways to internalize nature-related externalities. These schemes embed nature into economic decisions using 'polluter pays' or 'beneficiary pays' principles. Lessons from landscape pilots have already influenced eco-compensation frameworks in Peru and regulatory innovations tied to deforestation-free finance in Colombia.

Progress made at the landscape level can also inform multilateral platforms and global financial **governance**. As nature-related risks gain prominence in forums such as the G20 and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), landscapeled finance initiatives offer practical insights. For example, recognition of the need for location-specific risk assessment, rooted in landscapes, led the G20 to support the creation of the TNFD, which now provides global guidance for assessing naturerelated financial risks. Similarly, the Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS) brings together central banks to develop shared models for environmental risk analysis, including those based on nature-related exposure, many of which draw from landscape-scale insights.



## A JOINT CALL TO ACTION

WWF IS CALLING ON ALL INVESTORS AND COMPANIES TO ADOPT THE LANDSCAPE FINANCE APPROACH TO MOBILISE ¢20 BILLION BY 2030 TO ACCERELATE NATURE-POSITIVE, NET-ZERO SOLUTIONS.

The LFA is a tested, scalable model that's ready to meet the urgency of the climate and nature crises.

By aligning public, private and community investments within integrated landscape plans, this approach can unlock finance at the scale and speed required to address interconnected environmental,

social and economic challenges. Implementation depends on bold leadership, shared investment, and a commitment to collaboration.

Real change happens when different parts of the system move

together, with each actor bringing their own resources, influence and perspective. Table 3 below shows the key ways in which stakeholder groups can engage at each stage of the LFA.

TABLE 3:
Key actions for stakeholder groups to engage with the LFA

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	UNDERSTAND	MATCH	IMPLEMENT
Banks and investors	Assess portfolio investments and own operational activities against nature and climate-related risks and impacts and develop transition plans.	<ul> <li>Participate in early pipeline conversations to signal interest in specific opportunities.</li> <li>Co-create financial mechanisms, especially in blended structures.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Support design and capitalisation of selected applicable mechanisms.</li> <li>Eliminate financing for harmful practices.</li> <li>Engage clients and investees on their transition plans.</li> <li>Monitor and report; disclose TNFD metrics.</li> <li>Support collective action and landscape initiatives.</li> <li>Advocate with governments and the public sector</li> </ul>
Corporates	<ul> <li>Assess organizational nature and climate-related risks and impacts.</li> <li>Identify priority landscapes based on their materiality to the company, and develop TNFD-aligned transition plans with targets set in line with SBTN.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Participate in early pipeline conversations to signal interest in specific opportunities or sectors.</li> <li>Support the transition to sustainable practices in key landscapes.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Anchor offtake agreements or co-investment; sign credit purchase or equity agreements and procure credits.</li> <li>Monitor and report; disclose TNFD metrics.</li> <li>Support collective action and landscape initiatives.</li> <li>Advocate with governments and the public sector.</li> </ul>

Continued >

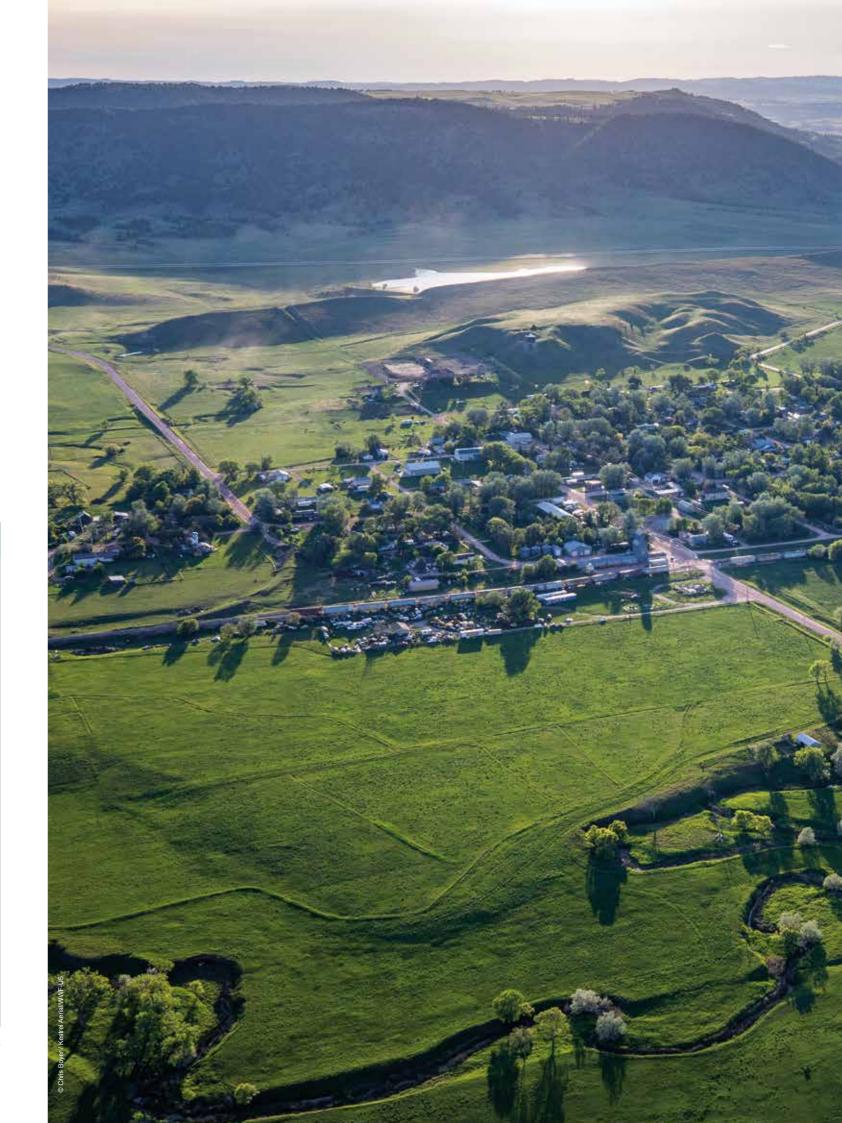


TABLE 3:
Key actions for stakeholder groups to engage with the LFA

Continued >

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	UNDERSTAND	MATCH	IMPLEMENT
Governments and regulators	<ul> <li>Align policies and regulations to support nature conservation.</li> <li>Develop nature-positive pathways, mandate nature-related disclosures, eliminate harmful subsidies.</li> <li>Include nature finance systemic actions in NDC/NBSAP targets; convene key stakeholders for landscapelevel engagement for joint action for conservation planning.</li> <li>Enhance knowledge and data on nature-related impacts and risks at landscape level.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Participate in early pipeline conversations to signal interest in specific opportunities as a part of the NBSAP process and investment.</li> <li>Drive improvement of enabling environment.</li> <li>Actively participate and shape system-level action to spur Greening Finance opportunities.</li> </ul>	Support co-design, development and capitalisation of key financial mechanisms (e.g. enable payments for ecosystem services, tax incentives, guarantees, sovereign facilities). Continue to monitor outcomes in key landscapes aligned with NDCs/NBSAPs. Advocate for better governance of natural resources by national governments.
DFIs and MDBs	<ul> <li>Fund baseline studies and development of conservation plan preparation.</li> <li>Understand nature risk exposure in existing investment portfolios to identify the .most appropriate instruments they can provide.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Participate in early pipeline conversations to signal interest in specific opportunities or sectors.</li> <li>Enable and fund development and capacity-building for more systemic actions at landscape or national level .</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provide concessional layer or guarantees including technical assistance financing.</li> <li>Support funding of MRV and capacity building</li> </ul>
NGOs and project developers	Convene key stakeholders in a landscape. Lead inclusive conservation planning; build Financing Green and Greening Finance pipeline of opportunities.	<ul> <li>Convene all stakeholders to match finance interventions to opportunities.</li> <li>Guide process and follow up to match origination and financing opportunities to funders.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Develop and implement projects; operate MRV; ensure safeguards and benefit-sharing.</li> <li>Support development of implementing party/ investee capacity.</li> </ul>
Philanthropies and impact funds	<ul> <li>Fund baseline studies and development of conservation plans.</li> <li>Understand nature risk exposure within existing portfolios to identify hotspot landscapes.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Participate in early pipeline conversations to signal interest in specific opportunities.</li> <li>Fund key matching and capacity-building workshops and processes.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provide catalytic first-loss capital, technical assistance funding or outcome payments.</li> <li>Verify impact.</li> <li>Support design of novel finance interventions and mechanisms.</li> </ul>

WWF, Conservation Capital and the Sustainable Finance Coalition are committed to accelerating the LFA. Each organization brings unique tools and networks to the table, but we're united in one goal: to make integrated, inclusive and investable conservation the new norm. We invite funders, practitioners, policymakers and private sector leaders to take the next step with us, together. For more information, please contact WWF on finance@wwfint.org.



