C2ES CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY SOLUTIONS

INTERNATIONAL

Enhancing Action & International Cooperation for Nature-Based Solutions and Ecosystem-Based Approaches

Discussion paper

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Center for Climate and Energy Solutions[1]

A. Summary

1. The period from the end of the first global stocktake (GST) at COP28 (2023) through to COP30 (2025) is critical. During this time period we will learn the collective level of ambition of new climate targets, whether countries have taken into account the outcomes of COP28 in formulating them, and whether countries have put in place the domestic plans, legislation, finance and investment needed to implement those new targets. In the context of the Paris Agreement's ambition cycle, 2024-2025 are crucial years for preparation, action, and enhanced international cooperation.

2. The GST decision from COP28 sets out a number of key, transformational global targets and signals to Parties to: (i) inform their next nationally determined contributions (NDCs); and (ii) enhance implementation and international cooperation.[1] Parties are expected to communicate their NDCs by February 10, 2025, with an end date of 2035.[2] The GST signals form part of guidance and requirements that have been set out from Paris to date,[3] including that:

    - Each Party's successive NDC will represent a "progression" beyond its previous NDC and reflect its "highest possible ambition," reflecting its common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), in the light of different national circumstances[4]
    - Parties "shall pursue domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives" of their NDCs[5]
    - Parties include, as part of the information to facilitate clarity, transparency, and understanding of NDCs:
        - how the Party considers that its NDC is fair and ambitious in the light of its national circumstances[6]

[1] This paper has benefited from the feedback, inputs, and insights from Jennifer Skene, Natural Resources Defense Council.

- how the NDC contributes toward achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2[7]
- how the NDC is informed by the outcomes of the GST, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 9, of the Paris Agreement[8]

- Parties come forward with ambitious, economy-wide emission reduction targets, covering all greenhouse gases, sectors and categories and aligned with limiting global warming to 1.5 degree C, as informed by the latest science, in the light of different national circumstances[9]
- Parties commit to accelerate action in this critical decade on the basis of the best available science, reflecting equity and the principle of CBDR-RC in the light of different national circumstances and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty[10]
- Parties put in place new or intensify existing domestic arrangements for preparing and implementing successive NDCs[11]
- Parties are expected to present their next NDCs at a special event to be held under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.[12]

3. In order to implement the GST targets and signals through enhanced NDC ambition and implementation, major barriers must be meaningfully addressed, turned into opportunities for enhanced international cooperation, and translated into development priorities and domestic policies. In the context of making the case for clear leadership to enable such action, this paper focuses on the GST decision's calls to Parties to:

   - contribute to, in a nationally determined manner, the achievement of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience target of **"[r]educing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity and accelerating the use of ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA) and nature-based solutions (NBS), including through their management, enhancement, restoration and conservation and the protection of terrestrial, inland water, mountain, marine and coastal ecosystems**" by 2030[13]
   - implement "**integrated, multi-sectoral solutions, such as land use management, sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems, nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, and protecting, conserving and restoring nature and ecosystems, including forests, mountains and other terrestrial and marine and coastal ecosystems, which may offer economic, social and environmental benefits such as improved resilience and well-being, and that adaptation can contribute to mitigating impacts and losses, as part of a country-driven gender-responsive and participatory approach, building on the best available science as well as Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and local knowledge systems**."[14]

4. Together, these signals recognize that biodiversity and ecosystem services have limited capacity to adapt to increasing global warming levels and the importance of effective EBA and NBS to the climate system.[15] As such, this paper particularly focuses on **reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS.** In the context of making the case for clear leadership to enable such action, this paper further:

   - sets out barriers and solutions, as identified by our work and others, that must be addressed and implemented to enable real action in 2025 with regards to EBA and NBS[16]
   - sets out key leadership considerations, how such a leadership role can be effectively utilized, and key priorities for 2025-26.

5. Many of the **obstacles to reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS[17,18] can largely be summarized as five immediate challenges**:

   - **lack of financial resources**
   - **uncertainty about long-term performance and the potential risks/benefits** over extended periods
   - **technical and knowledge gaps in many regions**, leading to lack of technical capacity to design, execute, and monitor these complex solutions
   - **institutional and policy barriers**, with many sectors acting in silos
   - **lack of coordination**.

6. Parties must respond quickly and tangibly to reduce climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS.[19,20.] A number of solutions and opportunities exist to help overcome these challenges. At the same time, clear leadership that is inspiring, inclusive, respects the nationally determined nature of NDCs, and meets Parties and NPS where they are in terms of capacity, is essential. Enhanced international cooperation is vital to move from incrementalism to transformative levels of action in 2025 and beyond.

Recognizing the importance of reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS, **Parties should take bold steps to enhance synergies between their NDCs, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to include national strategies for implementing and integrating EBA and NBS.** Parties should also strengthen synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leveraging opportunities identified in the *Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want* report to maximize co-benefits and policy coherence across climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development agendas.[21]

An integrated approach will help avoid duplication of efforts, increase finance flows, and enhance collaboration between the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the SDG Agenda and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) outcomes. It will also create synergies across climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development initiatives. The process of formulating and implementing NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs presents opportunities to align or realign relevant planning and reporting under the CBD and UNFCCC, ensuring that actions are mutually supportive and not undertaken in isolation from one another.

Leaders must take effective action on reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS. In the short-term, Brazil, as COP30 President, could task one of its special envoys to identify leadership and drive momentum on accelerating the use of EBA and NBS.[22]

The Presidency Troika's leadership approach, including Mission 1.5, provides a unique opportunity to set out a new model for collaborative leadership. Building on the GST targets and signals from the UAE Consensus, COP30 in Belém must reflect on the level of ambition presented by the NDCs and set the new direction as we head toward the end of this critical decade.

Questions for Consideration

- How are Parties planning to take forward the signals to reduce climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS? How will this be reflected in the formulation and implementation of new NDCs and NAPs?
- How can Parties best be supported to enhance the reduction of climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS?
- What plans are there to enhance international cooperation toward reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS?
- Which organization(s), countries, or regions are best placed to show leadership and build momentum to reduce climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS?

B. Context

7. The GST is a key part of the Paris Agreement's "ambition cycle."[23] Parties to the Paris Agreement are required to undertake a GST every five years "to take stock of the implementation of this Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this Agreement and its long-term goals…It shall do so in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support, and in light of equity and the best available science."[24]

8. The outcome of the GST shall inform Parties in: (i) updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support (including their NDCs); and (ii) enhancing international cooperation for climate action.[25] The GST outcome also reaffirms sustainable and just solutions founded on meaningful, inclusive participation of all stakeholders and underlines that just transitions can support more robust and equitable mitigation outcomes.[26]

9. Parties are encouraged to communicate their NDCs by February 10, 2025, with an end date of 2035.[27] There are guidance and requirements for their NDCs that have been set out by Parties from Paris through to COP28 (see "Summary" above).

10. Both EBA and NBS leverage nature to tackle environmental challenges. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), NBS are "actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits."[28]

11. NBS is a broader term that encompasses EBA as well as actions to address biodiversity loss, mitigation, and food security.[29] However, EBA specifically targets climate change adaptation. The core aim of taking an ecosystem approach is the conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning in order to maintain ecosystem services.[30]

12. According to the November 2024 *NDC Synthesis Report*, 81 percent of Parties included adaptation priority efforts related to terrestrial and wetland ecosystems in their NDCs, and 66 percent of Parties included efforts related to biodiversity and ecosystems.[31] 31 percent of Parties specified adaptation efforts to achieve ocean ecosystems targets.[32]

13. Most NAPs include EBA and NBS (44 out of 57 countries, according to the NAP Global Network). EBA is the more widely used approach. Most NAPs also identify at least one priority sector related to

ecosystems, biodiversity, or the environment, highlighting the importance that countries place on these sectors in their climate change adaptation strategies.[33]

14. Conserving, managing, and restoring forests and other ecosystems have implications for mitigation, adaptation, food security, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.[34] If implemented in ways that prioritize high-quality decision making and enhance coordination and synergies, these measures can achieve climate and non-climate goals such as increasing resilience, preserving biodiversity, safeguarding livelihoods and the SDGs (e.g., SDG 2 on enhancing food security and SDG 3 on human health).[35]

15. Biodiversity and ecosystems are often associated with SDG 14 (life on land) and SDG 15 (life below water). The achievement of virtually all other SDGs is directly dependent on protection of life on land and below water as preconditions for the fulfilment and respect of people's basic needs and rights as well as maintaining a healthy planet.[36]

16. The years 2024-2025 are crucial to take forward the GST targets and signals, translating them into effective domestic policies and measures as well as enhancing international cooperation on climate action. The moment of truth as to whether the GST, in the wider context of the Paris Agreement's ambition cycle, will have succeeded in increasing ambition will be in 2025, when new NDCs must be tabled by all Parties. The collective impact of these will be set out in a synthesis report to be made available ahead of COP30.[37] Furthermore, COP30 in Belém should not be seen as a cliff edge; it will need to set out the world's response to level of ambition that countries have come forward with.

Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem Based Approaches: From Incremental to Transformational Change

17. By implementing EBA and NBS, emissions could be reduced by up to 11.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually by 2030, accounting for over 40 percent of the reduction needed to limit global warming.[38] For context, 11.7 gigatons is roughly 20 times the annual carbon dioxide emissions of Germany in 2023: 600 million tons.[39]

18. Restoring 350 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 could remove 13–26 gigatons of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and generate significant economic benefits.[40] Additionally, minimizing ecosystem stressors can reduce the exposure or vulnerability between 1–5 billion people. EBA can reduce the exposure or vulnerability of specific groups of people (i.e., less than one billion people).[41]

19. Currently, around U.S. $133 billion per year is invested in NBS, with public funding comprising 86 percent and private finance 14 percent. However, more urgent action and support is required to accelerate progress on EBA and NBS.[42]

Figure 1: EBA and NBS simultaneously address human well-being needs and promote biodiversity by focusing on protection, restoration, and sustainable management. This definition forms the foundation for tailored, issue-specific, and infrastructure-specific strategies that can be utilized as effective solutions.[43]

IUCN, Ensuring Effective Nature-Based Solutions, 1, Figure 1 (July 2020), https://iucn.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/iucn_issues_brief_-_nbs_standard_eng.pdf.

20. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework sets out several targets for Parties under the CBD. Target 3 aims to ensure that by 2030, at least 30 percent of land, inland waters and marine areas are effectively conserved and managed through equitable and ecologically representative systems, recognizing Indigenous people's rights and integrating these areas into ecological landscapes and seascapes.[44] Target 8 focuses on reducing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and enhancing resilience. This target emphasizes the use of EBA and NBS, aiming to minimize negative impacts and maximize the positive outcomes of climate action on biodiversity.[45] It includes guidance to minimize the effects of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity, while strengthening resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction strategies.

21. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has declared the current decade (2021–30) as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. UNEP, in collaboration with the IUCN and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), leads the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. This initiative focuses on promoting agro-ecological farming practices, reforestation, afforestation, and more. UNEP also supports tree-planting initiatives and climate-smart agriculture. These programs help combat land degradation, absorb carbon, and raise awareness about the importance of supporting biodiversity.

22. Additional initiatives include:

    - The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People is a coalition of more than 100 countries that aims to protect and conserve 30 percent of land and ocean by 2030 ("30x30," a target enshrined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework), led by Costa Rica and France.[46]
    - Business for Nature is a global coalition that brings together business and conservation organizations and forward-looking companies to encourage companies to commit and act to reverse natural loss and advocate for greater policy ambition.[47]
    - The Climate Champions' Race to Resilience campaign partners are innovating science-based solutions to accelerate action on ocean and coastal ecosystems (such as the Ocean Risk and Resilience Alliance [ORAA], the Global Mangrove Alliance and Global Fund for Coral Reef).[48]

23. The need to address biodiversity loss and climate change in an integrated manner has been explicitly recognized in COP decisions:[49]

    - The 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact emphasized the importance of "protecting, conserving and restoring nature and ecosystems, including forests and other terrestrial and marine ecosystems, to achieve the long-term global goal of the Convention by acting as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases and protecting biodiversity, while ensuring social and environmental safeguards."[50]
    - The 2022 Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan reiterates this language and goes one step further, encouraging Parties to consider EBA or NBS for their mitigation and adaptation action.[51]
    - The adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience and GST outcome[52,53] in 2023 recognized the need for reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS.[54]

24. At COP30/7th Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA7) in 2025, Parties are expected to adopt indicators to measure progress toward achieving this target.

25. The UNFCCC COP29, CBD COP16, and UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP16 launched the Rio Trio Initiative. This initiative aims to foster greater collaboration between the three conventions to develop greater synergies.[55]

Barriers and Solutions to Implementing Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem-based Approaches/Adaptation

Barriers

26. Parties still face a number of regulatory, economic, social, and technological barriers to implement EBA and NBS. As identified by C2ES,[56] the GST's *Technical Dialogue Synthesis* report,[57] and other sources, these challenges include:

- lack of financial resources
- technical and knowledge gaps in many regions, leading to lack of technical capacity to design, execute, and monitor these complex solutions
- institutional and policy barriers, with many sectors acting in silos.

27. Many developing countries face challenges that include financial and governance constraints due to agriculture, cropland, urbanization and mining activities. To reduce the impacts to biodiversity and ecosystems, developing countries can prioritize "high quality" protected areas, or those that both protect high ecological integrity landscapes and prohibit industrial development; conservation efforts; sustainably made commodity products; agroforestry; and improving governance.

28. NBS face hurdles such as low public awareness, technical and logistical issues, and lack of standardized methodologies for assessing effectiveness and approaches for implementation—the lack of which can result in inequitable implementation especially across the Global North and South.[58] Social factors, such as lack of protection for Indigenous people's rights and inadequate local engagement, further impede success.

29. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) undertook feasibility assessments for forest-based adaptation and for biodiversity management and ecosystem connectivity as adaptation options, concluding in both cases that there is robust evidence for and medium agreement on their feasibility.[59] Nevertheless, adaptation options that are feasible and effective today will become constrained and less effective with increasing global warming.[60] Biodiversity and ecosystem services have limited capacity to adapt to increasing global warming levels, and consequences of current and future global warming for climate resilient development include reduced effectiveness of EBA and approaches to climate change mitigation based on ecosystems and amplifying feedback to the climate system.[61] Given that degraded ecosystems are often less resilient, they should be protected now, before ecological integrity has been lost.

Solutions

30. A number of high-impact solutions and opportunities to address key challenges have been identified through a wealth of efforts across different fora. The following list draws from C2ES's work, as well as the High-Level Climate Champions' (HLCs) *2030 Climate Solutions*:[62]

Actions, solutions, and enablers for NBS and EBA
• Strengthen synergies and avoid trade-offs between climate action and action needed to halt and reverse biodiversity and ecosystem loss and degradation and put nature on a path to recovery by 2030, in a manner that is consistent with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Source: C2ES)
• Improve finance to support climate-proofed, area-based management tools, through tools including funds or coalitions for private investment (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
• Promote NBS and/or EBA as an adaptation option for terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and ocean ecosystems and urban environments, including for significantly enhancing resilience and reducing exposure of coastal communities impacted by sea level rise (Source: C2ES)
• Restore areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems (Source: C2ES)
• Conserve and manage areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services through ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (Source: C2ES)[63]

• Expand support for ecosystem stewardship by Indigenous peoples and local communities, including by strengthening legislation for securing land rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities according to traditional values and practices of land tenure (Source: C2ES)
• Implement deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions at their sources, while minimizing other ecosystem stressors different from climate change such as changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, pollution, and invasion of alien species (Source: C2ES)
• Reduce emissions by more than 10 Gt CO_2e per year through NBS by 2030, including the protection (45 MHa), sustainable management (2 BHa), and restoration (350 Mha) of land and demand side food system action (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)[64]

31. The **HLCs and the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action** identify impactful climate solutions and opportunities for international cooperation.[65] At COP28, in the context of the conclusion of the GST and building on prior work, the HLCs presented the *2030 Climate Solutions* – an Implementation Roadmap that sets out solutions framed in specific actions, with insights from a wide range of NPS on effective measures being undertaken that need to be scaled up and replicated as well as current gaps that need to be bridged.[66] The HLCs' solutions recommend key actions for NBS and investing in nature.[67] These recommendations for actions and support overlap with high-impact opportunities and solutions to NBS and investing in nature, as also identified in work by C2ES.[68]

32. The **COP28 and COP30 Presidencies, UNCBD COP15 and COP16 Presidencies, and UNCCD COP15 Presidency** have also highlighted the following policy actions through their statement on nature with mitigation and adaptation benefits:[69]

    - fostering stronger synergies, integration, and alignment in the planning and implementation of national climate, biodiversity, and land restoration plans and strategies
    - scaling of finance and investments for climate and nature
    - ensuring the full, equitable, inclusive, and effective representation and participation promoting a whole-of-society approach in the synergetic planning and implementation of national climate, biodiversity, and land restoration plans and strategies
    - encouraging coherence and interoperability across data sources and data collection, metrics and methodologies, and voluntary reporting frameworks.

C. Leadership for Implementing Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem-based Approaches

The Troika, G7, and G20

33. As an outcome of the UAE Consensus, the COP28 Presidency (UAE) has been working together with the Azerbaijani (COP29) and Brazilian (COP30) Presidencies to drive ambitious collective action, including through the "Roadmap to Mission 1.5C," an initiative to significantly enhance international cooperation and the international enabling environment to stimulate ambition in the next round of NDCs. This configuration has been called "the Troika." The Troika, together with the G7 and G20 and including through the Roadmap to Mission 1.5C, broadly seek to drive ambition and enhanced international cooperation.

34. In April 2023, the G7 Climate and Environment Ministers committed to the swift implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In doing so, they committed to dedicate a significant amount of international climate finance to NBS to deliver benefits for climate, people, and nature.[70]

35. In April 2024, the G7 Ministers and partners launched the Adaptation Accelerator Hub, which aims to bridge the gap between the current implementation of adaptation action and what is necessary to urgently respond to the climate impacts in the most climate vulnerable countries and communities. It builds on the Adaptation Pipeline Accelerator proposed by the UN Secretary-General.[71] In its April 2024 communique, the G7 climate, energy and environment ministers committed to:

    - swiftly, fully, and effectively implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
    - increase investment in sustainable, disaster-proof, and climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure and NBS in order to close the investment gap in water and sanitation
    - call for urgent and enhanced action at all levels across all sectors and countries to achieve the transformation into net-zero, circular, and nature-positive economies
    - continue to dedicate a significant amount of their international climate finance to maximize co-benefits and synergies in addressing climate change and the biodiversity crisis, as appropriate, recognizing that NBS can deliver mitigation while offering significant benefits for adaptation, and encourage others to do the same
    - promote NBS, as well as blue carbon, recognizing marine ecosystems' key role as natural carbon sinks, in contributing to climate change mitigation and reducing disaster risk, while providing multiple benefits in terms of conservation of the environment, and development of local economies, including fisheries and tourism.[72]

36. The G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Group under the 2025 leadership of South Africa advocates for NBS and EBA for disaster risk reduction. This includes using natural systems to safeguard against the impacts of disasters.[73] The G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Group is addressing biodiversity, conversation, oceans, land degradation, desertification, drought, and coasts.[74] The G20 Finance Working Group will continue its work on understanding investable opportunities for NBS.[75]

37. These efforts reflect the need for focused leadership to specifically drive progress on each of the GST targets and signals.

2025 Nature and Climate-related Events

38. Biodiversity and nature-related organizations, coalitions, and initiatives may meet or engage at a number of high-level nature-based related events for 2025. These events include:

JANUARY
16–17 January, G20 Sustainable Financing Working Group meeting (South Africa)
FEBRUARY
11 February, Pathway to NDC 3.0 (virtual)
11–13 February, World Governments Summit (Dubai, UAE) • *Troika event on transforming climate ambition and implementation*
25–27 February, resumed sessions of the 16th meeting of the CBD (Rome, Italy)
26–28 February, Financing in Common Summit (Cape town, South Africa)
MARCH
5 March, G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Work Group (virtual)
7 March, The Role of Non-Party Stakeholders in Shaping NDCs 3.0 in the Caribbean (virtual)
20–22 March, Fourth workshop of the UAE-Belem work programme on indicators (Bonn, Germany)
24–26 March, Petersberg Dialogue (Berlin, Germany)
24–25 March, G20 Sustainable Financing Working Group Meeting (Western Cape, South Africa)
24–25 March, UNEP Nature Action Dialogues (Cambridge, UK)
26–29 March, G20 Climate and Environment Sustainability Working Group Meeting (virtual)

APRIL
1 April, NDC 3.0 Enhanced Ambition and Needs (virtual)
10–11 April, G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Work Group (South Africa)
21–26 April, World Bank and International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings (Washington, DC)
28 April, Nature Finance Forum Europe 2025 (Paris, France)
MAY
5–9 May, 20th session of the UN Forum on Forests (New York, New York)
19-23 May, Latin America Regional Climate Week (Panama City, Panama) • *NDC Clinics*
22 May, International Day of Biological Diversity (Montreal, Canada)
27–28 May, SDG-Climate Synergies Conference (Copenhagen, Denmark)
29–30 May, Resumed 2nd Session of the UN- Habitat Assembly (Nairobi, Kenya)
JUNE
9–13 June, UN Ocean Conference (Nice, France)
11–13 June, Global NDC Conference 2025 (Berlin, Germany)
12–13 June, G20 Sustainable Financing Working Group Meeting (Western Cape, South Africa)
15–17 June, G7 Summit (Alberta, Canada)
16–26 June, UNFCCC SB62 (Bonn, Germany) • *Oceans and Climate Change dialogue* • *Annual GST NDC dialogue* • *Fifth workshop of the UAE Belem work programme on indicators*
21–29 June, London Climate Action Week (London, UK)
30 June, Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) (Seville, Spain)
JULY
1–3 July, Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) (Seville, Spain)
TBD, UNFCCC Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA) (TBD)
9–10 July, G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Work Group (Johannesburg, South Africa)
14–8 July, Climate and Environment Sustainability Working Group Meeting (Kruger National Park, South Africa)
AUGUST
23–29 August, Rio Climate Action Week (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
SEPTEMBER
1–5 September, Africa Regional Climate Week Ghana (Accra, Ghana) (TBC)
10–4 September, UN General Assembly (New York, NY)
21–28 September, NY Climate Week (New York, NY)
OCTOBER
6–8 October, G20 Climate and Environment Sustainability Working Group Meeting (Cape town, South Africa)
9 October, G20 Climate and Environmental Sustainability Working Group Ministerial Meeting (Cape town, South Africa)
8–9 October, G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group Meeting (Western Cape, South Africa)
13 October G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group Ministerial (Western Cape, South Africa)
9–15 October, IUCN World Conservation Congress (Abu Dhabi, UAE)
14–15 October, Pre-COP (Brasilia, Brazil) *Troika of COP Presidencies High-level Dialogue to focus on NDC ambition and implementation to date*
20–24 October, CBD SB27 (Panama City, Panama)

17–19 October, Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (Washington, DC)
NOVEMBER
10–21 November, COP30 (Belem, Brazil) • *UAE Dialogue*
22–23 November, G20 Summit (South Africa)
DECEMBER
1–12 December, Seventh UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) (Nairobi, Kenya)

Capacity Building and Support for Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem-based Approaches and NDCs and NAPs

39. Other initiatives can provide critical capacity-building support for the development of climate policy and NDCs. One key initiative is **UN Development Programme (UNDP)'s Climate Promise**.[76] Climate Promise leverages Parties' NDCs and brings together UNDP's infrastructure, networks and breadth of substantive offers to provide comprehensive support on NDC implementation. UNDP provides support to help countries take bold action to reduce their emissions, increase their resilience to climate impacts and support sustainable development priorities.

40. In April 2024, UNDP unveiled the next stage of Climate Promise, Climate Promise 2025, which will support countries in developing and delivering their pledges and draws on UNDP's newly established Climate Hub.[77] Climate Promise 2025 will link climate diplomacy and thought leadership with climate action and sustainable development at national and local levels to align the next generation of NDCs with the Paris Agreement goals.

41. Another key initiative is the **NDC Partnership**.[78] Leveraging more than 200 members and more than 80 institutions, the Partnership responds to requests for support needed to translate identified NDC implementation priorities into actionable policies and programs. Based on these requests, the membership offers a tailored package of expertise, technical assistance, and funding. This collaborative response provides developing countries with efficient access to a wide range of resources to adapt to and mitigate climate change and foster more equitable and sustainable development.[79]

42. In June 2024, the NDC Partnership and the UNFCCC secretariat launched the **NDC 3.0 Navigator**. The NDC 3.0 Navigator is an interactive tool designed to support countries in raising NDC ambition and accelerating the implementation of the next round of NDCs. It brings together expert-created strategies, resources, and country insights to support countries in updating their NDCs.[80] The NDC Navigator also set out strategies for Parties translating "global efforts" on translating adaptation goals for diversity from the first GST into national adaptation efforts.[81] These strategies include actions to reduce climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as to accelerate the use of NBS through national and subnational initiatives.

43. The NAP Global Network, established at UNFCCC COP20, connects practitioners and policymakers in 155 countries for the drafting and implementation of NAPs.[82] Launched in 2021 by the UNFCCC secretariat, UN4NAPs is an UN-wide initiative that provides support and technical expertise for NAPs and developing country Parties. It also works with a network of 50 intergovernmental organizations (IGOs).[83] Additionally, UNEP developed guidelines to assist adaptation practitioners at national and local levels in integrating EBA into NAPs by highlighting the benefits, challenges, necessary information, expertise, and stakeholder engagement required for effective implementation.[84]

44. Aligning synergies ensures that actions taken under National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and NAPs are mutually supportive, avoid adverse outcomes, and not undertaken in isolation from one another.[85] In 2022, the Biodiversity and Climate Change Adaptation Expert Group under the Nairobi Work Programme published a technical brief on how to increase synergies between NBSAPs and NAPs.[86]

Recommendations

45. Recognizing the importance of reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS, **Parties should take bold steps to enhance synergies between their NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs to include national strategies for implementing and integrating EBA and NBS.** Parties should strengthen coherence with the SDGs, leveraging opportunities identified in the *Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want* report to maximize co-benefits and policy coherence across climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development agendas.[87]

46. An integrated approach will help avoid duplication of efforts, increase finance flows, enhance collaboration of the UNFCCC and CBD outcomes, and create synergies across climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development initiatives. The processes of formulating and implementing NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs present opportunities to align relevant planning and reporting under the CBD, SDG Agenda, and UNFCCC, ensuring that actions are mutually supportive and not undertaken in isolation from one another.[88] The support network of EBA and NBS includes many organizations, initiatives, and declarations (see the "Nature-based solutions and Ecosystem based approaches: From Incremental to Transformational Change" section). However, there is currently a gap in effective leadership to make connections across the wider landscape that can drive transformative efforts on EBA and NBS. The Troika—the collaborative leadership between the Presidents of COP28 (UAE), COP29 (Azerbaijan), and COP30 (Brazil)—could therefore identify and suggest an international organization to lead on EBA and NBS to drive a shared agenda, promote common indicators, and ensure coherent multi-sectoral approaches among climate, biodiversity. and nature.

47. UNEP, which leads on NBS and nature programs, is well positioned to significantly strengthen coherence and ambition by promoting shared indicators and ensuring complementary multisectoral approaches among EBA and NBS. IUCN, which produces and manages relevant EBA and NBS data and tools, can play a key supporting role in enhancing UNEP's capacity to track progress toward climate-related goals, develop common indicators, and advance integrated monitoring frameworks.[89] Doing so in close coordination with the UNFCCC and CBD would ultimately facilitate implementation of EBA and NBS in ways that guarantee protection of nature and biodiversity.

48. UNFCCC Parties and the COP30 Presidency can, in turn, support this cooperative leadership by:

    - encouraging financial pledges from developed countries for investing in EBA and NBS
    - encouraging multilateral development banks to increase funding for EBA and NBS
    - encouraging Parties to maximize synergies and minimize tradeoffs between their climate and biodiversity actions by aligning their NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs to reduce emissions, increase adaptive capacity, and enhance actions for EBA and NBS
    - encouraging Parties to create a formal joint work program for Parties to discuss EBA and NBS and/or a formal process to enhance synergies between the CBD and UNFCCC.

49. As COP30 President, Brazil has made biodiversity, and nature conservation central themes of COP30.[90] In the short term, Brazil could work with the COP30 special envoys, who will support engagement and outreach with priority sectors and regions to help ensure the success of COP30, to identify and

endorse an international organization, like UNEP. The COP30 special envoys on forests, bioeconomy, and oceans could identify a lead organization that could address existing gaps and advance the integration of national biodiversity and conservation strategies into NDCs with the aim of enhancing and increasing EBA and NBS investments.[91] Such a leader should use innovative thinking to drive NBS, have experience in successfully implementing EBA and NBS, deploy diplomatic skills to foster international cooperation, and expertise in mechanisms like payment for ecosystem services and results-based payments. The special envoy could also help drive momentum, promote shared indicators on adaptation and mitigation, create guidance for implementation, and ensure a cohesive and unified approach across multiple sectors for EBA and NBS.[92] Brazil could also test with Parties whether they might benefit from a proposal for a joint work program on EBA and NBS to enhance these synergies.

Ongoing Leadership is Needed

50. The near-term goal is action and implementation that inform enhanced NDCs and ambition through 2025. In the longer-term, such leadership will be critical for informing subsequent implementation. Once there has been sufficient time to analyze the NDCs in the annual update of the NDC synthesis report that will be made available ahead of COP30, it will become clearer whether the GST will have succeeded.[93] But this also means that Belém will not be the "NDC COP." As such, 2025 will demonstrate how much more Parties are willing to commit to achieving the Paris goals. It is also possible that NDCs will reveal themselves to more usefully be investment plans or tools.[94]

51. The year 2025 will also mark the year that the Paris Agreement's enhanced transparency framework will be fully operational. New processes, like the facilitative multilateral consideration of process, provides opportunities for Parties to share best practices and lessons learned in implementing their NDCs.

52. Troika leadership and the incoming Brazilian Presidency must utilize the Roadmap to 1.5C and the outcomes of COP29 to skillfully build on the picture of progress toward a successful outcome at COP30 that remains critical to ambition and enhanced international cooperation in 2026. COP30 in Belém should not be seen as a cliff edge, but a steppingstone to COP31 and beyond. In 2026, the second GST process begins again.

Conclusion

53. While there is a case for clear leadership to reduce climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS, there is also a need for an inclusive approach. Clearer leadership on implementing and coordination on accelerating use of EBA and NBS, including how efforts are enacted on the ground, may elicit reactions that Parties are "being told what to do." As such, the national determinedness of NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs and their domestic implementation must be clearly reiterated and respected.

54. At the same time, the value of clear leadership on reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity by accelerating the use of EBA and NBS will enable far greater and faster implementation than would otherwise be the case. In addition, tracking progress toward the achievement of these signals at COP30 is crucial to generate further momentum. Early action must be captured in the next round of NDCs, laying a strong foundation for further efforts.

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