



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



## PRESS RELEASE

# International Day for Biological Diversity: 139 countries get headstart on efforts to reverse species loss

- 139 countries get funds to take fast action on nature ahead of global agreement on biodiversity
- National governments eligible for new grants of \$300,000 from the GEF to update and align biodiversity protection plans with expert guidance from UNDP and UNEP
- Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework expected to be adopted later in 2022 will aim to halt and reverse biodiversity loss within a decade

**20 May 2022** – With global biodiversity loss at dangerous levels, 139 countries have received a lifeline to fast-track efforts to conserve, protect and restore species and ecosystems as soon as a new global accord currently under negotiation is approved.

The new financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), totaling \$43 million, will give developing countries the means to quickly put the anticipated Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework into practice and make headway towards the goal of halting and reversing species loss this decade.

Supported with technical expertise from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the participating countries will work to analyse and align their national policies, targets, finance and monitoring systems to take effective action on global threats to biodiversity.

“As we celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity, this commitment shows that the world is united in recognizing the urgent need to end the destruction of nature and the loss of the services it provides,” Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity said. “This early action will prepare Parties to mobilise for the action that all sectors of society will take to make these aspirations a reality in the 10 years ahead.”

The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, a ten-year plan to halt the increase in the rate of extinctions and bring 30 per cent of land and sea areas under protection, is expected to be agreed by the 196 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity when they meet in Kunming later this year.

Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO and Chairperson of the GEF said it was critically important for all countries to be ready to act quickly once the new framework is approved.

“Setting our aspirations is only a first step, and this coming decade requires us to sprint,” Rodriguez said. “Recognizing the intense pressures on developing countries as well as their unprecedented commitment to change the trajectory of biodiversity loss, the GEF is making these Early Action Grants available even before the new global accord is agreed. Countries can use this “fast track” financial approach to update their biodiversity strategies and build capacities to deliver in the GBF. We stand ready to continue to help stewards of globally-important biodiversity elevate nature in their planning and quickly scale up efforts that together can turn international goals into reality.” “The Global Biodiversity

Framework represents a critical opportunity to set our planet on a new course,” UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said. “But the global pandemic has left us with no time to waste. This joint initiative to accelerate preparedness by national actors shows that together we are ready to put nature at the heart of decision-making about our shared future.”

“We need to create a planetary safety net by putting nature at the heart of our global, national and local economies and development frameworks. Nature underpins half the world’s jobs and livelihoods, is the foundation for national food and water security, and is essential for tackling our climate crisis. Investing in early actions on nature is a triple win for people and the planet,” stated UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner.

The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is currently in its final negotiation stages, with the [fourth and final meeting](#) of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Framework to be held from 21 to 26 June in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **Notes to Editors**

The Global Environment Facility Early Action Grants will provide immediate financial and technical support to developing country governments, drawing from enabling activity resources in the biodiversity focal area in the GEF’s seventh funding cycle, known as GEF-7. The support is designed to help accelerate implementation of the Global Biodiversity framework once it is formally agreed at the 2022 UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 15). Biodiversity protection also represents the biggest share of the GEF-8 programming period, which will run from July 2022 to June 2026.

#### Grant recipient countries are:

Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Congo DR, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone,, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

#### **About the Global Environment Facility**

The [Global Environment Facility](#) is the largest multilateral fund working to enable developing countries to invest in nature. It supports the implementation of international environmental conventions on biodiversity, climate change, chemicals, and desertification. Since 1991, it has provided more than \$21.7 billion in grants and blended finance and mobilized an additional \$119 billion in co-financing for more than 5,000 projects and programs. Through its Small Grants Programme, the GEF has provided support to more than 26,000 civil society and community initiatives in 135 countries.

### **About the UN Development Programme**

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for every- one. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

### **About the UN Environment Programme**

The UN Environment Programme is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

### **About the Convention on Biological Diversity**

Opened for signature in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and entering into force in December 1993, the CBD is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the CBD has near universal participation among countries. The CBD seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous peoples and local communities, youth, women, NGOs, sub-national actors and the business community.

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