

Policy brief:

THE NBSAPS WE NEED FOR A LIVING AMAZON

The Amazon is at Risk

The largest rainforest and river basin of the world, holding 10% of the planet's known species, is at risk of ecological collapse. The Amazon extends for 7 million km² with a population of 47 million, 2 million of whom are Indigenous Peoples. Climate change, deforestation and degradation are eliminating the trees that pump 20 billion tons of water into the air every day and store 150-200 billion tons of carbon, affecting the Amazon's resilience and leading it towards an ecological tipping point. The Science Panel for the Amazon warns us: we may reach an irreversible tipping point if we lose more than 20% of the Amazon's forests¹. **With deforestation levels at 17%, the time to act is now. An Amazon beyond its tipping point would not recover, with vast parts of it becoming degraded lands or savannahs, with devastating impacts for biodiversity and human populations.** The results of such a scenario would be felt across the world due to the Amazon's vital role as a global temperature, carbon, and hydrological regulator, making current global climate and biodiversity goals out of reach.



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International and regional commitments to act for the Amazon

Amazon countries' governments leadership through the firm and effective implementation of international and regional commitments for the Amazon is key to changing the current trajectory of the region. Governments must make urgent decisions to keep an ecologically healthy Amazon that maintains its environmental and cultural contributions to local peoples, the countries of the region, and the world, within a framework of social equity, inclusive economic development and global responsibility. **We urge a commitment by Amazon governments to avoid reaching an ecological tipping point.**

1. Science Panel for the Amazon Assessment Report, 2021.



The Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Belem Declaration of the Amazonian Summit (ACTO, 2023), among other regional and international agreements that aim at improving the environmental and social outcomes for people and nature, already contain commitments that, if fully implemented, should prevent the Amazon from reaching the ecological tipping point, including actions aimed at **stopping deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems and the associated biodiversity loss, halting illegal gold mining and mercury use, and conserving 80% of the biome by 2030.**

This can be done by designing and implementing ambitious National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) that aim to halt and reverse biodiversity loss in the Amazon by 2030 through 3 key gamechangers.



1. Zero deforestation:

The Amazon is experiencing deforestation due mainly to unsustainable or illegal agricultural expansion and cattle ranching. **Goals:** *By 2030, supply chains of export and domestic market commodities achieve zero associated deforestation and conversion, regenerative cattle ranching and agriculture are increased, bio-economies are scaled-up and loss of areas of high biodiversity importance is halted.*



2. No illegal gold:

Illegal gold production is driving deforestation, river pollution with mercury and soil erosion in the Amazon. Mercury use threatens the health and well-being of people and biodiversity. **Goal:** *By 2030 illegal production of gold and the use of mercury are phased out.*



3. Conserve 80%:

Considering that around 17% of the Amazon forests have been lost, and that about 50% of the Amazon is currently managed or conserved in legally designated protected areas and indigenous territories, it is essential to meet the 30% gap through effectively and sustainably managed territories, landscapes, and basins. **Goal:** *By 2030, 80% of forests, and the wetlands and rivers of the Amazon are effectively conserved and managed, especially by strengthening Indigenous Peoples' territorial security as a key strategy for conservation, and through connectivity between critical landscapes and basins.*



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This ambition

This ambition must be part of comprehensive and ambitious NBSAPs, meaning NBSAPs that address conservation challenges in each country, preventing the spread of the conversion affecting the Amazon to other ecosystems.

Ambitious and regionally relevant NBSAPs should incorporate the following considerations:

1. Ambition

The Amazon biome holds an incredible array of species from all groups, many of which are still unknown to science. Taken together Amazonian countries NBSAPs should be able to halt and reverse biodiversity loss in the Amazon as a biome, and in all Amazon countries by 2030.

2. Ambitious national targets and actions

- NBSAPs targets and actions for the Amazon should take into consideration the specific biodiversity assets, values, threats and drivers, and opportunities that exist in the region, as well as the socio-economic context of Amazonian local populations and the circumstances and needs of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.
- The consumption footprint in the Amazon is currently at unsustainable levels. Most of the deforestation is caused by food production, mainly livestock for meat production, and soy for animal feed and human consumption. Therefore, the NBSAPs of Amazonian countries, but primarily of developed countries outside the Amazon, must include objectives to reduce their footprint accompanied by sectoral and cross-sectoral action plans to achieve fair transformations of food, forestry, agricultural, and fisheries systems.
- To ensure economic prosperity in the Amazon and a fair transition to more sustainable development models, governments should implement actions aimed at identifying, reforming, or phasing out harmful incentives, including fossil fuel subsidies, completely or gradually, and should establish regulations and incentive to ensure that financial flows are aligned with NBSAPs.
- NBSAPs should prioritize the actions that contribute to achieving the aim of avoiding the tipping point, in alignment with the Belem Declaration.
- Given that the Amazon biome already has about 50% of its territory under protection either by protected areas or in indigenous territories,
 - NBSAPs should include a specific target for the Amazon that exceeds the global 30 by 30 goal, aiming at 80% protection for the biome in order to avoid reaching an ecological tipping point, complemented by expanding restoration and sustainable management efforts to degraded areas.
 - NBSAPs should include a target for participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and effective management processes covering all areas, including target(s) for restoration of degraded ecosystems by the impacts of illegal gold mining, deforestation or conversion.
 - NBSAPs should include targets and time bound actions for the recovery of threatened species such as jaguars, river dolphins, migratory freshwater fish, and primates, among others. They should also address wildlife trafficking and human-wildlife conflict, ensuring that the use of wild species is sustainable, safe, legal, and equitable.
 - NBSAP targets for reducing threats to biodiversity should be accompanied by measures to strengthen equitable governance that strengthens and empowers Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples, as well as ecological connectivity that privileges corridors for large-range terrestrial and freshwater species like the jaguar, large migratory catfishes and the river dolphin.



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- Targets and action plans should specify the political, legal, and other measures to be instituted, and detail how and when they will be implemented, to ensure that all supply chains sourcing from the Amazon are deforestation and conversion free (with ambitious policy actions by 2025 that can yield results well in advance of 2030 as a definite deadline). Furthermore, businesses should monitor and transparently disclose biodiversity-related risks, and implement measures to reduce their impacts, dependencies, and risks on biodiversity.

3. Whole of government and whole of society approach

- Alongside the environment ministry, a ministry with a cross sectoral coordination mandate (economy, planning, finance, etc.) should undertake the revision of the NBSAPs involving all other relevant ministries and agencies responsible for economic sectors that impact the Amazon, including those that mandate on tackling illegal activities such as illegal gold mining.
- NBSAPs should have coherent links with other national and regional policy, planning, and budgeting frameworks, including the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the Minamata National Action Plans (to phase out mercury use), and the Belém Declaration of the Amazon Presidential Summit (ACTO, 2023), as well as the international agenda to stop plastic pollution.

4. Means of implementation

- As part of Target 19, developed countries' NBSAPs should include ambitious targets related to means of implementation, aligned with the commitment to provide USD 20 billion international biodiversity finance annually by 2025 to support Amazonian countries in halting and reversing biodiversity loss and should reduce their own consumption and investment footprint in the Amazon.
- Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples, non-state actors, youth and women, should be meaningfully engaged in the implementation and monitoring of the NBSAPs.
- Direct access to funding for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities should be guaranteed to ensure implementation of locally led ambitious actions in support of sustainable livelihoods that strengthen sustainable use of biological resources and biodiversity conservation.

5. Human rights based approach

- The NBSAPs must outline measures to respect, protect, promote and fulfill human rights, including the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the rights to land and freshwater, resources, and full and equitable participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, women and youth. Actions must be specific for each relevant target and element of the NBSAPs. The Escazú Agreement can be referenced for the purpose of ensuring enabling conditions for access to environmental justice and information, and the establishment of adequate conditions for human rights defenders on environmental issues to develop their work.

- Besides the national monitoring framework, Amazonian governments should aim to have a regional, transparent and participatory system to track the implementation of the NBSAPs in light of the regional commitments contained under the Belem Declaration, to show if plans are adding up to prevent reaching the tipping point.
- Key stakeholders must join forces with governments to build measures for the protection of the Amazon in a way that fully incorporates the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and the support of civil society, to ensure the effective design and implementation of NBSAPs.

6. Timing

- Given that the revised NBSAPs are expected to be submitted before COP16, urgency is required. However, Amazonian governments must strive to adequately consult all stakeholders, including rights holders.

WWF stands ready to leverage our knowledge and experience in the biome to help deliver transformational change in support of Amazon countries' commitments through the design and implementation of strong NBSAPs, NDCs and other policy tools.

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Belem Declaration's commitments that align with the GBF Targets

Target 1- Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss: Establish an Amazon Alliance to fight deforestation with the purpose of stopping the Amazon region from reaching a tipping point; promoting compliance of national goals related to illegal logging, forest legislation, sustainable forest and integrated management for recovery of native vegetation, regional programs for forest control, capacity building for protected areas staff (art. 45). Ensure effective conservation of key biodiversity areas respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, including their traditional territories (art. 46). Implement actions for the eradication of illegal mining and related crimes (art. 64). Protect and guarantee human rights of Indigenous Peoples and their collective rights over their territories, especially Indigenous Peoples in isolation and initial contact (art. 101). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/1>

Target 2- Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems: Strengthen scientific cooperation for better understanding of climate change and forest interrelations for decision making on recovery, reestablishment of native vegetation in deforested, degraded or altered areas, among others. Strengthen mapping and monitoring of degraded areas and identify priorities for restoration with emphasis on native vegetation, contributing to the resilience of local productive systems (art. 53). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/2>

Target 3- Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas: Establish regional protocols for monitoring, cooperation, and mutual support for the management of water resources and for the revitalization, conservation and protection of water sources and their watersheds (art. 30). Establish the Amazon Alliance to Combat Deforestation for regional cooperation against deforestation to avoid reaching the tipping point (art. 45). Ensure and enable that terrestrial, inland water, marine and coastal areas are effectively conserved and protected (art. 46). Promote exchange of good practices on environmental regulation of land use to strengthen planning and land use mechanisms and acknowledgement of lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples, Local and Traditional Communities, including their conservation efforts (art. 49). Finance sustainable and value-added programs for forest products and biodiversity to reduce deforestation and forest and soil degradation, forest fires and biodiversity loss (art. 55). Conserve and sustainably manage inland water and coastal ecosystems and their resources considering ecological functions and local uses including conservation of aquatic ecosystems and river dolphins (art. 57). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/3>

Target 4- Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts:

Promote actions for the conservation and management of endangered species, promoting their monitoring (art. 59). Create a working group within ACTO related to the sustainable use of the genetic heritage and ancestral research knowledge within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol (Art. 60). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/4>

Target 5- Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species: Promote actions for conservation and management of endangered species in the Amazon Region (art. 59). Strengthen cooperation for prevention and reduction of illegal activities, including environmental crimes in accordance with the protection of biodiversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local and Traditional communities (art. 61). Cooperate effectively among countries to combat illegal trafficking of Amazonian species and products, including native and endemic species and those obtained from illegal mining and related crimes (art. 62). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/5>

Target 6.- Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact: Emphasize the need for effective cooperation between countries to combat illegal trafficking of Amazonian species and products (art. 62). Promote actions for conservation and management of endangered species in the Amazon Region (art. 59). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/6>

Target 7- Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity: Mapping and monitoring of degraded, polluted or altered areas identifying priority areas for ecosystem restoration and recovery (art. 53). Adopt urgent measures to eliminate air, soil, and water pollution to protect human health and the environment, including the development of an ambitious international agreement to end plastic pollution, recognizing the significant role of Indigenous traditional knowledge systems. Additionally, promote sustainable solutions that do not exacerbate existing pressures in the Amazon or create new negative impacts (Article 81). Strengthen health monitoring for populations exposed to mercury, hazardous waste, plastic pollution and air pollutants and experience exchange to mitigate risks and negative impacts on human health and the environment, considering existing agreements including on mercury, chemicals, hazardous waste, and plastic pollution (art. 92). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/7>

Target 8- Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience: Initiate dialogue on a possible Mechanism of Mitigation and Adaptation for Integrated and Sustainable Forest Management (art.42). Advance innovative mechanisms for financing climate action, including debt swaps (art.36). Promote the implementation of adaptation programs to reduce the vulnerability of Indigenous Peoples and Local and Traditional Communities (art.38). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/8>

Target 9- Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People: Guarantee the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Local and Traditional communities including the right to the territories and lands they inhabit, including titling of territories and lands and development of Indigenous territorial and environmental management policies as indispensable for biodiversity conservation (art. 47). Finance sustainable and value-added programs for forest products and biodiversity to reduce deforestation and forest and soil degradation, forest fires and biodiversity loss (art. 55). Establish a program for sustainable use of biodiversity in production chains of interest to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (art. 74). Develop a program for joint promotion of Amazonian products and services compatible with sustainable forests for the international market (art.75). Exchange experiences on food systems based on traditional agriculture, aquaculture and artisanal fishing to guarantee food security for Indigenous People and Local Communities (art. 96). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/9>

Target 10- Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry: Agree on common goals by 2030 to fight deforestation, halt illegal resource extraction and promote land-use planning with the ideal of reaching zero-deforestation (p.2). Develop conservation and management plans for agrobiodiversity zones and traditional agricultural systems (art. 56). Promote participatory management and sustainability for traditional fisheries through the strengthening of community measures, planning, monitoring

and fish quality with attention to pollution derived from economic activities and waste discharge (art. 58). Develop an agenda for the development of production chains based on the sustainable use of biodiversity resources with social inclusion (art. 73). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/10>

Target 11: Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People: Deepen cooperation in risk and disaster management (art. 50). Develop a common strategy to prevent and mitigate effects of El Niño in the region (art. 51). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/11>

Target 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts: Promote sustainability in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, etc. production chains, in accordance with national legislations and existing monitoring mechanisms (art. 71). Initiate a dialogue among governments on the sustainability of hydrocarbons and mining in the Amazon (art. 79). Foster sustainable tourism (art. 80). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/15>

Target 19- Mobilize \$200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity From all Sources, including \$30 Billion Through International Finance: Urge developed countries to meet their obligations to provide and mobilize support to developing countries, including development, climate and biodiversity financing, aiming at implementing national policies and programs for the sustainable development of the Amazon region (p.5). Work with development banks of Amazonian governments in the sustainable development of the region, supporting local sustainable enterprises and inclusive economic opportunities with public and private resources (art. 82). Exchange information and coordinate on bilateral or multilateral non-reimbursable financing for sustainable development in the region (art. 83). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/19>

Target 21- Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action: Invest in regional research and innovation for the development of innovative solutions and technologies, rescuing traditional knowledge and wisdom, for wealth generation associated with sustainable use and forest conservation (art. 78). Rescue and value diverse practices, traditional knowledge, ancestral knowledge, and practices and cosmovision of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (art. 102). Develop national policies and regional efforts for guaranteeing protection and respectful and dignified use of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' knowledge and wisdom (art. 108). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/21>

Target 22- Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all: Develop a new, common agenda for the Amazon, based on mechanisms of social participation and involving active participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local and Traditional communities (art. 1). Adopt measures to ensure full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, urban populations, and Local and Traditional Communities of the Amazon Region in decision-making and public policy formulation processes (art. 100). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/22>

Target 23-Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action: Strengthen cooperation to prevent and confront gender-based violence, misogyny, racism, and promote and protect human rights of women, girls, and Afro-descendants as a cross-cutting theme in the conservation, restoration, management and sustainable use of biodiversity (art. 103). <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/23>

See Belem Declaration and GBF targets.

<https://otca.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Declaracion-de-Belem.pdf>

<https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets>