

# Mainstreaming international biodiversity goals for the private sector

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## Summary

Five international goals for biodiversity have been established to direct governments and inspire wider society to take steps towards the conservation of biodiversity, which are a unifying feature of multiple Multilateral Environmental Agreements (such as the Convention on Biological Diversity) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The five goals represent clear statements about what aspects of biodiversity require immediate action to reverse the ongoing global decline of biodiversity. The goals frame biodiversity not solely as a conservation issue, they embed biodiversity across multiple areas of social and economic development, from tackling hunger and water scarcity, to improving infrastructure and creating sustainable livelihoods.

Governments have mobilized and are working to achieve the international biodiversity goals, however these efforts are falling short of the magnitude of action required to reverse biodiversity loss. There is a clear role for the private sector to play in managing their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity as a way to mitigate risks, with potential actions creating opportunities to contribute to the international biodiversity goals. However, the goals are perceived by many businesses as having been written by Governments for Governments and so have failed to resonate with and inspire action from the private sector.

To address this issue, we: a) reframe the international biodiversity goals to illustrate their relevance to the private sector, and b) illustrate the various avenues of action that businesses can take for biodiversity using fourteen carefully selected case studies.

Appreciating that the SDGs have captured the attention of the private sector, we mapped the SDGs to the five international biodiversity goals to demonstrate the multiple crossovers with biodiversity goals.

We then present a translation of the international biodiversity goals into 'corporate biodiversity goals', using language that aims to resonate with businesses and provide a comprehensive list of possible business actions for biodiversity in line with the corporate biodiversity goals. A summary of the translation of the five international biodiversity goals is presented in Table 1.

We illustrate these business actions with fourteen business case studies, which cover multiple sectors, geographic regions, and interventions for action on biodiversity. For each of the fourteen business cases, we have drawn out the business case for undertaking action for biodiversity. This assessment illustrates a range of reasons why businesses are driven to undertake action that is beneficial to biodiversity, such as compliance with environmental regulation, operational, reputational and financial incentives; and highlighting the co-benefits that biodiversity actions can deliver for the environment, society, and businesses themselves.

This work seeks to answer the question - how do we make international biodiversity goals relevant to businesses? To date, there has been no systematic analysis of the avenues of action that businesses can take to manage their own biodiversity impacts and dependencies in the context of contributing to the international strategic goals for biodiversity. The University of Oxford and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), with the support of the Valuing Nature Placement scheme, undertook this project to address this issue.

The audience for this work are businesses who are already undertaking actions for biodiversity, helping make the links between their actions and international policy clearer; and for businesses commencing their journey in exploring relevant actions that they could undertake to address their impacts and dependencies on nature and contribute to the international biodiversity goals.

## Further information

The full Main Report and Case Studies presents the fourteen case studies, which detail the main business actions for biodiversity and is split into five sections that correspond with each of the international biodiversity goals. The background to this project is listed in a Technical Appendix, which outlines the methods used to link the biodiversity goals, SDGs, and business actions, and the case selection process. Both these documents can be accessed online here: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-7678>

For more information on this project and future initiatives that relate to this project, please contact Matt Smith: Matt.Smith@jncc.gov.uk

Table 1. Translating the international biodiversity goals into corporate biodiversity goals with example business actions

International Biodiversity Goal		Corporate Biodiversity Goal	Example business actions (For full lists of actions and relevant MEA targets & SDGs for each goal see Main Report & Case Studies)
<b>A</b>	Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society	Embed biodiversity into decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raise awareness about biodiversity internally, e.g. amongst employees</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity embedded in corporate strategy</li> <li>▪ Adopt and implement voluntary certification schemes and industry standards</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use	Reduce impacts and promote sustainable use in operations and/ or supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce or eliminate impacts on species and habitats directly affected by operations and/ or supply chain</li> <li>▪ Adopt measures to ensure sustainable use of natural resources</li> <li>▪ Prevent the introduction or spread of invasive species</li> </ul>
<b>C</b>	Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity	Improve the status of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish private protected areas, or support establishment or management of public protected areas</li> <li>▪ Implement ecosystem restoration actions</li> <li>▪ Invest in solutions that work with nature, such as natural infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>D</b>	Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services	Enhance the benefits society draws from biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Account for the needs of indigenous groups, women, the poor, marginalised and vulnerable groups and individuals in business actions</li> <li>▪ Ensure access to, and benefit sharing from, natural resources while operating within sustainable limits</li> <li>▪ Adhere to or incorporate international, regional and/ or national rules that relate to biodiversity</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building	Stakeholder engagement, support and knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue to manage impacts on biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Incorporate traditional knowledge into strategic planning for sustainable management of biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Share biodiversity monitoring data to assist decision-making and adaptive management</li> </ul>