



Accelerating Implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

Political, institutional and international
opportunities for delivery

October 2026

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Status and purpose: This report presents an evidence-informed analysis of conditions that can accelerate implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It is intended to inform discussion around the first Global Review, COP17 and implementation after COP17. The analysis complements WWF's formal COP17 position papers, which set out WWF's specific negotiating asks.

WWF is an independent conservation organization, with more than 38 million followers and a global network active through local leadership in over 100 countries. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and build a future in which people live in harmony with nature by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring the sustainable use of renewable natural resources, and promoting reduced pollution and wasteful consumption.

Introduction: Overcoming barriers to GBF implementation

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) commits countries to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 through action on conservation, restoration, sustainable use, finance, harmful incentives and the drivers of nature loss. The first Global Review is the moment to assess whether this is happening and, crucially, to respond where it is not.

The Global Report reveals uneven progress. Since adopting the GBF, governments have submitted national targets and reports, updated strategies, strengthened conservation measures, and developed policy and financing initiatives. However, activity, plans, and reported progress do not necessarily show implementation or biodiversity outcomes.

Purpose of this report. WWF commissioned the Global Cooperation Institute to examine why GBF implementation is lagging and what could accelerate delivery, including clear case studies on addressing barriers. The report complements the Global Report by applying a political-economy lens to selected barriers and identifying practical conditions to turn commitments into durable action towards 2030. It aims to inform Parties and other actors; it does not repeat the Global Report's assessment of all 23 targets or offer a comprehensive implementation blueprint.

A political-economy interpretation. The report asks: who benefits from the current situation; who bears the costs of change; who has authority or influence over decisions; what prevents action; and what could realistically shift these conditions? The IPBES framing of views, structures, and practices provides a cross-check.¹ This lens helps explain why scientific evidence, targets and plans alone do not necessarily lead to implementation.

The economic and geopolitical context has become tougher. Governments must accelerate biodiversity action while facing constrained public finances, pressure for growth and competitiveness, food and energy security concerns, land conflicts, political polarisation, and fragmented international relations. Many required reforms, such as changes to subsidies, land use, production systems, public investment, and trade, create immediate costs or risks for identifiable groups. Meanwhile, their benefits may be widely shared and realised over time. Internationally, persistent differences over responsibility, development space, finance, debt, and cost distribution shape implementation. These pressures make politically credible, institutionally feasible, and cooperative implementation approaches more important.

¹Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), Transformative Change Assessment, <https://www.ipbes.net/transformation-change-assessment> (accessed 4 October 2026).

Three connected challenges. Implementation gaps persist because the conditions for action are weak. Building on the Global Report, this report identifies three connected deficiencies.

First, **political demand is insufficient:** biodiversity objectives are widely accepted in principle but often overridden by short-term pressures related to economic growth, employment, food and energy security, and public expenditure. Political demand is constrained by short electoral and institutional cycles, powerful interests benefiting from existing arrangements, and economic and financial systems that still incentivise biodiversity exploitation.

Second, **national implementation architecture is often weak:** NBSAPs and targets do not automatically create the policy coherence, authority, resources, accountability and cross-government coordination required for delivery.

Third, **international support is often inadequate, fragmented, or poorly aligned with national implementation priorities.** Adequate, predictable, and accessible finance and fair burden-sharing remain essential, especially for biodiversity-rich developing countries, alongside capacity-building, technology transfer, and technical and scientific cooperation. Finance is essential but cannot alone overcome fragmented institutions, unequal responsibilities, or politically difficult transitions.

Accelerating implementation requires action on all three challenges.

- To respond to insufficient political demand, we propose stronger public and political narratives to make biodiversity more politically consequential and support existing constituencies and coalitions.
- To address weak implementation architecture, we focus on the authority, policy coherence, rights, partnerships, and accountability needed to translate commitments into delivery.
- To respond to inadequate international support, we propose focusing on feasible national pathways, regional cooperation, and science diplomacy that connect adequate and accessible finance, capacity, technology, knowledge, and fair burden-sharing to practical implementation.



Methodology and limitations. The analysis is a qualitative, selective synthesis. It drew on the Global Report, consultation material, non-state submissions, relevant literature, nine interviews, consultation discussions with government officials, international process specialists, researchers, civil-society practitioners, WWF country teams, emerging implementation cases, and comparative experience from other international processes. These sources serve different purposes: the Global Report identifies patterns in reported progress; consultation and non-state evidence identify blind spots; literature and interviews inform barrier analysis; and cases illustrate possible routes to change. Participants were purposively selected to test findings, identify blind spots, and examine practical experience; they do not represent a sample or establish barrier prevalence.

The seven priorities proposed in this report were selected through a qualitative assessment of where action could make the greatest practical difference. They respond to recurring and consequential implementation barriers, could unlock progress across multiple GBF targets, and offer feasible routes for action in the current political, economic, and institutional context. The priorities are deliberately selective rather than comprehensive; other target-specific measures and the Global Report's non-prescriptive actions remain necessary. Cases illustrate mechanisms and emerging practice, not proof of effectiveness or direct transferability. A longer technical note accompanies this advocacy report and is available on request.





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CHALLENGE 1

POLITICAL DEMAND IS INSUFFICIENT

Global Report finding: The Global Report identifies political will and ambition as critical implementation challenges. Although it records “strong political will and commitment” to the GBF, it finds that the collective scope and ambition of national targets still fall short of the global targets.² The shortfall is greatest in areas that require difficult choices beyond established conservation policy: mainstreaming biodiversity; sustainable consumption; reform of incentives and subsidies; participation and rights; policy coherence; and finance.³

² Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 1: Political will and ambition”, pp. 348–349.

³ CBD (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, p. 349.

The Report finds that implementation is not advancing sufficiently, particularly in addressing the underlying and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss. These include “unsustainable production and consumption patterns, misaligned economic incentives, and insufficient integration of biodiversity and its multiple values across sectors”.⁴ It finds limited progress on reforming harmful incentives and subsidies under Target 18, on biodiversity finance under Target 19, and on integrating biodiversity into policy, planning and decision-making under Target 14.⁵ While many Parties report engagement with ministries beyond the environment sector, they often describe this without evidence of coordinated implementation across government.⁶

Biodiversity is most likely to lose political priority when implementation requires decisions on economic incentives, budgets, land use, production, infrastructure, and development. These decisions may have immediate, concentrated costs, while biodiversity benefits are broader and longer term. This pattern shows that a major constraint is not simply a lack of biodiversity commitments or technical knowledge. Still, securing action is difficult when delivery affects powerful interests, established economic models, and immediate political priorities.

Biodiversity objectives are widely supported in principle but often lose out to short-term pressures around growth, employment, food and energy security, and public expenditure. The benefits of action- more resilient ecosystems, secure food and water systems, healthier communities, and reduced future risk- are widely shared and often realised over time. The costs of reform, however, may be immediate and concentrated among businesses, producers, workers, or communities. Those benefiting from current arrangements are often better organised and more influential than those who would benefit from change.

Many relevant decisions are made by finance, agriculture, infrastructure, trade, and planning ministries, where biodiversity may still be seen as an environmental concern rather than a national economic and social priority. Short political cycles reinforce this problem, but so do economic and financial systems that continue to reward biodiversity loss and externalise its costs.

Building political demand means changing these conditions: making biodiversity more relevant to public and political priorities, supporting constituencies and coalitions around specific reforms, and creating political space for action when difficult choices arise. In response to this first challenge, we propose two priorities: build a stronger public narrative and support movements and coalitions.

⁴CBD (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 2: Action and implementation”, pp. 350–351

⁵CBD (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section II.B, Target 14, pp. 212–213; Target 18, p. 228; and Target 19, pp. 230–231.

⁶CBD (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 4: Whole-of-Government approaches”, pp. 353–354.

PRIORITY 1

BUILD A STRONGER PUBLIC NARRATIVE

Make biodiversity politically consequential through stronger public and political narratives that link it to prosperity, resilience, health, livelihoods and security.

Biodiversity needs a stronger public and political narrative that positions nature as fundamental to national prosperity, resilience, and wellbeing rather than primarily as an environmental concern. The underlying arguments already exist in the GBF, the SDGs, and many national biodiversity strategies. The priority is to make them more politically effective by connecting biodiversity to decisions made by finance, agriculture, infrastructure, planning, health, and other ministries, as well as to the public concerns shaping those decisions.

A stronger narrative should connect biodiversity to food, land and water security, health, livelihoods, economic resilience, national security and future economic opportunity. It should also retain the multiple values of nature, including cultural, social and intrinsic values, alongside the rights, knowledge and stewardship of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Effective narratives will be nationally grounded, linking global biodiversity objectives to the development priorities, identities and concerns of societies.

A stronger narrative cannot alone overcome the interests and incentives that obstruct reform. Its role is to help make action politically feasible by strengthening the case for biodiversity where decisions are contested, widening the group of actors with a stake in implementation, and making it harder to treat biodiversity as an optional environmental concern when short-term pressures rise. Narrative and communications build political support for specific implementation choices where action is contested.

As one senior practitioner working across biodiversity and food systems observed, biodiversity is too often heard as “another problem” on an already crowded agenda, rather than “part of the solution” to food security, livelihoods and resilience. She argued that facts alone are unlikely to shift this response: “we don’t need to see the numbers, we need to see pathways forward” that show how change can work in different contexts.⁷ A government official involved in GBF implementation described the need for cross-sectoral ownership and political will, noting that climate spending, fiscal pressure and other immediate priorities were crowding out biodiversity.⁸

⁷GCI research interview with senior biodiversity and food-systems practitioner, 2026.

⁸GCI research interview with government official involved in GBF implementation, 2026.

Case study analysis, including the examples below, suggests that beyond generic awareness-raising, advocates should build stronger political support for specific implementation choices. The practical route is to identify policy decisions where insufficient political demand blocks progress, such as agricultural incentives, land-use planning, public investment, or infrastructure, and build communication and engagement around those decisions.

Evidence also cautions against treating single framing as a substitute for audience insight. Experimental research on tropical forest restoration found that instrumental ecosystem-service messages and dynamic social-norm messages did not reliably increase public support; people's existing connection to nature was more influential. The practical implication is to test messages with the audiences whose support is needed for a particular decision, rather than if economic arguments will persuade everyone.⁹

This work requires audience insight, political economy analysis, credible evidence, communications capacity, and partnerships beyond the biodiversity sector. Targeted work can begin quickly, but changing political priorities and building durable public support will take years.

COP17 can help establish this political framing. In its high-level messaging on the Global Review, COP17 can present biodiversity implementation as integral to food, water, and health security, livelihoods, resilience, and economic stability. This gives environment, finance, and sectoral ministers a shared basis to present biodiversity action as part of national development and economic policy rather than an additional environmental commitment.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- Governments have the central role in connecting biodiversity to national development and economic priorities, particularly through finance, agriculture, infrastructure, planning, health, and environment ministries.
- Civil-society organisations, including WWF, can assemble and communicate evidence, test messages, convene dialogue, and support public engagement around specific reforms.
- Trusted messengers will differ by audience and context and may include farmers, businesses, financial institutions, producer organisations, scientists and public leaders.
- Narratives concerning Indigenous Peoples and local communities should be co-developed with the rights-holders, reflect their priorities and knowledge systems, and recognise them as leaders and implementation partners.

⁹Simons, D.-L., Bradbury, R. B. and Evans, K. L. (2025), "Impacts of ecosystem service message framing and dynamic social norms on public support for tropical forest restoration", *Conservation Biology*, 39(2), e14373, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.14373> (accessed 3 October 2026).

Narrative is an evidence-informed proposition, not a stand-alone solution with a settled evidence base. The cases below show how framing can support a specific political choice when credible, nationally grounded, and paired with incentives, institutions, and organised constituencies.

Finland

Framing peatland restoration through resilience and security

Finland's Hydrology LIFE project (2017–2023) shows the practical foundation for a broader public and political narrative. The project restored 5,800 hectares of peatland and wetlands, 42 kilometres of streams, and the hydrology of 14 lakes using measures such as blocking drainage ditches, restoring water levels, and preventing bird lakes from becoming overgrown.¹⁰

Now, a newer security framing has extended the political case. In 2026, a joint Ministry of the Environment–Ministry of Defence working group concluded that restoring mires in eastern and northern Finland could strengthen national defence by creating natural barriers to movement while also contributing to biodiversity recovery, climate adaptation, and societal resilience. It estimated that at least 180,000 hectares of mires could offer both restoration and defence benefits.¹¹

Finland's security context is specific, but this example shows how credible, nationally grounded evidence can connect a restoration decision to priorities that command wider political attention and help biodiversity enter conversations beyond the environment sector.

¹⁰Metsähallitus, "Hydrology LIFE", <https://www.metsa.fi/en/project/hydrology-life/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

¹¹Finnish Government, "Working group: Major synergies between restoration and national defence", 15 June 2026, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/-/1410903/working-group-major-synergies-between-restoration-and-national-defence> (accessed 3 October 2026).

PRIORITY 2

SUPPORT MOVEMENTS AND COALITIONS

Support movements and coalitions around specific implementation challenges, recognising existing organising around land, food, climate, rights and social justice.

Transformative implementation requires organised constituencies that can build political support for specific reforms. The GBF adopts a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, recognising that implementation depends on action across society, not governments alone. This requires more than a new narrative, public-awareness campaigns, or consultation on individual policies. It requires durable alliances around shared objectives and reforms, bringing together people and organisations with different interests but a common stake in successful implementation.

This does not mean creating or directing a single global biodiversity movement. Movements often emerge from lived impacts, rights struggles, and existing organising around land, food, climate, livelihoods, or social justice. They may take the form of rights-holder organisations, social movements, long-term coalitions, community platforms, or time-bound campaigns. The task is to recognise these constituencies, support their agency, and, where interests align, help build coalitions to address specific implementation challenges.

Many biodiversity reforms create a difficult political asymmetry: the costs of changing subsidies, land use, or production practices may be concentrated among groups, while the benefits of healthier ecosystems are widely distributed. Those expecting to lose from reform have strong incentives to organise, while potential beneficiaries may remain politically diffuse. Supporting movements and coalitions can help correct that imbalance by making beneficiaries of biodiversity action more visible, connected, and politically influential.

Movements, coalitions, and campaigns play different roles. Movements build broad-based political energy and legitimacy; coalitions bring organisations together around shared reforms; and campaigns focus attention on specific policy, budget, or implementation decisions. All can support implementation when they meaningfully influence priorities, rather than serving as vehicles for an externally defined agenda.

As one senior practitioner who convenes a cross-sectoral partnership observed, participants do not want “just a community of practice that learns together”; they want momentum to do things differently through advocacy, policy change, or jointly funded action in a defined context and timeframe.¹²

¹²GCI research interview with senior practitioner convening a cross-sectoral partnership, 2026.

A 2026 global study examined 2,801 socio-environmental mobilisations involving communities, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, and other civil society actors challenging environmentally damaging activities. The study recorded at least one progressive outcome in 61 per cent of cases, including project cancellations, successful court decisions, new legislation, and institutional change. Around 40 per cent of mobilisations occurred within the world's highest-priority areas for species conservation. The study concludes that organised civil society can be a significant agent of biodiversity conservation, especially when movements are strengthened through broader coalitions, networks, and access to resources. It also identifies substantial risks: many movements face repression, criminalisation, or violence.¹³

The climate movement provides a case study in how to turn an environmental issue into political demand. Over two decades, scientific institutions, environmental organisations, youth movements, businesses, cities and other actors helped turn climate change into a mass political issue. Fridays for Future mobilised an estimated 7.6 million people across 185 countries during the September 2019 global strikes. Research in Germany and the United Kingdom found that climate protest increased political and media attention to climate change. The experience shows how broad, sustained constituencies can make an environmental issue more visible and politically consequential.¹⁴

This priority requires flexible, long-term resources; access to information and decision-making; stronger networks; and protection for civic space and environmental defenders. Support should respond to the priorities of existing movements and organisations, rather than direct them toward an externally defined agenda. Building trust, collective advocacy, and political influence requires sustained work. The Global Review is an opportunity to galvanise support for existing coalitions and initiatives, and to start new ones, to drive reform.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- Indigenous Peoples' organisations, local communities, women's groups, youth networks, farmers and fishers, trade unions, cities, businesses, scientists, faith and cultural organisations, and civil-society groups all have potential roles.
- Governments should protect civic space, environmental defenders, and the rights to information, participation, and justice that enable meaningful collective action. They should create pathways for organised constituencies to influence policy, budget, and implementation decisions.
- Funders should provide flexible, long-term resources that support local organising, networks, coalition-building, and protection where needed.
- Major organisations can convene where useful, connect national and international action, support shared advocacy, and join coalitions led by others. Their role should be to support leadership, political access, and agency, rather than to recruit actors to a predetermined biodiversity campaign.

¹³Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (2026), "Socio-environmental mobilizations and biodiversity conservation", available at www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2513327123

¹⁴de Moor, J. et al. (2020), "Protest for a Future II: Composition, Mobilization and Motives of the Participants in Fridays For Future Climate Protests on 20–27 September, 2019", <https://researchportal.helsinki.fi/en/publications/protest-for-a-future-ii-composition-mobilization-and-motives-of-t/>; and Nature Human Behaviour (2024), <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-024-02075-4> (accessed 4 October 2026).

Costa Rica

Building a coalition for forest reform



In the 1990s, Costa Rica faced pressure to cut funding for forest protection just as earlier policies began to reverse deforestation. Political and environmental leaders built a broad coalition behind forestry reform, helping secure a new Forestry Law and a nationwide Payments for Environmental Services program, partly financed by a fossil-fuel tax. Forest cover rose from around 42 per cent in 1997 to 51 per cent in 2005.¹⁵

The coalition mattered because it was organised around an identifiable political and fiscal decision, rather than a general appeal to protect forests. The 1996 Forestry Law provided the legal basis for a national Payments for Environmental Services system, and a share of the fossil-fuel tax provided dedicated funding. This linked environmental objectives to a durable administrative and funding mechanism, rather than relying solely on annual conservation allocations.¹⁶

The program gave landowners a reason to participate by paying for forest-related environmental services, including protecting and restoring forest cover. It therefore joined political support, a legal framework, public finance, and a practical offer to producers. The rise in forest cover also fit within a wider policy and economic context. Still, the case shows how a coalition can help carry a reform from political agreement into an institution that changes incentives on the ground.

¹⁵Princeton University, Successful Societies, "Creating a Green Republic: Payments for Environmental Services in Costa Rica, 1994–2005", <https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/publications/creating-green-republic-payments-environmental-services-costa-rica-1994%E2%80%932005> (accessed 3 October 2026).

¹⁶FONAFIFO, "Payment of Environmental Services", <https://www.fonafifo.go.cr/en/servicios/pago-de-servicios-ambientales> (accessed 3 October 2026).



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CHALLENGE 2

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ARCHITECTURE IS TOO WEAK

Global Report finding: The Global Report finds that whole-of-government action remains “uneven and insufficient”, despite many Parties reporting efforts to strengthen environmental governance, mainstream biodiversity and improve policy coherence.¹⁷ It identifies particular weaknesses in integrating biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, and in securing integration across levels of government and sectors.¹⁸ Targets 1 and 14, which are central to integrated planning and mainstreaming, have shown limited progress.¹⁹

¹⁷Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026) Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 4: Whole-of-Government approaches”, pp. 353–354.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 353–354.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 354.

The Report records engagement with ministries beyond the environment sector, including agriculture, fisheries and finance. However, this engagement is “often described in general terms without including information on coordinated implementation across sectors”.²⁰

The Report also finds that implementation cannot succeed without actors beyond national governments. Still, the rights, participation, resource needs, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, youth, and other actors are not yet fully realised, supported, or consistently reflected in planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting.²¹ National targets provide limited coverage of access to information and justice, rights over lands, territories, resources and traditional knowledge and gender-responsive biodiversity governance.²²

Taken together, these findings point to a central implementation challenge: national targets and NBSAPs do not consistently create the authority, coordination, accountability, and inclusive partnerships required to change the decisions driving biodiversity loss. Ambitious plans alone do not create the

authority, incentives, institutions, and relationships needed for delivery. Responsibilities are often dispersed across ministries and government levels, each with different mandates, budgets, and political priorities. Environment ministries may be expected to lead implementation without the authority or resources to influence the economic decisions driving biodiversity loss. Those who bear the costs, risks, or practical responsibilities of transition may have limited influence over how policies are designed and implemented. This can weaken policy coherence, reduce legitimacy, and generate resistance.

Strengthening national implementation architecture does not necessarily mean adding a bureaucratic layer. It means ensuring necessary functions are in place: political authority; cross-government responsibility; conflict resolution; links between national and subnational action; integration into sectoral plans, budgets, and investment; accountability; and continuity across political cycles. It also requires recognition of the rights, authority, knowledge, and existing contributions of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other rights-holders, alongside meaningful partnerships with wider actors whose decisions shape biodiversity outcomes. We therefore propose two priority areas in response to this challenge: strengthening national implementation architecture and securing rights and strengthening equitable governance. Neither is new, but both should now be reprioritised.

²⁰Ibid., p. 353.

²¹Ibid., section III.B, “Key message 5: Whole-of-society”, pp. 355–356.

²²Ibid., p. 355.

PRIORITY 3

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ARCHITECTURE

Embed biodiversity across government through political authority, cross-government responsibility, policy coherence, budgets, investment and accountability.

Evidence from the Global Report and interviews shows why national implementation architecture matters. The Global Report finds whole-of-government action remains uneven and insufficient, and engagement of ministries beyond the environment sector is often described without evidence of coordinated implementation.

Interview evidence points to the same conclusion. A senior figure with experience in government and national biodiversity processes identified coordination as the feature that separates countries moving beyond “high-level political discourse” from those achieving “true implementation.” This means bringing the right actors together and working vertically and horizontally across ministries. Otherwise, NBSAPs risk remaining documents few actors understand, own or use.²³

A government official responsible for GBF implementation added a complementary point: cross-sectoral ministries need to own implementation and include biodiversity priorities in their budgets. Without that ownership, policies can be shelved when fiscal pressures and other immediate priorities intervene. The aim is to ensure biodiversity objectives become part of the everyday business of government: reflected in national development strategies, agricultural and land-use policy, fiscal policy, public procurement, infrastructure planning, and investment decisions.

This does not require a single institutional model or an additional layer of bureaucracy. It requires clear political authority, responsibilities and coordination arrangements beyond environment ministries. Governments need ways to bring finance, agriculture, planning, infrastructure, industry and other relevant ministries around shared objectives, manage trade-offs, monitor implementation, link national and subnational action and maintain continuity across political and budgetary cycles.

What this means in practice. The appropriate institutional model will vary by country, but credible national implementation architecture should answer five practical questions:

²³GCI research interview with senior figure experienced in government and national biodiversity processes, 2026.

- Is there a body with sufficient political authority to resolve conflicts between environment, finance, agriculture, infrastructure, trade and other relevant sectors?
- Have the ministries and subnational authorities whose decisions drive biodiversity loss been assigned clear delivery responsibilities?
- Is biodiversity being integrated into the next budget, public-investment plan, land-use decision or sector strategy, rather than referenced in an NBSAP?
- Are resources, monitoring and accountability arrangements in place to sustain delivery across political and budgetary cycles?
- Can Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other rights-holders, alongside relevant subnational and societal actors, meaningfully influence the decisions that affect them?

National architecture should connect plans to delivery. This means linking national targets to sectoral responsibilities, budgets, investment plans, implementation capacity and accountability. Where available, national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments can help identify financing needs and options for delivering NBSAP priorities. This means using the NBSAP as a framework for coordination and direction rather than allowing it to remain a parallel environmental strategy with limited influence over wider government policy.

Stronger architecture requires political sponsorship at the centre of government, technical capacity within ministries, data and monitoring systems and sustained support for cross-sector coordination. International partners can support peer learning, institutional advice and capacity-building but cannot create the domestic authority needed to manage trade-offs. Assigning responsibilities, establishing coordination mechanisms and requiring biodiversity screening in relevant plans can begin immediately if it has not already. However, embedding biodiversity in fiscal policy, public investment and sectoral incentives will require sustained work across multiple budget and planning cycles.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- Heads of government and central coordinating institutions are important because they can mandate cooperation across ministries and resolve competing priorities.
- Environment ministries retain a central role in setting biodiversity objectives, providing expertise and monitoring progress, but finance, agriculture, infrastructure, planning, industry, trade and subnational authorities must share responsibility for delivery.
- Legislatures, public financial institutions, audit bodies and independent advisory institutions can strengthen accountability and continuity.

- Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other rights-holders should be recognised as partners with rights, authority and knowledge relevant to implementation.
- Businesses and civil-society organisations also have important roles in the sectors and decisions that shape biodiversity outcomes.

COP17 can reinforce this priority by moving beyond a general call for mainstreaming. Building on Target 14, Decision 16/13 and the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Champions Group, Parties could voluntarily use existing mainstreaming processes to identify: the central authority responsible for implementation; the two or three economic sectors driving their main biodiversity pressures; and the next national planning, budget or investment decisions through which NBSAP priorities will be integrated. This would give countries a practical way to show how biodiversity is beginning to shape sectoral mandates, public spending and decisions across government, without creating a new COP17 requirement or reporting checklist.

Colombia

Linking a biodiversity plan to wider development choices

Colombia's Biodiversity Action Plan 2024–2030 translates the GBF into six national targets and 191 actions. It was developed through engagement across government, including agriculture, commerce, mines, transport, health, education, and housing, alongside regional consultations and biodiversity pacts. The plan links biodiversity to participatory territorial planning, sustainable and regenerative production, and the biodiversity economy. It shows how an NBSAP can provide a basis for cross-government coordination rather than remain a standalone environmental document.²⁴

The process was unusually broad: around 100,000 people participated across 23 cities, including ethnic communities, academia, private-sector and civil-society organisations, and 15 national-government sectors. This matters because it created a route for biodiversity priorities to be discussed with the institutions and constituencies that shape land use, production, infrastructure, and territorial development.²⁵

²⁴Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, "Colombia opens COP16 with presentation of its Biodiversity Action Plan to 2030", <https://www.minambiente.gov.co/colombia-abre-la-cop16-con-la-presentacion-oficial-de-su-plan-de-accion-para-proteger-la-biodiversidad-al-2030/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

²⁵Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, "Colombia receives global recognition for its Biodiversity Action Plan to 2030", <https://www.minambiente.gov.co/colombia-recibe-reconocimiento-mundial-por-su-plan-de-accion-de-biodiversidad-al-2030/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

Implementation remains a work in progress, but Colombia's Seventh National Report records 31 per cent progress across national biodiversity targets. Herencia Colombia, which had brought 19 million hectares under protection and conservation by April 2026, is one concrete part of that wider picture rather than the sole measure of implementation.²⁶

China

National-park reform and clearer conservation authority

China's national-park reforms consolidated previously fragmented protected-area responsibilities, clarified central and local roles, and linked conservation more closely to land-use and national development planning. The reforms also included co-management, participatory monitoring and ecological-ranger schemes, demonstrating how institutional reform can link national coordination with local implementation.

The reforms gained a clearer statutory basis through the National Park Law, which took effect in January 2026. This shows how clarifying mandates and connecting central standards with local institutions can reduce fragmentation in a defined part of the implementation system.²⁷ For Priority 3, the relevant lesson is institutional: national architecture needs both an agreed direction and clear authority for delivery.

²⁶Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, Seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2026, https://www.minambiente.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/WEB_7%C2%B0-INFORME-NACIONAL.pdf (accessed 3 October 2026).

²⁷National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, National Park Law, effective 1 January 2026; Zhang, Z. et al. (2025), "Scaling up mainstreaming biodiversity through national park reforms in China", Bulletin of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, 39, 2025001, <https://doi.org/10.1051/bcas/2025001> (accessed 3 October 2026).

France

Coordinating ecological planning from the centre of government



In 2022, France created a General Secretariat for Ecological Planning (SGPE) under the Prime Minister to coordinate biodiversity, climate, energy and circular economy strategies across government. It supports implementation, monitors progress and promotes coherence among environmental, economic and social priorities. The example illustrates the value of central authority in bringing ministries together around shared objectives.²⁸

Its significance lies in the function it was designed to perform: placing ecological planning at the centre of executive government, convening ministries, tracking sectoral trajectories and linking environmental objectives to economic and social policy. This created a route for biodiversity to enter wider planning, rather than remain solely an environment-ministry concern.²⁹

The case also illustrates a potential limitation. The SGPE's political influence has weakened under subsequent prime ministers; it now advises political leadership rather than consistently directing it. Central coordination needs more than a formal mandate: it depends on sustained political sponsorship, routine decision-making authority, and links to sectoral plans and investment.

²⁸Légifrance, General Secretariat for Ecological Planning, https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/article_lc/LEGIARTI000048516894/2026-05-05 (accessed 3 October 2026).

²⁹French Government, "Le Secrétariat général à la planification écologique", <https://www.info.gouv.fr/grand-dossier/france-nation-verte/le-secretariat-general-a-la-planification-ecologique>; Légifrance, Article LEGIARTI000048516894, https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/article_lc/LEGIARTI000048516894/2026-05-05 (accessed 3 October 2026).

PRIORITY 4

SECURE RIGHTS AND STRENGTHEN EQUITABLE GOVERNANCE

Secure rights, authority and customary governance as foundations for legitimate and durable biodiversity implementation.

This priority is about governance and power, not just participation. Many decisions required to implement the GBF (on spatial planning, restoration, protected areas, agriculture, infrastructure, and resource use) determine who has access to, authority over, and benefits from lands, territories, waters, and resources. Where these decisions affect Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other rights-holders, implementation cannot be treated as a technical exercise or a consultation after policy is set.

Secure rights, customary governance, and meaningful influence over decisions are conditions for implementation. They enable rights-holders to shape priorities and trade-offs, apply their knowledge, and hold public and private actors accountable. This includes full and effective participation; free, prior and informed consent where applicable; secure tenure; accessible information; safeguards and grievance mechanisms; direct access to resources; and fair sharing of costs and benefits. Indigenous Peoples should be recognised for their distinct collective rights, authority, and knowledge, rather than being folded into generic stakeholder categories or treated primarily as beneficiaries or delivery agents for conservation programmes.

These conditions do not automatically guarantee biodiversity outcomes, and their effects depend on context. They do, however, matter particularly where implementation changes access to land or natural resources. The Global Report finds that the rights, participation and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are still insufficiently supported in implementation.³⁰ The IPBES Transformative Assessment identifies equitable governance and recognition of rights as enabling conditions for transformative change.³¹ A technical expert interviewed for this research made the practical implication clear: tenure security is fundamental, and Indigenous Peoples need to lead processes rather than be treated as beneficiaries. He warned that where tenure is not recognised, conservation or agricultural measures can create displacement rather than durable implementation.³²

³⁰Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2026), Revised Global Report on Collective Progress in the Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Add.1/Rev.1, Targets 21 and 22, pp. 257–259.

³¹Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (2024), Thematic Assessment Report on the Underlying Causes of Biodiversity Loss and the Determinants of Transformative Change and Options for Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, Summary for Policymakers, especially the findings on inclusive, accountable and adaptive governance.

³²GCI expert interview, 2026. See also IPBES (2023), Report of the Second Indigenous and Local Knowledge Dialogue Workshop for the Transformative Change Assessment, pp. 30–31, which identifies insecure tenure as a source of evictions, displacement and loss of access and use.

This priority requires time, trust, accessible participation processes, secure rights, appropriate safeguards, and long-term resources for local organisations. It may also require changes to laws, tenure arrangements, benefit-sharing systems, access to public finance, and government practices. Practical improvements in participation and local partnerships can begin within one to two years. Strengthening rights, trust, local institutions, and addressing entrenched inequalities will require sustained work over several years.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- National and subnational governments need to establish the legal, institutional and financial conditions for rights-based and equitable implementation.
- Indigenous Peoples' organisations, local communities, Afro-descendant Peoples, women, youth, farmers, fishers and other rights-holders should lead or shape decisions according to their distinct rights, authority and knowledge.
- Businesses, civil-society organisations, local authorities and producer organisations also have important roles, but should not be conflated with rights-holders.
- WWF and other partners can support dialogue, capacity, evidence-sharing and locally led action, while ensuring that their own programmes do not displace local leadership.

COP17 can reinforce existing GBF commitments on rights, equitable governance and whole-of-society implementation without creating a new planning requirement. Relevant routes include the Global Review outcome, Article 8(j), resource mobilisation and the financial mechanism. After COP17, Parties and partners can use existing NBSAP, sectoral and finance processes to strengthen meaningful participation, customary governance, FPIC where applicable, safeguards, grievance mechanisms and direct access to finance.

Brazil

Benefit-sharing for custodians of traditional knowledge



Brazil's National Benefit-Sharing Fund (FNRB) channels benefits from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge to organisations representing Indigenous Peoples, Quilombola communities, Traditional Peoples and Communities, and Traditional Farmers. In 2025, its first Guardians of Sociobiodiversity award supported 20 grassroots organisations, each with R\$45,000.³³ The second edition in 2026 expanded the award to 50 organisations at R\$50,000 each, directing R\$2.5 million to beneficiaries.³⁴ Two further R\$1.5 million calls are being prepared to support conservation of genetic resources through ex situ collections and on-farm conservation.

The significance is both institutional and financial. Benefit-sharing is made visible through a public mechanism that directs resources to organisations representing people whose knowledge and stewardship are implicated in the use of biodiversity. The awards do not on their own demonstrate equitable benefit-sharing across every use of genetic resources. They are, however, a concrete step from legal recognition towards resources reaching representative grassroots organisations.

Ecuador

Indigenous stewardship of agrobiodiversity



The Amazonian Chakra is an ancestral, biodiverse agroforestry system managed by Indigenous communities in Napo province, Ecuador. It combines trees, food crops and medicinal plants in a landscape that supports food and livelihood security, native agrobiodiversity, cultural practice and knowledge transmission.

³³Brazilian National Foundation for Indigenous Peoples, "Indigenous organisations can compete for R\$45,000 in the Guardians of Sociobiodiversity award", 2025, <https://www.gov.br/funai/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2025/organizacoes-indigenas-podem-concorrer-a-r-45-mil-no-premio-201guardias-da-sociobiodiversidade201d-inscricoes-vao-ate-24-de-janeiro> (accessed 3 October 2026).

³⁴Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change of Brazil, "Second edition of the Guardians of Sociobiodiversity award", 2026, <https://www.gov.br/povosindigenas/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2026/mma-prorroga-inscricoes-para-a-2a-edicao-do-premio-guardias-da-sociobiodiversidade> (accessed 3 October 2026).

FAO recognised the Amazonian Chakra as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System in 2023.³⁵

The governance lesson is that Indigenous communities and their own institutions carry stewardship, rather than adding it to an externally designed conservation programme. Recognition can strengthen visibility and support for these systems. Still, it does not substitute for secure rights, authority over territory and resources, or meaningful influence over the policies that affect them.



In Papua New Guinea's Bismarck Forest Corridor, the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme works through customary land rights and Indigenous institutions. Communities have developed rules for hunting, deforestation and resource use, and have agreed to four voluntary conservation deeds covering 19 clans and 209 km². The example shows how conservation can build on existing community authority rather than create parallel governance structures.

This approach starts from the country's tenure reality: 97 per cent of land in Papua New Guinea is under customary tenure. The programme works with four Indigenous communities in the Bismarck Forest Corridor, where voluntary conservation deeds enable customary landowners to set rules for wildlife and natural resource use collectively. It also combines conservation with locally relevant livelihoods and capacity-building, rather than treating community governance as an add-on.³⁶

The case shows how implementation arrangements can begin with existing land rights and institutions, then support communities in setting and enforcing rules they regard as legitimate.

³⁵Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, "The Amazonian Chakra, a traditional agroforestry system managed by Indigenous communities in Napo province, Ecuador", <https://www.fao.org/agroforestry/fao%27s-work/faos-work/article-detail/the-amazonian-chakra-a-traditional-agroforestry-system-managed-by-indigenous-communities-in-napo-province-ecuador/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

³⁶Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, "Papua New Guinea | Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme", <https://www.fao.org/in-action/swm-programme/where-we-work/papua-new-guinea/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

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CHALLENGE 3

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT INSUFFICIENTLY ENABLES COUNTRY-OWNED IMPLEMENTATION

Global Report finding. The Global Report confirms that adequate, predictable and accessible finance, alongside capacity-building, technology transfer, technical and scientific cooperation, remains essential to GBF implementation. It records some gains in these areas but finds that access to sufficient and timely means remains a barrier across the GBF. Targets 15, 16, 18 and 19 are among the lowest in Parties' self-assessments of progress, and the 2025 milestone of US\$20 billion a year in international biodiversity finance was likely not met. This is particularly important for biodiversity-rich developing countries facing substantial direct and opportunity costs. The report also points to the broader international drivers of biodiversity loss, including trade, consumption and global supply chains.³⁷

³⁷Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 3: Means of implementation”, pp. 351–353.

The Global Report identifies systemic needs across national reports: inadequate financing, insufficient institutional and human resource capacity, fragmented governance and coordination, weak monitoring and data systems, and incomplete or unenforced legal frameworks. It treats means of implementation as a package: finance, capacity, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer must reinforce one another. Interviews also confirm that support is often fragmented, short-term or poorly aligned with national priorities and implementation needs. Finance remains a requirement, but finance alone cannot guarantee delivery when countries also face institutional constraints, limited capacity, weak coordination and politically difficult choices about development pathways.³⁸

International support operates within unequal relationships shaped by longstanding questions of responsibility, equity, development space, debt and burden-sharing. Biodiversity-rich countries may be expected to protect ecosystems that generate global benefits while carrying substantial domestic costs. At the same time, externally driven finance, technical assistance and reporting requirements can reflect donor priorities and project cycles rather than supporting coherent, nationally owned implementation. This can make support difficult to access, hard to coordinate and less effective in addressing the political and institutional barriers to delivery.

More effective international support requires both fair burden-sharing and stronger alignment. The politics are substantive: biodiversity-rich countries can face foregone revenues, fiscal costs and domestic political risks when protecting ecosystems that generate global benefits, while providers of support may prioritise their own strategic, commercial or reporting interests. Finance, capacity, technology and knowledge must therefore reinforce nationally determined priorities, reach relevant actors at the right time and avoid creating new conditionalities or parallel agendas. This also requires action on international economic and policy drivers that make biodiversity-positive development more difficult.

The following proposals focus on country-owned pathways, practical regional cooperation and science diplomacy as priority routes at this stage to make international cooperation as effective as possible in complex circumstances.

³⁸CBD (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, section II.D, “Means of implementation”, pp. 307–308, 321 and 329.

PRIORITY 5

SUPPORT FEASIBLE NATIONAL PATHWAYS

Support feasible national pathways that connect policy reform, public investment, finance, capacity and long-term implementation around nationally agreed priorities.

This priority is not meant to create another biodiversity plan, treat blended finance as a solution in itself, or make a pathway a precondition for finance or technical support. Countries already have plans, targets and projects; the challenge is to connect them into a practical programme of action that governments, rights-holders, civil society, businesses and international partners can implement together.

A feasible pathway should identify the national development priorities to which biodiversity contributes; the policy and institutional reforms required; the sectors and actors responsible; and the domestic and international resources needed to deliver them. It should build on existing NBSAPs, national biodiversity finance plans and other national processes, and may focus on voluntary priority transitions rather than attempting to cover every target at once. It should bring relevant actors together around a common national objective, rather than allowing government agencies, NGOs, funders and other partners to pursue separate agendas, compete for resources or remain accountable primarily to external priorities.

National biodiversity plans are vulnerable when governments change, budgets tighten, or political priorities shift. Sovereign sustainable bonds, dedicated public funds, fiscal reforms and other nationally appropriate instruments can help provide greater continuity for a well-developed pathway. Their role is not to constrain national choice through externally imposed commitments, but to support nationally agreed priorities across a five- to ten-year horizon. As one senior former government official interviewed for this research put it, resourcing can serve as a “lock-in mechanism”. When an agreed policy package is connected to long-term fiscal and financing decisions, it is less vulnerable to political turnover. He cautioned, however, that debt swaps can deliver continuity while constraining national choice if they lock countries into externally settled priorities.³⁹

³⁹GCI research interview with senior former government official interviewed for this research, 2026.

Adequate, predictable and accessible finance, alongside capacity-building, technology transfer, technical and scientific cooperation and fair burden-sharing, remains essential. Support should be available as pathways develop, rather than only after they are complete. The effectiveness and alignment of support also matter; programme support should strengthen nationally determined priorities and institutions, rather than creating fragmented projects, parallel agendas or unintended conditionalities. This is particularly important for biodiversity-rich countries that bear substantial costs in protecting ecosystems of global value.

This priority requires political leadership, coordination capacity, fiscal and financial expertise, strong and meaningful participation processes and flexible international support responsive to nationally determined priorities. Developing national pathways, mobilising longer-term finance and aligning support behind national priorities need to advance together. This will take sustained work across several budget and political cycles, but countries should not have to complete another planning process before finance and other support become available.

An international enabling model is the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, which has begun translating nature-related risks and GBF implementation questions into the language of fiscal policy, public investment and procurement. It does not yet demonstrate national biodiversity outcomes. Still, it shows how international cooperation can equip finance ministries to participate in nationally led pathways rather than leave biodiversity to environment ministries alone.⁴⁰

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- National governments should lead pathway development, with political sponsorship from the centre of government and participation from finance, planning, environment, agriculture, infrastructure and other relevant ministries.
- Coordination spaces can bring together public institutions, financial institutions, businesses, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other rights-holders around a shared agenda.
- Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other rights-holders should participate based on their rights, authority and knowledge, rather than as simply one stakeholder group among others.
- Multilateral funds, development banks, bilateral partners, philanthropic organisations and international NGOs should align their support with nationally agreed pathways, rather than encouraging parallel project portfolios. WWF and other partners can help convene actors, support political-economy analysis, connect national and international partners, and advocate for support that enables long-term implementation.

⁴⁰Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, "Helsinki Principles", <https://www.financeministersforclimate.org/helsinki-principles> (accessed 4 October 2026).

COP17 entry point. The draft Global Review decision already invites Parties, voluntarily and as appropriate, to identify specific priorities for implementing their NBSAPs and the corresponding means of implementation, and to reflect these in relevant plans and policies. This creates an opening for interested Parties to develop country-owned pathways through existing NBSAPs, biodiversity finance plans or comparable national processes. Such pathways can help connect priority reforms, institutions, domestic resources, international support and safeguards around nationally determined objectives. COP17 need not prescribe a new template, deadline or reporting requirement; international partners should make finance, capacity-building and technical support available as pathways develop and are implemented.⁴¹

Brazil

Linking international finance to a national ecological transformation pathway

Brazil is using sovereign finance to connect international capital with nationally defined environmental priorities. Its Sovereign Sustainable Bond Framework makes terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity, sustainable land use and natural resource management eligible categories for sovereign financing. Brazil's first sustainable sovereign bond raised US\$2 billion, with 18 per cent of its environmental allocation subsequently directed to terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity.⁴²

The framework is more than a green label. It sets eligible categories, links proceeds to federal budget expenditure and commits the Treasury to publish allocation and impact reports. The 18 per cent figure records an allocation within the environmental categories of the first issuance; it is therefore evidence that biodiversity entered the financing architecture, not proof that biodiversity outcomes have already been achieved.⁴³

⁴¹Draft COP17 decision on the Global Review, paragraph 24, as circulated following SBI-7 (2026).

⁴²National Treasury of Brazil, Sovereign Sustainable Bond Framework, https://www.gov.br/tesouronacional/en/federal-public-debt/sustainable-bonds-files/FW-EN/?set_language=en (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁴³Brazilian National Treasury, "Brazil's Sovereign Sustainable Bond Framework", <https://www.gov.br/tesouronacional/en/federal-public-debt/sustainable-bonds-files/FW-EN> (accessed 3 October 2026).

The example illustrates the role of international cooperation in a national pathway: external finance is channelled through Brazil's own fiscal and policy framework, rather than treated as a separate conservation project. The bond sits within Brazil's wider Ecological Transformation Plan, which combines public finance, taxation, credit, regulation, private investment and the Brazilian Sustainable Taxonomy. It shows how international capital can reinforce nationally determined priorities when linked to a broader policy and investment strategy.

The international element is specific: investors purchase Brazil's sovereign bonds, while Brazil retains responsibility for selecting eligible public expenditure, reporting on its use and linking it to domestic policy. This differs from a stand-alone externally funded conservation project. It can give an agreed policy package greater continuity, but it also depends on fiscal credibility, transparent allocation, debt sustainability and the capacity to monitor results.⁴⁴

Not every country will want to issue a sovereign sustainable bond. The point is that international finance is most useful when it reinforces a nationally owned package of reform, investment and delivery arrangements, with public institutions accountable for how the resources are used.

PRIORITY 6

STRENGTHEN REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen regional cooperation for peer learning, shared ecosystems, pooled capacity, common data and practical implementation.

Regional cooperation should play a stronger role as a delivery route for translating global biodiversity commitments into national implementation. The GBF is negotiated globally and implemented primarily at the national level, but many implementation challenges lie between these levels. Ecosystems and river basins cross borders; countries in the same region often share production systems, markets and environmental pressures; and governments confronting similar challenges can learn from one another.

⁴⁴Brazilian National Treasury, "Brazil publishes the second Allocation and Impact Report on sovereign sustainable bonds", 14 November 2025, <https://www.gov.br/tesouronacional/en/news/brazil-publishes-the-second-allocation-and-impact-report-on-sovereign-sustainable-bonds> (accessed 3 October 2026).

Regional institutions can provide functions that individual countries cannot easily deliver alone: peer learning on policy reform; common data and knowledge systems; cooperation across shared ecosystems; pooled specialist capacity; regional finance and technical support; and a route for practical lessons from implementation to inform the Global Review. The priority is to build more systematically on existing regional infrastructure (regional dialogues, peer-learning platforms and Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centres) where countries face common barriers or share ecosystems that require coordinated action. COP17 can recognise and support this voluntary cooperation without creating a new regional planning or reporting requirement.

In a more fragmented geopolitical context, regional institutions can provide practical spaces for neighbours to sustain cooperation on shared interests, even when broader global agreement is difficult to achieve. Global processes can be distant from the practical problems governments encounter, while bilateral support may not always create space for mutual learning between countries facing comparable challenges. Regional cooperation offers a complementary route for governments to exchange experience directly and adapt approaches to their own circumstances.

This can speed up implementation and reduce risk. Governments considering subsidy reform, sustainable finance instruments, biodiversity mainstreaming or new governance arrangements do not need to start from scratch. Experience elsewhere in the region can demonstrate how reforms have been pursued, reveal where difficulties arose and provide models that can be adapted rather than imported wholesale.

Regional cooperation can also help address challenges that cannot be resolved within national boundaries, including shared ecosystems, migratory routes, marine areas and transboundary landscapes. It strengthens feasible national pathways without displacing national ownership and creates practical channels for evidence and implementation experience to move between countries and into the Global Review process.

Stronger regional cooperation requires reliable support for regional institutions, dedicated convening capacity, shared data and knowledge systems and resources for practical implementation, not dialogue alone. Building joint financing approaches, coordinated ecosystem management or durable regional implementation platforms will require sustained investment over several years.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- National governments remain responsible for implementation, but existing regional organisations and partnerships can act as delivery vehicles. These may include regional environmental programmes, regional economic communities, development banks, river basin and marine institutions, cross-border landscape partnerships, regional centres for technical and scientific cooperation, and regional scientific networks.

- Relevant national actors extend beyond environment ministries to foreign affairs, finance, agriculture, water, infrastructure and planning ministries, depending on the shared challenge.
- Regional and national offices of major international organisations can help convene partners, connect national experience and support cooperation around shared ecosystems and implementation priorities.

Pacific

Regional infrastructure for GBF implementation

Pacific Island countries are using the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to align national biodiversity targets, share experiences in NBSAP implementation, and coordinate ahead of global negotiations. In 2024, SPREP became the Oceania Regional Centre for Technical and Scientific Cooperation for GBF implementation, providing a regional platform for technical support, knowledge exchange and resource mobilisation. More recently, Pacific countries have used regional processes to improve coherence between climate and nature policy, including shared data and financing approaches.⁴⁵

The regional function is practical. For small island states with limited specialist capacity, SPREP can pool technical expertise, convene peer exchange, support common data and mobilise resources without displacing national ownership. Its role in regional technical and scientific cooperation creates a standing channel through which countries can share, adapt and carry national implementation questions into wider Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) processes.⁴⁶

The example shows how an existing regional institution can reduce implementation costs and risks, particularly where countries share ecological conditions and need support closer to their circumstances than a global process can provide.

⁴⁵Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, "SPREP recognised as Oceania Regional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre", <https://www.sprep.org/node/69446> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁴⁶Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, "SPREP recognised as Oceania Regional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre for the Convention on Biological Diversity", <https://www.sprep.org/news/sprep-recognised-as-oceania-regional-technical-and-scientific-cooperation-support-centre-for-the-convention-for-biological-diversity> (accessed 3 October 2026).

Amazon

Cooperation around shared ecosystems



The eight Amazon countries have renewed regional cooperation through the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation (ACTO). The 2023 Belém Declaration established a shared agenda spanning biodiversity, forests, water, Indigenous Peoples, science, sustainable development and environmental crime. It has supported networks linking national authorities on water, forests and integrated fire management, as well as regional scientific cooperation and knowledge exchange. This example shows how regional institutions can connect national implementation around shared ecosystems and common challenges.⁴⁷

The regional function here is different: the Amazon is a shared ecosystem whose forests, rivers, fire regimes, markets and environmental crime cannot be governed effectively by one country alone. ACTO provides a political and institutional platform through which countries can coordinate national authorities, technical agencies and scientific cooperation around those connected pressures.⁴⁸

The Belém Declaration created a renewed common agenda, but its value for implementation will depend on whether its commitments are translated into funded, accountable arrangements at national and regional levels. The emerging networks on water, forests and integrated fire management are therefore best understood as delivery routes under construction, rather than evidence that transboundary biodiversity outcomes have already been secured.

⁴⁷ Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation, Belém Declaration, <https://otca.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Declaration-of-Belem.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁴⁸ Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, "Belém Declaration", 2023, <https://otca.org/en/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

PRIORITY 7

INVEST IN SCIENCE DIPLOMACY

Invest in science diplomacy to sustain cooperation, build trust and create shared ground for action in a fragmented international context.

Science diplomacy uses scientific and technical cooperation to help countries address common problems, maintain dialogue when broader political relations are difficult, and inform diplomatic and political decisions. For the GBF, it is an enabling and delivery route: connecting knowledge, diplomacy and implementation to help countries work together on shared ecosystems, common policy challenges and the systemic drivers of biodiversity loss.⁴⁹ Science diplomacy does not mean treating every scientific or technical initiative as diplomacy. Its distinctive contribution is to foster trusted, purpose-specific cooperation among countries on shared problems. Scientific capacity and evidence uptake can enable that work, but do not substitute for the diplomatic relationships and political follow-through on which it depends.

Science diplomacy is distinct from knowledge uptake, although the two are closely connected. Knowledge uptake concerns whether evidence informs national and sectoral decisions. Science diplomacy uses cooperation around knowledge to build relationships, support dialogue and create common reference points between countries. The Global Report records gains in technical and scientific cooperation but finds that access to sufficient and timely implementation means remains a barrier across the GBF. IPBES assessments, national research institutions, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other knowledge-holders already provide substantial insight into biodiversity loss and possible responses. The challenge is applying this knowledge to the diplomatic and political processes that shape cooperation on finance, trade, agriculture, infrastructure, development, and shared ecosystems.⁵⁰

Science diplomacy cannot resolve conflicts of interest or substitute for political decisions. Nor should it be used to present political choices as purely technical. It can, however, provide trusted spaces where countries and sectors can examine the implications of different choices, work from common evidence and maintain practical cooperation. It can also help move biodiversity beyond environmental forums by engaging foreign ministries, economic institutions, development agencies and regional bodies in the international conditions required for implementation.

⁴⁹Convention on Biological Diversity, Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Target 20, <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/20> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁵⁰Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, section III.B, “Key message 3: Means of implementation”, pp. 351–353.

This work should draw on scientific, Indigenous, local and other knowledge systems, with appropriate recognition of rights, authority and governance. IPBES provides an important, internationally legitimate evidence base: by synthesising scientific, Indigenous, and local knowledge on the systemic conditions for transformative change, it can create shared reference points for political and diplomatic cooperation. It does not change policy itself; its contribution to implementation depends on whether governments, regional institutions and diplomatic processes use that evidence to shape decisions. This requires regional convening capacity, scientific and technical networks, shared infrastructure and mechanisms that connect knowledge to policy and investment.

Following COP17, willing Parties, regional bodies and existing science-policy networks could develop practical partnerships on shared challenges, such as food systems, trade-related drivers, sustainable finance, digital sequence information or transboundary ecosystems.⁵¹

Comparable climate processes suggest why this matters. Informal dialogues outside formal negotiations have sometimes enabled countries to exchange evidence, test politically difficult options and build relationships before seeking agreement in a formal forum. The lesson for biodiversity is not to replicate a climate model, but to create purpose-specific spaces (especially around shared ecosystems and difficult economic transitions) where scientific cooperation can support diplomatic trust and practical follow-through.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

- Foreign ministries, diplomats, environment ministries, development agencies and regional institutions should play a central role, working with national scientific institutions, IPBES, the CBD Secretariat, universities, technical agencies and regional scientific networks.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities should participate as rights-holders and knowledge-holders.
- International organisations and other partners can support dialogue, connect diplomatic and scientific communities, and identify practical areas where cooperation can advance implementation.

⁵¹Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (2024), Thematic Assessment Report on the Underlying Causes of Biodiversity Loss and the Determinants of Transformative Change and Options for Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, Summary for Policymakers.

Africa

Building scientific capacity that can support regional cooperation



The African BioGenome Project (AfricaBP) is a pan-African initiative aiming to sequence and assemble genomes from approximately 105,000 African eukaryotic species, while strengthening African capacity in genomics, bioinformatics and biodiversity research. It brings together researchers, policymakers and institutions to generate, analyse and use biodiversity data across Africa, rather than relying solely on laboratories and infrastructure elsewhere.⁵²

The initiative is therefore an emerging example of regional scientific capacity-building with potential relevance to food systems, conservation and national biodiversity policy.

Capacity alone does not guarantee data sovereignty, equitable benefit-sharing or meaningful control by countries and communities over samples, sequence data and downstream commercial uses. Those outcomes depend on governance: who sets research agendas, the consent and community-authority arrangements that apply, access to data and how access-and-benefit-sharing obligations are implemented.

UK National Ecosystem Assessment

Designing ecosystem evidence for policy use



The UK National Ecosystem Assessment brought together more than 500 experts to assess the condition of the UK's ecosystems and the benefits they provide to society. Designed with policy use in mind, it helped inform England's Natural Environment White Paper and subsequent biodiversity strategy, and developed approaches to bring ecosystem services into government decision-making. The case shows how evidence can become more influential when policy institutions help shape the questions it addresses.

⁵²African BioGenome Project, "Sequencing and Assembly", <https://africanbiogenome.org/reports/sequencing-and-assembly-2/> (accessed 3 October 2026).

This is a supporting evidence-to-policy example rather than a science-diplomacy case. Its relevance is the design principle: involving policymakers and other users in framing the questions made it more likely that the assessment would be used in subsequent national policy. The UK Government's Natural Environment White Paper explicitly drew on the assessment while advancing an ecosystems approach across government.⁵³

IPBES

**Building shared ground for
international cooperation**



The IPBES Transformative Change Assessment brings together scientific, Indigenous and local knowledge to examine the underlying economic, institutional, social and cultural causes of biodiversity loss. Its value for science diplomacy lies in creating an internationally legitimate body of knowledge around politically difficult questions, including incentives, institutions, values and power. This shared evidence base can support dialogue and cooperation between countries; the next task is to connect it more systematically to national and regional implementation decisions.⁵⁴

Its diplomatic value derives from both process and content. IPBES member governments approved the summary for policymakers, and the assessment brought together scientific, Indigenous and local knowledge into a shared account of the systemic conditions driving biodiversity loss. This does not eliminate conflicts of interest, but it provides governments and other actors with a shared reference point for discussing contested choices about incentives, institutions, values and power.⁵⁵

For Priority 7, the test is whether actors use that shared ground. Regional bodies, foreign and environment ministries, development agencies and scientific networks can use the assessment to convene dialogue on specific shared problems (such as transboundary ecosystems, food-system transitions, finance or trade), then connect that dialogue to national and regional implementation decisions. Without those routes into diplomacy and delivery, even authoritative knowledge will remain underused.

⁵³UK Government, "2010 to 2015 government policy: biodiversity and ecosystems", <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-biodiversity-and-ecosystems/2010-to-2015-government-policy-biodiversity-and-ecosystems> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁵⁴Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, "Citations of IPBES assessments: Transformative Change Assessment", <https://ict.ipbes.net/ipbes-ict-guide/data-and-knowledge-management/citations-of-ipbes-assessments/transformative-change-assessment> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁵⁵IPBES (2024), Summary for Policymakers of the Transformative Change Assessment, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11382230> (accessed 3 October 2026).

Food systems: a test case for transformative implementation

Why food systems matter: Food systems provide a particularly clear test of the political-economy approach proposed in this report. Agriculture is one of the largest drivers of biodiversity loss: it has been identified as a threat to 24,000 of the 28,000 species at risk of extinction, and food production is the principal driver of biodiversity loss by converting natural ecosystems into agricultural land.⁵⁶

Yet the Global Report indicates that progress remains weak on targets most directly connected to changing these pressures. Parties' self-assessments show that 57 per cent of highly aligned national targets under Target 10 are progressing at an insufficient rate; in comparison, only 25 per cent of highly aligned national targets under Target 18 are reported as on track.⁵⁷ These records report implementation progress rather than demonstrated biodiversity outcomes. The production–consumption asymmetry is also striking: fewer than a third of national targets highly aligned to Target 16 are reported as on track.⁵⁸ The challenge is not only technical. The challenge is whether governments, producers, businesses, consumers and international partners can create politically feasible and economically viable pathways for change.

The political-economy challenge. Agricultural support, food prices, trade, rural livelihoods and land use are politically sensitive. Existing arrangements benefit producers, companies and interests, while the costs and risks of transition can fall disproportionately on farmers, small-scale producers and rural communities. Governments may be reluctant to reform subsidies or regulations for fear of effects on food affordability, employment or competitiveness. Responsibility is also fragmented across agriculture, finance, environment, trade, health and planning ministries. International markets and supply chains add further pressures, while biodiversity-rich producer countries may be asked to bear costs that generate benefits far beyond their borders.

⁵⁶Wageningen University & Research, food-systems evidence on agriculture and biodiversity loss, available at <https://edepot.wur.nl/696771> (accessed 3 October 2026).

⁵⁷Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, Target 10, pp. 151 and 160; Target 18, p. 234.

⁵⁸CBD (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Target 16, p. 215.

Challenge 1: Political demand is insufficient. Food-system change will be difficult unless biodiversity is linked to concerns with greater political weight: food and water security, farmers' livelihoods, health, rural development, resilience to climate shocks, and the long-term viability of agriculture. The Global Report reveals a clear political asymmetry: countries are more ready to address the production side of food systems than the demand-side choices on overconsumption, food waste and footprint. This is where an effective narrative comes in. But the narrative must link to real choices, such as agricultural support reform, public procurement, land-use planning, and investment. It also requires broader constituencies for action. Farmers, fishers, workers, consumers, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, health organisations, businesses and environmental groups will not always share the same interests. Still, they can build coalitions around specific reforms where benefits and risks are openly addressed. Existing movements around food sovereignty, rural livelihoods, land rights, health and climate justice may offer more credible entry points than building a biodiversity movement from scratch.⁵⁹

Challenge 2: National implementation architecture is too weak. Food systems show why NBSAPs cannot remain separate environmental plans. The Global Report finds that biodiversity mainstreaming remains too often an add-on, with agriculture and finance ministries lacking the mandate or capacity to integrate it into core decisions. Biodiversity objectives need to be integrated into agricultural policy, rural development strategies, fiscal policy, trade, public investment and land-use planning. This requires national arrangements that bring relevant ministries and institutions together, manage trade-offs and link targets to budgets and incentives. It also requires recognising rights and practising inclusive stewardship. Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other rights-holders are not simply delivery agents for decisions made elsewhere: they hold rights, knowledge, and practical authority over land, water, and food systems. Their full and effective participation, including fair access to resources and benefits, is essential to a legitimate and durable transition.⁶⁰

Challenge 3: International support insufficiently enables country-owned implementation. Food-system change requires feasible national pathways that combine policy reform, public investment, finance, capacity, knowledge and support for producers facing transition risks. Target 18 shows why: many countries have begun inventorying harmful incentives, but far fewer report reforming them, even though persistent subsidies remain a barrier to Target 10. Finance alone is not enough. Resources should help countries shift incentives and create viable alternatives, rather than fund isolated projects while broader agricultural and trade policies continue to reward biodiversity loss. Regional cooperation can help countries with similar production systems, markets, and ecological pressures share experiences in subsidy reform, sustainable finance, restoration, and producer support. Science diplomacy can support cooperation around common evidence on food security, land use, trade and biodiversity, while helping governments address contested policy choices.⁶¹

⁵⁹Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD/SBSTTA/28/2/Rev.1–CBD/SBI/7/2/Rev.1, Target 10, p. 160; Target 16, p. 215.

⁶⁰CBD (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Target 14, pp. 212–213.

⁶¹CBD (2026), Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Target 10, p. 160; Target 18, p. 234.



The wider lesson. Food systems show why implementation must connect five levers: reforming incentives that reward biodiversity loss; cross-government delivery across agriculture, finance, trade and land use; rights-based governance; practical support for producers through the transition; and aligned public and international finance. Political support is needed to make these reforms feasible; national architecture is needed to embed them in budgets, policies and implementation; and international support is needed to share risks and enable country-owned pathways. Progress will be uneven and will take time. Still, food systems underscore that implementing biodiversity depends on changing the conditions in which economic and political decisions are made, not just on setting more ambitious targets.

⁶²Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT, "BioFinCas: Biodiversity Finance in Agricultural Cooperatives", project page, 2023–2031, accessed 4 October 2026.

Conclusion: COP17 and beyond

The three implementation challenges set out in this report reinforce one another. Political demand can create space for difficult reforms; national architecture can turn ambition and resources into coordinated delivery; and more effective international cooperation can help countries pursue transitions that would otherwise be too costly or risky.

The seven priorities reinforce one another, but they play different roles. Some identify core conditions for implementation, others offer ways to support delivery through national, regional and international action. They do not offer a guarantee or a single blueprint. They identify where implementation repeatedly breaks down and where action could shift the political, institutional and international conditions for delivery.

The Global Review process must become a moment of implementation. The Global Report provides evidence of collective progress; the Global Review is an opportunity for Parties and other actors to respond by accelerating action, strengthening support and improving follow-up. Further commitments will achieve little unless they translate into policy, budgets, institutions and action. Accelerating implementation requires stronger political demand for biodiversity action, a national architecture that can translate commitments into decisions across government and society, and adequate international support to enable credible, nationally owned pathways.

The practical test for COP17 is whether it produces a credible course correction. The negotiated outcome should strengthen national implementation, address gaps in national ambition, reinforce implementation mechanisms and establish credible follow-up. It should also strengthen whole-of-government and whole-of-society action, while recognising the rights, authority and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other rights-holders.

But the opportunity extends beyond the negotiated text. Leaders, ministers, funders, regional institutions and other actors should use COP17 to advance concrete reforms, align support behind nationally determined priorities and strengthen cooperation on shared implementation challenges. Not every priority in this report belongs in the negotiated outcome. Some will need to be pursued through political commitments, existing initiatives, voluntary pathways or national or regional action after COP17.

On political demand, COP17's high-level messaging can present implementation as integral to food, water and health security, livelihoods and economic stability. That gives finance and sector ministers a shared basis for treating biodiversity as part of national development policy. The COP17 moment can also help galvanise support for existing coalitions around specific reforms, while recognising that most coalition-building and implementation will continue through national, regional and societal action.

On national architecture, Parties can voluntarily use existing mainstreaming processes to identify who holds central authority, which sectors drive their main pressures, and which forthcoming budget, planning or investment decisions will put NBSAP priorities into practice. The Global Review outcome, along with existing routes such as Article 8(j), resource mobilisation and the financial mechanism, can reinforce commitments to rights and whole-of-society implementation.

On international support, COP17 can build on the draft Global Review decision's voluntary invitation to identify implementation priorities and the support they need, so partners align finance, capacity and technology behind them rather than funding parallel projects. It can also recognise voluntary regional and scientific cooperation as routes for delivering that support.

Changes in practice will measure progress. By 2029, the test should be whether biodiversity is shaping sectoral policy, budgets, incentives and investment; whether rights-holders and affected groups have real influence over decisions; and whether adequate finance, capacity, technology and cooperation are reaching nationally determined priorities. Regional cooperation, shared learning and scientific cooperation can help countries move faster, avoid repeating mistakes and sustain delivery.

If COP17 begins that shift, the Global Review will not only diagnose the implementation gap but also help create the conditions to close it.



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