

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework: Upscaling wetland conservation, restoration and wise use through National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

1. Introduction

This briefing paper for Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands has been prepared by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) under its workplan 2023-2025, as part of Task 5.2 Guidance to support global implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for wetlands, in collaboration with the International Organization Partners (IOP) of the Convention and in consultation with the Secretariat.

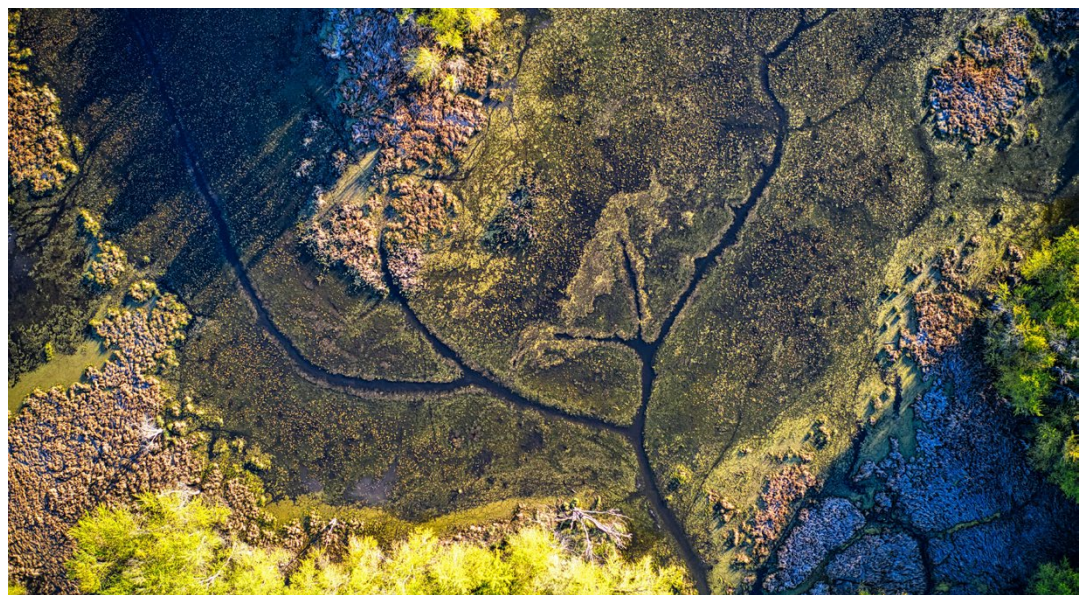
The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) was adopted by 192 countries at CBD COP15 in December 2022. It contains 4 goals and **23 targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030**.

Wetlands are explicitly included in KM-GBF **Target 2 on restoration**, and **Target 3 on protected areas** (the “30x30 target”) through wording on inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems. This is an excellent outcome for wetlands and the nature and people who depend on them. **Many other KM-GBF targets** are critically important for wetlands too; these are included in this briefing paper.

The KM-GBF provides a powerful new global **opportunity for the rapid upscaling of wetland conservation, restoration**

and wise use in all countries, and for cross-government, society-wide approaches. The KM-GBF also has a strong focus on addressing the direct and indirect drivers of nature and wetland loss, action by business and finance, and the role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs).

The opportunity now is to secure the essential inclusion of ambitious **wetland targets and policies in [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans \(NBSAPs\)](#), to meet commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and under the Convention on Wetlands**, as a designated lead partner on wetlands and work on inland water biodiversity for the CBD ([CBD Decision III/21](#)).



© Tom Fisk / pexels.com

2. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national targets

Role of Wetlands in NBSAPs: The briefing paper underscores the importance of integrating ambitious wetland targets and policies into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). This integration is crucial to meet commitments under both the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on Wetlands.

Countries are already progressing the revision and update of NBSAPs, setting out how they will contribute to each of the KM-GBF targets between now and 2030. The first round of updated NBSAPs, with a focus on national targets, must be submitted before **CBD COP16 in October 2024**, where they will be reviewed.

CBD Decision 15/6 includes guidance on what NBSAPs should contain and how they should be revised. The guidance emphasizes the importance of synergies with other Conventions and the whole of society approach, stating that NBSAPs should include **actions from other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), with explicit reference to the Convention on Wetlands.** Developing **robust national targets for wetlands conservation, restoration and wise use** is crucial.

The document states that **NBSAPs should contain three common key elements:**

- National **targets** addressing or contributing to each of the goals and targets in the KM-GBF;
- Concrete **actions, policies and programmes** to meet national targets and contribute to global goals and targets, including spatial, temporal and financial aspects;

- National **monitoring**, reviewing and assessment: using the KM-GBF's headline indicators as well as a selection of component, complementary and other **national indicators.**

Convention on Wetlands **COP14 Resolution XIV.6** encourages Contracting Parties to “*enable the adequate recognition of wetlands in the goals, targets and indicators of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*”, and also urges Contracting Parties to establish national collaboration mechanisms between MEA focal points. This aligns with CBD **Decision 15/6** which encourages countries to set up a **national coordination mechanism** including representatives of different ministries, focal points of other relevant MEAs, IPLCs, NGOs and others - and to include this in their NBSAPs. IOPs stand ready to contribute to, support, or facilitate such coordination at national level.

The content of NBSAPs will determine priorities for **funding** at the national and international level. This is another reason why it is important for wetlands to feature strongly in NBSAPs. Countries, with support of the **GEF Early Action Support** and **NBSAP Accelerator Partnership**, and via UNDP and UNEP, will produce national biodiversity financing plans alongside their NBSAPs.



3. How wetlands should feature in NBSAPs

As a priority, **wetlands need to feature strongly in all NBSAPs** in the following ways:

- **Target 1 on spatial planning:** NBSAPs should identify wetlands that count as “areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity”, and set out how biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning will ensure better protection of wetlands.
- **Target 2 on restoration:** NBSAPs should include ambitious national targets (in hectares, and kilometres for rivers) and plans for wetland restoration, contributing to the restoration of at least 30 percent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems globally by 2030.
- **Target 3 on conservation:** NBSAPs should include specific targets and plans for increasing the area of inland, as well as marine and coastal, wetlands in protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), including Wetlands of International Importance and their

effective management, contributing to the conservation of at least 30 percent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services. National targets here should be in hectares for wetlands, and in kilometres for rivers, and include management plans.

- NBSAPs should include actions to address the **drivers of wetland loss** and degradation.
- NBSAPs should have a range of wetland-relevant **indicators** to monitor progress for each target.

All types of wetlands in a country should be considered in the process of updating NBSAPs. The Convention on Wetlands definition of “wetland” has been [adopted by the CBD](#). This includes but is not limited to: rivers, floodplains and river basins; lakes; peatlands; marshes and swamps; tidal flats; saltmarshes; sea grasses in deltas and along the coast; and mangroves. Wetlands identified as critically important sites for biodiversity and ecological connectivity should feature strongly in NBSAPs.



© Teofilo Narvaez / pexels.com



© Евгений Карепанов / pexels.com

There are also many **other KM-GBF targets** that require consideration of wetlands, and where wetlands make a critical contribution to delivery. Therefore, countries are encouraged to include wetlands and other aspects of wetland wise use in other parts of their NBSAPs. For example:

- **Target 4 on species:** NBSAPs should include recognition of wetlands as critical habitats essential to halt species extinction.
- **Target 7 on pollution:** NBSAPs should include action to dramatically reduce pollution of wetlands.
- **Target 8 on climate:** NBSAPs should include wetlands as premium nature-based solutions, or ecosystem-based approaches, critical to climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation; the role of wetlands in disaster risk reduction (DRR); and actions to minimize negative impacts of climate action on wetland ecosystems and biodiversity.
- **Target 10 on productive land:** NBSAPs should recognize wetlands as productive systems and should include sectoral policy interventions and other policy actions to shift to sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries management designed to protect and restore wetlands.
- **Target 11 on ecosystem services:** NBSAPs should include wetlands for their provision of ecosystem functions and services, protection from disasters, and as an effective nature-based solutions.
- **Target 12 on urban green and blue space:** NBSAPs should include ambitious plans for urban wetlands

including through the [Wetland City Accreditation](#) scheme.

- **Target 15 on business and financial institutions:** Mandatory disclosure of impacts and dependencies on biodiversity and shifting to nature positive as part of NBSAPs should incorporate impacts on wetlands, particularly Wetlands of International Importance, including through supply chains.
- **Target 18 on reducing harmful subsidies:** NBSAPs should identify and include plans to reduce subsidies and financial flows that are harmful to wetland ecosystems.
- **Target 19 on increasing finance:** funding for the delivery of the KM-GBF should prioritize adequate investment in wetland conservation and restoration.

The Convention on Wetlands also supports **Targets 20 and 21 on supporting capacity development and providing the best available data, information, and knowledge for decision-makers.**

Several tasks in the [Scientific and Technical Review Panel \(STRP\) workplan 2023-2025](#) promote mainstreaming wetlands into KM-GBF implementation and NBSAPs, including submission of wetlands in indicators to the expert group on the KM-GBF indicator and monitoring framework, guidance on Wetlands of International Importance as OECMs, and a global assessment of the gaps in the network of Wetlands of International Importance, and synergies with global climate and biodiversity goals.

The text of all 23 KM-GBF targets is available [here](#).

KM-GBF Adoption and Targets for Biodiversity: The Framework, adopted by 192 countries, aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 through 4 goals and 23 targets. Wetlands are explicitly included in Targets 2 and 3, emphasizing their importance in the global biodiversity context.



4. How Convention on Wetlands focal points can engage with the NBSAP process

1. **Connect with your [CBD focal point](#).** Each Party to the CBD should have identified a national plan for updating biodiversity targets, strategies, and action plans. Regular discussions on the state of wetlands and their inclusion in national plans will be crucial for achieving the targets of the KM-GBF at a national level.
2. **Connect with your [GEF focal point](#).** Ensuring that wetlands are well-incorporated into NBSAPs will help determine priorities for funding at a national level. The ecosystem services of wetlands cut across biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development and national GEF prioritization should reflect this.
3. **Review existing wetland conservation or restoration policies and plans at the national scale that can be included in updates to the NBSAP.** These may cover:
 - i. establishment of national wetland inventories;
 - ii. commitments to restore a given number of kilometers of rivers or of hectares of inland waters;
 - iii. identification of freshwater, coastal and marine Key Biodiversity Areas;
 - iv. development of river or lake basin management plans;
 - v. assessments of ecosystem services of wetlands;
 - vi. systematic conservation planning analyses for freshwater and coastal ecosystems, among others; and
 - vii. alignment of wetland conservation and restoration actions ([particularly of coastal blue carbon ecosystems](#)) as part of climate change adaptation and mitigation, including in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), or disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans.
4. **Join the [NBSAP forum](#),** which is a mechanism to find tools and materials to support the development of NBSAPs.
5. **Reach out to IOPs working in your country.** They can support in the development of national targets, including identification of priority wetlands and policies; supporting the aggregating the number of kilometers of rivers or of hectares of inland waters that are planned to be conserved or restored and ensuring those combined contributions are added to the NBSAP. IOPs may be able to assist with coordination between focal points and in other ways too. For further assistance or inquiries about developing national targets, identifying priority wetlands, policies, and coordinating between focal points, please do not hesitate to reach out to the IOPs working in your country.

Acknowledgements

Preparation of this briefing paper was led by Sevvandi Jayakody (STRP), Megan Eldred (BirdLife International) and Laura MacKenzie (Wetlands International).



The views and designations expressed in this publication are those of its authors and do not necessarily represent the views of parties to the Convention on Wetlands or its Secretariat.

Reproduction of this document in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes may be made without special permission from the copyright holders, provided acknowledgment of the source is made. The Secretariat would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication or material that uses this document as a source.

Except where otherwise noted, this work is protected under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial-No Derivative Works License.



Information about the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) can be found at: <https://www.ramsar.org/about/bodies/scientific-and-technical-review-panel>.

For more information about this briefing paper or to request information on how to correspond with their authors, please contact the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands at: stp@ramsar.org.

Published by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands.

© 2023 Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands.

The Convention on Wetlands



The Convention on Wetlands is a global inter-governmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.