

Memorandum to support submissions to UNFCCC SBSTA under ‘Agenda Item 14: Cooperation with International Organisations’

September 2025

Introduction

This memorandum provides ENACT partners and stakeholders with supporting information on the role of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in advancing synergies across the Rio Conventions — particularly in relation to the call for submissions from Parties and observers on cooperation with other international organizations.

At SB62 in Bonn, Parties engaged in discussions on Rio Convention synergies, with strong calls for enhanced policy coherence across the Conventions (UNFCCC, 2025). NbS featured prominently in these exchanges and were referenced in the outcome report, particularly in relation to climate adaptation (FCCC/SBSTA/2025/4, para. 45). Negotiations on this matter will continue at SBSTA 63 in Belém, with a potential decision at COP30. To inform these deliberations, Parties and observers have been invited to submit views on ways to strengthen collaboration between the UNFCCC and other international organisations.

Partners and stakeholders are encouraged to use this memorandum as a resource when preparing their submissions to UNFCCC SBSTA under ‘Agenda Item 14: Cooperation with International Organisations’, with a focus on strengthening synergies through NbS (deadline for submissions is 30 September 2025). The content is informed in part by the relevant priority areas outlined in the pre-SBSTA 62 information note, while also highlighting additional areas of cooperation with respect to NbS.

This memorandum also reflects key messages emerging from the CBD COP16/22 process on enhanced policy coherence across the Rio Conventions (CBD, 2025). These messages were consolidated at the Technical Information Exchange on 15 June and will inform discussions at SBSTTA 27 in Panama, contributing to a draft decision on climate change and biodiversity for CBD COP17.

What are synergies in context of NbS?

The inherent power of NbS is the synergistic effects they trigger across the Rio Conventions — fostering coherence between convention-level processes and supporting integrated planning and implementation of national climate, biodiversity, and land commitments and strategies. NbS offer a pathway to achieve symbiotic progress towards convention goals — whereby the sum of the parts is greater than the sum of each convention implemented in isolation. In this way, NbS serve as a ‘joined up’ implementation framework for the Rio Conventions, generating synergies that deliver stronger collective outcomes without undermining progress under any individual convention.

Views on Enhancing Synergies Through NbS



Elevating NbS on the political agenda

NbS are widely recognised as measures that can simultaneously advance implementation of all three Rio Conventions while enhancing socio-economic resilience and sustainable development¹. Accordingly, NbS are increasingly embedded in international frameworks and processes, and directly contribute to several global goals:

- **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):** NbS contribute to the Paris Agreement’s goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C and strengthening resilience to climate change through ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation, as reflected in the United Arab Emirates Framework for Global Climate Resilience (UNFCCC, Decision 2/CMA.5, para. 9). The outcome of the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement further encourages Parties to adopt “integrated, multi-sectoral solutions,” such as NbS (UNFCCC, Decision 1/CMA.5, para. 55).
- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):** NbS are embedded in the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), including Target 2 (restoration of 30% of degraded ecosystems), Target 8 (minimising climate impacts on biodiversity), and Target 11 (restoring, maintaining and enhancing nature’s contributions to people).
- **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD):** Parties are called to explore complementarities with other multilateral environmental agreements, including through NbS implementation, to advance the objective of achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 (UNCCD, Decision 8/COP.15, para. 1).
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** NbS directly support several goals, notably SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 15 (Life on Land), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).
- **United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA):** Resolution 5/5 adopted a formal definition of NbS, recognising their essential role in addressing global challenges such as climate change, while supporting sustainable development and human well-being (UNEA, 2022).
- **COP28 Joint Statement on Climate, Nature and People (2023):** NbS are included as a key approach for integrated action across climate, biodiversity and land agendas.

In unison, these mandates denote the high-level recognition of NbS as a unifying approach across global environmental frameworks. This provides a clear foundation for their more consistent and deeper integration into intergovernmental processes, including decisions taken under the Rio Conventions. Partners and stakeholders are therefore encouraged to elevate NbS as primary instruments for enhancing synergies across the conventions, and to seize opportunities to collectively secure stronger political support for their implementation.

¹ Recognized as actions that can be taken to tackle societal, economic and environmental challenges under, *inter alia*, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (CBD/SBSTTA/27/4).



Policy coherence and cooperation via JLG/JWP

NbS should be positioned as a cornerstone of policy coherence and cross-convention cooperation, forming a central element of a potential Joint Work Programme (JWP) under the Joint Liaison Group (JLG). As NbS are formally recognised across decisions under the Rio Conventions, they represent a clear area of overlap that requires coordinated approaches to ensure effective implementation.

From an operational perspective, differences in technical language and terminology across conventions can create misalignments that hinder collaboration. However, the increasing use of the term “nature-based solutions” across the Rio Convention processes offers a unifying concept that can serve as a binding force for joint work.

A JWP that places NbS at its core would provide a strategic entry point for enhancing synergies across the conventions. It would help overcome fragmentation, align overlapping issues, and create a framework for scaling NbS as an integrated solution to deliver on the objectives of all three conventions.



National planning and implementation

At the national level, there are parallels between Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the CBD, and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Targets under the UNCCD — the domestic planning instruments for meeting global climate, biodiversity and land goals. Customarily, these plans have been developed in relative isolation by separate ministries, departments, or agencies — environment, climate change, development, etc. — with limited coordination.

However, increasingly, countries are identifying areas of overlap — and nature is a key connector. For example, many now include nature-based actions in their NDCs as well as NBSAPs ([NDC Partnership and GIZ, 2024](#)), and some have gone further by developing integrated climate and biodiversity strategies, as highlighted during the Global Conference on Biodiversity Finance ([GEF, 2025](#)). Whilst there is no formal international requirement to align NDCs, NBSAPs, and LDN targets, coordinated submission and updating of these plans has been encouraged ([GIZ, 2024](#)).

It is through such alignment of national strategies that holistic action can truly be achieved. NbS provide an effective means to operationalise this alignment and harmonise policy across the Rio Conventions. By embedding NbS within national implementation plans under the UNFCCC, CBD, and UNCCD, countries can optimise resources, reduce duplication, and strengthen outcomes across biodiversity conservation, land restoration, and climate action — thereby bolstering synergies between the three conventions.



Whole-of-society and human rights-based approaches

As clearly signalled in submissions and discussions under the ‘[CBD enhanced policy coherence across the Rio Conventions](#)’ process, the effective implementation of synergistic actions requires a whole-of-society approach, underpinned by a human rights-based approach to deliver holistic, equitable, and enduring outcomes, while guarding against misuse. Synergies must be grounded in inclusive and cross-cutting approaches. When properly implemented, NbS foster nature-positive and inclusive governance — ensuring that synergistic action is not treated solely as a technical exercise but as a transformation of environmental governance that enhances human well-being across geographies and demographics ([IUCN Global NbS Standard, 2020](#)). NbS inherently promote local ownership and inclusive governance, with their success relying on community engagement, local leadership, and the integration of local and Indigenous knowledge ([University of Oxford, 2024](#)).

Synergies can be further strengthened by applying coherent and interoperable safeguards across the Rio Conventions. Such safeguards are essential to minimise trade-offs and to avoid, or where unavoidable, mitigate negative impacts on ecosystems, people, and the realisation of convention goals. NbS can support this interoperability by embedding safeguards within implementation processes, such as accounting for Section C considerations in the GBF (the guiding principles and enabling conditions for implementation). Existing standards and frameworks — such as the IUCN Global Standard for NbS and the [FEBA EbA Framework](#)— can provide practical guidance on effective NbS implementation that concurrently enhances coherence and safeguarding across the conventions.



Global Monitoring

A joint monitoring platform for NbS could also strengthen transparency and decision-making by identifying and addressing maladaptive actions (for example, climate responses that harm biodiversity, or vice versa), and by promoting co-benefit strategies such as ecosystem-based adaptation that advance climate, biodiversity, and people-centred objectives. Tracking NbS indicators that capture multiple co-benefits relevant across the climate, biodiversity, and land agendas would therefore provide a strategic mechanism for enhancing synergies — improving technical efficacy, informing decision-making, and supporting integrated action.

Nonetheless, the development of such a platform entails inherent complexities and costs, meaning that a phased approach towards a fully operational system would likely be needed. In support of this first phase, ENACT is currently developing a global monitoring framework for NbS based on its three [NbS goals](#). This framework is intended both to contribute to international monitoring efforts and to inform annual ENACT reports — thereby supporting partnership-level activities on knowledge exchange, policy development, and capacity building.

Looking ahead, opportunities to assist countries with their reporting obligations under the three Conventions — including through the JLG ([FCCC/SBSTA/2025/INF.1](#)) — should place NbS at the core, with a view to achieving more coherent and effective implementation at both national and global levels.

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Near-Term Opportunities for Advancement

The coming months present several seminal milestones to advance enhanced synergies across the Rio Conventions. At UNFCCC SBSTA 63 and COP30, discussions will continue on strengthening cooperation and coherence, with parallel processes under the CBD and UNEA reinforcing this momentum. In the lead-up to COP30, aligning positions with the Presidency's priorities will be essential to maximise political traction. To this end, ENACT will continue to contribute through the Global Climate Action Agenda, particularly under Axis 2 (stewardship of natural ecosystems as a central pillar of adaptation and mitigation) and Key Objective 6 related to NbS (conserving, protecting, and restoring ecosystems for climate, biodiversity, and land).

At CBD SBSTTA 27, Parties will consider guidelines on ecosystem-based adaptation and prepare for COP16 negotiations on Biodiversity and Climate Change and Cooperation with Other Conventions and International Organisations. Draft decisions already emphasise the importance of fostering stronger synergies and improving coherence between revised NBSAPs, NDCs and updated NAPs. Meanwhile, UNEA-7 offers an additional opportunity to build on Resolution 6/4, which urged countries to strengthen synergies, cooperation and collaboration for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Paris Agreement and the GBF.

Achieving progress will depend on active and sustained partner and stakeholder engagement to consolidate momentum around this agenda. ENACT provides both a prominent platform to elevate Rio Convention synergies at the political level and a practical vehicle to operationalise them through partner activities. Partners and stakeholders are therefore strongly encouraged to reflect the work of the partnership in their submissions and related interventions.

Learn more about the ENACT Partnership

