

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON – COP16 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Asks

CBD COP 16 is the first major summit since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) in 2022 and will be a test of national commitment to action on biodiversity loss. Success at COP16 hinges on these key outcomes:

- Governments put updated and aligned national plans forward and agree on metrics for tracking their progress. They integrate ambitious actions for species recovery.
- Significant progress is made toward the \$20 billion by 2025 international nature finance target.
- Concrete steps are taken to strengthen the links between nature and climate change processes.
- Agree a fair, equitable, accountable, and transparent multilateral mechanism for ensuring access to and benefit sharing from Digital Sequenced Information (DSI).

Achieving these goals will require the highest political commitment from world leaders and finance ministers.

Update National Strategies and Action Plans: With just five years left to halt and reverse global biodiversity loss, governments must develop ambitious, globally aligned, well-resourced, and well-evidenced national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAP). Parties should:

- Submit their revised NBSAP and/or National Targets well in advance of COP16. These should:
 - a. align with the global ambition of the KM-GBF
 - b. integrate biodiversity protection, restoration and recovery with action to tackle the climate crisis.
- If unable to publish an NBSAP before the deadline, leaders and ministers should use COP16 to platform national actions and commitments to implement the KM-GBF, creating a renewed swell of support for the agreement.

Scale up species recovery actions: Healthy, diverse, and abundant wild species populations are the building blocks of life. They play a critical role in delivering a range of ecosystem services, from soil formation to water filtration and climate regulation. We urge governments to work with relevant stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IP & LC), experts, and non-government organisations, to scale up species recovery actions and embed and resource these in their NBSAP. Successful species recovery action can be supported within the CBD process through:

- A funded position focused on species conservation and recovery within the CBD Secretariat.
- A dedicated knowledge exchange forum on species conservation and recovery.
- A cross-cutting agenda item on species conservation and recovery action under SBSTTA.
- A reminder that achieving species elements of the KM-GBF requires progress against all targets, not just Target 4; the latter is specifically for those species that require species-targeted interventions, without which they would continue to decline.

Close the data gaps: measuring national and global collective progress is essential for implementation and accountability. The 2024 gap analysis of the KM-GBF identified a range of data areas without effective measures, critically on species abundance and protected area quality. We must address these fundamental data gaps through the following:

- Parties should finalise a monitoring framework and agree on the processes for national reporting and global review of progress through 2026.
- Recovering native wild species abundance is a critical measure of success for Goal A. ZSL recommends that parties consider using the well-established and globally recognised Living Planet Index as an indicator for Goal A.
- Building awareness of the Green Status Index of Species Recovery as a metric for assessing progress towards the healthy and resilient element of Goal A
- Supporting countries to build the skills, tools, and capacity needed to produce critical national biodiversity data meeting global standards by 2030.

Mobilise Finance: The outcomes of COP15 promised resources for developing countries and to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. These commitments must be met in full, including the interim target to mobilise \$20 billion USD in international nature finance annually by 2025. To support this:

- Developed countries should make new finance commitments towards the \$20 billion by 2025 target ahead of and during COP16. To support this developed country ministerial champions could be identified to bring donor governments together to agree on a roadmap for action; signalling that they intend to meet their obligations under

the CBD. Colombia could convene an in-person meeting of Ministers of Finance to action the development of such a roadmap for delivery.

- Explicit targets towards, and dedicated and accessible finance for, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, who are the primary stewards of the world's most important biodiversity and biological carbon stores.

Digital Sequenced Information (DSI)

- DSI needs a coherent, transparent, and equitable access and benefits-sharing system to enable continued scientific innovation while contributing resources to biodiversity conservation, restoration, and sustainable use. It should include provisions to promote and safeguard the rights of IP&LC's and their access to the benefit sharing system, funds and non-economic benefits.
- Parties must agree to the modalities for an effective multilateral mechanism for access and benefit sharing from DSI.

Embrace synergistic approaches to nature and climate action - The joint IPCC-IPBES 2021 [report](#) concluded that the "protection and restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems is the top priority" for achieving climate change and biodiversity ambitions. To embed these synergies at COP16 we recommend:

- Parties prioritise language that directly references climate and nature across two key agenda items – Item 25 "Biodiversity and climate change" and Item 13. "Cooperation with international organizations and bodies established under other conventions". Across these agenda items, we urge parties to include commitments to:
 - operationalisation of the Bern III recommendations
 - coordination between national focal points for UNFCCC and CBD
 - encouraging alignment between climate and biodiversity national plans - NBSAPs and NDCs
 - exploring the possibility of a joint work programme across the conventions and strengthening the Joint Liaison Group.

UNFCCC COP29 – Key Policy Recommendations

COP29, to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024, is poised to be a crucial juncture in global climate action with key decisions due to be made on climate finance and the future of adaptation action. At COP29 ZSL is focused on de-siloing nature and climate in decision-making, advocating for connected climate and nature financing, and scaling nature positive adaptation action:

Climate and Nature Synergies:

- Align NBSAPs and NDCs: We recommend the integration of NDCs and NBSAPs across the two conventions, ensuring that national climate plans explicitly address biodiversity conservation and restoration. Fostering synergies between NBSAPs and NDCs can accelerate the use of nature-based solutions/ecosystem-based approaches which provide a win-win opportunity to deliver rapid mitigation and adaptation benefits for comparatively less cost than alternative measures.
- Support the development of a joint work programme across the conventions and strengthen the Joint Liaison Group.

Climate Finance:

- Agreement of the "new qualified goal on climate finance" (NCQG) to replace the previous \$100 billion pledge. This finance should include provision for investment in nature across mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage action.

Adaptation:

Adaptation has often been overshadowed by mitigation across the UNFCCC, yet it is crucial as climate impacts worsen. COP29 is a pivotal opportunity to prioritize adaptation and secure the necessary resources.

- Progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation process is needed in the establishment of a technical expert group for the indicator development process, alongside clear next steps for the remaining year of the UAE-Belém Work Programme.
- Updated National Adaptation Plans (NAP's) are needed for all countries, but specific focus is needed on enhancing support for developing countries on the development and implementation of the NAP's, with a focus on financial and technical assistance.

Finalise Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

- The finalisation of Article 6 is central in enabling the operationalisation of effective carbon markets and seeks to amend the mistakes of previous carbon market mechanisms. An effectively operationalised Article 6 system is vital amid growing interest and investment in carbon markets and the need for shared standards to maximise the benefits to both climate and nature outcomes.