



# **Report: Transformative change for global biodiversity: the role of gender equality and social inclusion**

**Wednesday 04 – Friday 06 September 2024**

**In partnership with**  
Department for Environment and Rural Affairs

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Food & Rural Affairs

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## **Executive summary**

- 1 The climate and nature crises impact first and worst on women, girls and marginalised groups in the Global South. The social, economic and political empowerment of women, girls and groups that face marginalisation – such as Indigenous Peoples and local communities – has been shown to deliver better environmental outcomes. However, too often actions that are designed to address climate change and biodiversity loss exclude their voices, their needs and their agency, and risk exacerbating rather than addressing social inequalities.
- 2 From 4-6 September 2024, representatives from governments in the global south, global north, indigenous people's organisations, civil society, multilateral organisations and academia came together to explore the situation, and to develop practical measures at global, national and local level to ensure that women, girls, and marginalised groups are at the heart of efforts to tackle the global biodiversity crisis.

- 3 Discussions covered the persistent difficulties in supporting inclusive and genuinely locally-led leadership on biodiversity action, despite the strength of the evidence suggesting that this is the most beneficial way forward. Conference sessions focused on why inclusion is vital for transformative biodiversity action; what can be learned from inclusive and transformative biodiversity action; barriers to achieving transformative change for biodiversity; Championing the implementation of Target 22 and Target 23 as fundamental to achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; Inclusive biodiversity finance for transformative change.
- 4 Key themes that emerged across the discussions included the importance of cross learning between development and conservation worlds, across government departments and the Rio conventions; valuing different sources of knowledge; the importance of engagement/collaboration outside the biodiversity world; tensions and challenges – and lessons – on getting funding to grassroots; and the challenges of working on inequalities in the biodiversity space in an intersectional way.
- 5 Working groups developed a set of recommendations in relation to the challenges around finance and the implementation of Targets 22 and 23 of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In addition, participants developed a set of principles to scale up inclusive, gender-responsive, locally led biodiversity action (Annex 1).
- 6 This report captures the main points and recommendations of the discussion. It does not represent policy of the UK Government or any of the participants. A short film made at the event is available [here](#).

## Key themes

- 7 Another key theme is the recognition that **despite growing evidence that the best way to achieve biodiversity goals is through working in genuine partnership with people who live in biodiversity hotspots in the developing world**, the perception that biodiversity and nature is pristine when left alone, and that human presence only degrades it, is a stubborn one. This leads to local people who are living in poverty often shouldering the blame or painted as destroyers, with external actors painted as the saviours of pristine environments. In fact, very often local communities have managed and improved that natural environment for many years without outside intervention.

- 8 Linked to this, another theme was the importance of an integrated approach to biodiversity that values the contribution of both the **natural and economic sciences as well as local and traditional knowledge**. As well as the importance of recognising traditional and local knowledge, this is about addressing the notion that people and biodiversity and wider nature are separate, or that any relationship between the two is direct and linear. In reality, perspectives are much more interconnected and impact each other in intersecting ways, and people are much more reliant on biodiversity and nature with different groups placing different values on the natural world.
- 9 As we work towards better and more inclusive biodiversity action, we must ensure that we don't perpetuate **other stereotyping narratives around gender inequality, such as assuming all local communities have inclusive participation already built in**, or that women are solely victims of environmental degradation, or the opposite that the environmental agenda and role as stewards should be added to their burden. Gender is always a lens for intersecting inequalities, such as age, class, education, place – it is important for biodiversity action to dig beneath these narratives and go beyond them. The global biodiversity and development goals cannot be achieved without challenging gender inequalities, which requires working with a diverse range of people beyond visible, and traditional community leadership structures.
- 10 The need for quality finance (that is, long term and predictable) for biodiversity action which reaches the local level, and the challenges of delivery this were another key theme. This is a particular challenge for large, multi-stakeholder funds like the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund with very complex governance structures, to ensure that gender equality and social inclusion are demonstrably central to its delivery.
- 11 Finally, **effective biodiversity action is dependent on securing land and resource rights**. Many communities lack formal and secure land and resource rights, and this directly hinders their ability to sustainably manage areas over the long-term. Even when rights do exist, they are often ignored or not upheld, and there are limited accountability or redress mechanisms in place to protect individuals. An estimated 28% of land globally is occupied by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, but tenure only covers 10% of that. There is a vast difference globally, between and sometimes within countries where there are some indigenous groups that have a high level of recognition, and others with none.

## Why is inclusivity vital for transformative biodiversity action?

- 12 Speakers emphasised the fact that the stories of individuals from marginalised communities often reflect the same theme: the desire to protect biodiversity and exist sustainably. Local actors have very clear ideas around their development needs, how to improve their own governance structures, accessing long-term finance, protecting their cultures and experiences, providing sustainable livelihoods and protecting biodiversity. In addition, in many contexts there is a high degree of overlap between biodiversity-rich areas and indigenous territories.
- 13 There is therefore a great potential to maintain and achieve further biodiversity positive outcomes if interventions are co-designed and Indigenous peoples and local communities, women and other marginalised groups are recognised as full partners. Indeed, a growing body of evidence suggests that biodiversity action is more likely to produce positive, sustainable outcomes for the environment and for society if this is the case. Initiatives are also more likely to be just, fair, and equitable if they are developed with wide participation.
- 14 For example, studies have shown that:
  - Community management of land and forest resources contributes significantly to positive biodiversity outcomes and sustainable resource use. Community fisheries management has also been shown to produce positive environmental outcomes generally, but few studies have focused on biodiversity.
  - Community-based interventions to combat illegal wildlife trade can complement formal law enforcement efforts if local people have a motivation (whether financial or non-financial) to protect wildlife.
  - Sustaining food production while enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of nature are complementary and interdependent goals that can be advanced through sustainable agriculture and support for Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems. Secure land tenure – access to and ownership or control of land – incentivises and supports sustainable land management practices.
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- Women and Indigenous Peoples and local communities often have extensive and valuable knowledge and experience about biodiversity, ecology, sustainable practices, environmental management, and interdependencies between communities and ecosystems.
- Gender-disaggregated data is important for designing evidence-based policies, tracking the effectiveness of interventions, mobilising gender-responsive financing, and monitoring implementation and progress towards goals and targets
- When local communities increase their income through sustainable natural resource management, they become more likely to safeguard the biodiversity and ecosystem services that underpin those income streams.

## **Learning from inclusive and transformative biodiversity action**

- 15 It is important to hear from examples of best practice in terms of biodiversity action that is locally led. One example from Madagascar showed that increasing a community's awareness of the benefits of mangroves and the link to their personal heritage led to an increase in protection and restoration. This work was led by a local woman, operating as President of her association, which is unusual in this context. She, and local partners, have worked to increase female voices within the project sites by utilising female only consultations to increase participation. This captures a wider demographic within communities and helps to increase the community awareness of the importance of protecting mangroves.
- 16 Another example from Kenya showed that when communities are given the space to take ownership it can have positive impacts. The communities in one area were forcibly relocated to arid areas from their previous forest locations because of an infrastructure project, and as such faced a very different landscape. Some groups decided to sell the land, but others utilised their traditional knowledge to grow trees. This resulted in a new microclimate and restoration of the land. Their traditional methods of agriculture and water harvesting restored the soil quality, and they found that wildlife returned to the area. The community could then earn a living from the fruit trees that were planted. This community ownership, and the utilisation of traditional methods, has led to a ripple effect empowering others and a wider, lasting, positive impact on the local biodiversity.



- 17 Finally, an example from Panama demonstrated what can be achieved, despite the reality of existing barriers within communities. There, Indigenous women have had to fight to achieve leadership positions within their community, and the fight has been long and painful. They faced strong resistance from their community leaders and had to prove the value of women's voices and knowledge across multiple generations to take those leadership positions.

## **What are the barriers to achieving transformative change for biodiversity?**

- 18 Many barriers exist for women, girls, Indigenous Peoples and local communities to fully participate in, be valued in, and benefit from biodiversity action. Barriers can take many forms and can include legal frameworks, lack of capacity, gender and other data gaps, negative stereotypes about the roles and capabilities of women, girls and Indigenous Peoples and local communities in biodiversity management, inequitable governance structures and social norms including gender-based violence that make it particularly difficult for women to participate.
- 19 An example from Vietnam demonstrated how sexual harassment and gender-based violence is directly barring women and girls from participation in conservation and leadership roles. Lone and remote female conservation workers can be the most impacted. Gender-based violence and sexual harassment can be seen as a method of control, to maintain a power imbalance or control over natural resources. It is also very difficult to assess, as many women and girls are not given formal training in recognising and handling sexual harassment or gender-based violence, and it often remains underreported due to stigma, fear of retaliation and tension within communities that discourage women from coming forward. Ways forward include better education of men to break down the societal norms and perceptions, recognition of women's achievements, building youth capacity on gender equality, providing conservation degrees and training for women on the local and national scale and overall working to create safer environments for women and girls working in biodiversity sectors.
- 20 A further barrier is the devaluing of local and indigenous knowledge with respect to science – something that the world of international development has been grappling with for some time but that there is always a risk of being reproduced in conservation science, caused by hierarchies and power imbalances existing between the global north and the global south and local communities.



- 21 The power of knowledge and data was highlighted with an example from Indonesia. One community was suffering from severe health issues and a clear cause could not be determined, until one local woman working as an ecologist gathered data and determined waterways were being contaminated with poison. She could then trace the source to fish being caught by local fisherman, using a poison as a means to catch larger quantities of fish. She then worked with local fisherman to stop the practice. She is now working to provide better training to local women in technical and leadership skills, such as data collection, and helping to break down local cultural barriers and detrimental beliefs on the involvement of women.
- 22 There are multiple barriers to the recognition of land and resources rights. The most prominent barrier is political will. The full recognition of rights to land tenure and protection and ownership of communal lands, and enforcement of those policies needs political backing and legislation. Governments need to ensure that biodiversity action does not cause conflict with local groups, recognises existing land rights, and move to put legislation in place to secure land and resource rights for women and Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Governments also need to ensure that biodiversity action does not follow an externally driven model, favour investors at the expense of local needs, or lead to trade-offs against or disempowering local actors.
- 23 A further barrier is found in destructive economic models. In the biodiversity context, destructive economic models are often associated with large economic subsidies, particularly agricultural and fisheries subsidies. Often there are no subsidies available that promote small hold farmers' rights, traditional fishing methods or promote biodiversity action at the local level. Globally there is also a general lack of subsidies that promote community-based action. Governments must look to ensure that large economic subsidies do no harm to biodiversity and local communities, and increase their positive and community-based incentives, moving towards positive economic models.

## **Championing the implementation of Target 22 and Target 23 as fundamental to achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**

- 24 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework calls for a ‘whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach’ incorporating the rights, knowledge, contributions, and values of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and girls, and ‘all actors of society’. Target 22 to “Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all” as well as Target 23 to “Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action” signal a recognition from the international community to the importance of social inclusion and gender equality. Without the effective implementation of Targets 22 and 23, the global community will fail in its achievement of the rest of the Framework.
- 25 Ensuring the effective implementation of these targets is critical to achieving the global goals for 2030 and beyond in the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Agenda for Sustainable Development, and this can only be done through inclusive transformative change across economic, social, legal, political, and technological sectors.

## **Inclusive biodiversity finance for transformative change**

- 26 The largest barrier to locally led biodiversity action, and full participation for all marginalised groups is access to truly inclusive and gender-responsive biodiversity finance. It is estimated that only 10% of all climate and biodiversity finance reaches the local level, with very little targeting both climate or biodiversity objectives and inclusion, women's rights or Indigenous people. Overall, there is not enough biodiversity funding available; the funding that is available is not flowing to the local level; and the funding is not leading to fair and equitable outcomes for all of society. Long-term, predictable financing with flexibility to adapt to local contexts is needed to deliver lasting impact. Current economic systems do not value biodiversity itself enough, but also do not value local experience or knowledge.

27 Progress has been made within the finance mechanisms to incorporate gender responsive and inclusive concepts and actions into project designs and programme directions, but there is still a need to bolster implementation at the national and local levels. There needs to be a push from governments to require it from their funding contributions, and capacity building and monitoring for the recipients of the funding. A good example of targeted, thematic funding is the USAID-funded, IUCN-implemented Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Environments (RISE) grants challenge to support partnerships between environmental organisations, community-based organisations and leaders, and organisations with experience addressing gender-based violence.

## **Galvanising action for transformative change**

28 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework calls for a ‘whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach’ incorporating the rights, knowledge, contributions, and values of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and girls, and ‘all actors of society’. To ensure this, there must be effective implementation of Targets 22 and 23.

29 Target 22 has concrete commitments and language relating to representation and participation, access to justice, rights over lands, territories and resources, respecting cultures and traditional knowledge and the full protection of environmental human rights defenders. However, since its adoption there has been confusion at the national level on implementing a human rights-based approach, especially in the context of biodiversity action, which has led to some push back. There are multiple challenges in achieving this target, but the biggest one to overcome is the need for cross sectoral work. The engagement, willingness and accountability across multiple government departments outside of the environment ministries to make legal and political change will be necessary – which can be difficult to achieve and manage. A further challenge lies in its monitoring, with no agreed and clear method of measuring progress existing for governments. Significant work, both within and outside of the formal CBD process will be needed to utilise existing data and plug the gaps. Target 22 requires action from all, which presents a challenge but also an opportunity, within which collaboration and partnership will be fundamental.

- 30 Target 23 has concrete commitments and language relating to gender equality in the implementation of the framework, recognising equal rights and access to lands and resources for women and girls, as well as participation and leadership on biodiversity for women and girls. It is also complemented by a Gender Plan of Action, which sets out concrete outcomes and example actions for implementation, including the appointing of gender and biodiversity national focal points. However, there remains confusion, gaps and challenges in implementation at the national level. These include a lack of willingness at local and political levels and misunderstanding on empowerment of groups and a view of competing rights; and lack of human resources, technical support and skills gaps; knowledge gaps and data gaps and the lack of information sharing; the framing of women as vulnerable and victims rather than partners and co-investors; and the disconnect between biodiversity and gender issues and wider economics and development.
- 31 Based on the discussions the group have drafted several principles, directed at all actors, to scale up inclusive, gender-responsive, locally led biodiversity action. They draw on the Principles for Locally Led Adaptation<sup>1</sup>, developed under the auspices of the Global Commission on Adaptation, and on the Shandia Principles<sup>2</sup> developed by the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities. They are intended to provide a guiding framework to help governments, donors, NGOs and others support and scale up transformative action to conserve, restore and sustainably use and manage biodiversity in ways that are locally-led, gender-responsive – in line with the CBD Gender Plan of Action - and inclusive of a wide diversity of often marginalised stakeholders including women, youth, children, disabled people, displaced people, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalised ethnic groups and local communities. Evidence shows that these approaches are, ultimately, more effective for biodiversity as well as being more socially just.
- 32 Recommendations and Principles are annexed to this report.

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<sup>1</sup> [Principles for locally led adaptation | International Institute for Environment and Development \(iied.org\)](https://www.iied.org/principles-for-locally-led-adaptation)

<sup>2</sup> [Shandia-report-2023-web.pdf \(globalalliance.me\)](https://www.globalalliance.me/shandia-report-2023-web.pdf)

## **Annex 1: Recommendations for KMGBF Target 22**

### **Monitoring**

- At the international level, the GBF Monitoring Framework should:
  - a) Identify and support the completion of global data sets that are nearly able to support monitoring components of this Target, even if not fully developed (e.g. land tenure and land tenure change, and attacks on EHRDs)
  - b) Encourage or require national level targets to be set where global data sets are not available or inadequate
- At the national level, Governments should develop nationally specific indicators to measure those components on Target 22 for which there are no global data sets available as well as contributing fully to the data sets that are
- At the local levels, non-State reporting of human rights outcomes, including on representation, participation, access to justice, access to information, rights, attacks on environmental human rights defenders, should be supported and enabled

### **Article 8(j) and Related Provisions under the CBD**

- State Parties and observers should support the recommendation of Indigenous Peoples, expressed through the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions be made into a permanent Subsidiary Body with a strong Programme of Work that would support and underpin progress on key elements of Target 22.

### **Knowledge sharing**

- Governments, international agencies with critical expertise, civil society and other actors should support the emergence of communities of practice to advance implementation, share accessible existing guidance (including through translation), and practical exchange to share knowledge and experiences at the local level. This includes prioritising community-to-community exchange as a key learning opportunity.

## **Annex 2: Recommendations for KMGBF Target 23**

### **Monitoring**

- Gender disaggregated and gender relevant qualitative data collection should be a priority at all levels to support accountability.

### **Knowledge sharing and capacity building**

- Governments should communicate gender-related commitments at the national level to agencies and civil society
- Governments should consider appointing gender and biodiversity focal points and train them to perform that role.
- Governments should consider designating champions at the ministerial and leadership levels to promote action and generate political pressure between countries, particularly to ensure that COPs maintain a focus on gender issues, and NBSAPs are gender responsive
- Establish knowledge sharing networks, where guidance, training and policy dialogues can be made available to all, particularly to focal points

### **Resources**

- Governments should allocate dedicated resources at the national level for gender-biodiversity focal points to support them in their role.
- Consider the establishment of a dedicated fund under the CBD for the participation and training of gender experts and female delegates for international meetings
- Consider strengthening the allocation of funds for gender related projects under the GBFF, GEF and other multilateral finance mechanisms, and also ensure that all projects under these mechanisms are gender responsive with gender outcomes.

Across these targets, and the wider framework, more works needs to be done, and urgently. Governments must work to mainstream biodiversity across all their departments and sectors and break down the barriers and bureaucracy operating between them. Governments must also commit to working across the siloes of climate change, biodiversity and desertification in an inclusive and gender-responsive way.

Guidance needs to become more visible across available networks under the CBD process and knowledge sharing between actors should be strengthened, particularly relating to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

## **Annex 3: Recommendations on financing inclusive biodiversity action**

Funders, both public and private should look to:

- Provide more intersectoral funding to bring together development and conservation objectives
- Reassess risk profiles or consider risk differently to kickstart innovation. Lack of efficiency can be offset to the potential for long-term sustainability and resilience of outcomes
- Channel more funding upfront for the design stage for the meaningful participation of local and marginalised actors.
- Consider funding legacy work that is successful, so funding opportunities are less driven by innovations
- Consider the design and governance of their funding channels – and the extent to which IPLCs / local actors can influence decisions over funding
- Where they work with intermediaries, to ensure those intermediaries do genuinely add value, rather than act as gatekeepers.

Funding intermediaries should look to:

- absorb more of the risk
- meaningfully add value to delivery, for example by pooling many smaller initiatives that would otherwise not attract funding
- support more integrated approaches – e.g. linking health and biodiversity outcomes
- support learning and build capacity of smaller organisations to develop and become lead organisations over time
- provide greater transparency on overheads and openness about how money is spent (challenge exists for governments that are seeking to keep track and audit



funding that bypasses them goes directly from donors to local / national organisations)

## **Annex 4: Principles for inclusive, gender responsive and locally-led biodiversity action**

### **Preamble**

These principles were developed during the Wilton Park conference on 'Transformative change for global biodiversity: the role of gender equality and social inclusion' hosted by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in September 2024. They draw on the Principles for Locally Led Adaptation<sup>3</sup> – developed under the auspices of the Global Commission on Adaptation – and on the Shandia Principles<sup>4</sup> – developed by the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities – as well as the outcomes of the discussions during the conference. They are intended to provide a guiding framework to help governments, donors, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders support and scale up transformative action to conserve, restore and sustainably use and manage biodiversity in ways that are locally-led, gender-responsive<sup>5</sup> – in line with the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity Gender Plan of Action – and inclusive of a wide diversity of stakeholders including women, youth, children, people living with disabilities, displaced people, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalised ethnic groups and local communities who are often at the frontlines of biodiversity action yet least empowered to effect change and face system barriers and discrimination. Evidence<sup>6</sup> shows that these approaches are, ultimately, more effective for biodiversity as well as being more socially just.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.iied.org/principles-for-locally-led-adaptation>

<sup>4</sup> <https://globalalliance.me/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Shandia-Brochure.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> 'Refers to a policy or program which fulfils two basic criteria: a) gender norms, roles, and relations are considered and b) measures are taken to actively reduce the harmful effects of gender norms, roles, and relations—including gender inequality.' GPE and UNGEI (2017) Guidance for developing gender responsive education sector plans, p4. [2018-02-gpe-guidance-gender-responsive-esp.pdf](https://www.gpe.org/2018-02-gpe-guidance-gender-responsive-esp.pdf) ([globalpartnership.org](http://globalpartnership.org)).

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Lucas, B et al (20024) Transformative change for global biodiversity: the role of gender equality and social inclusion. Background notes for Wilton Park conference WP3425, September 2024. [Transformative Change for Global Biodiversity: the Role of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion. Background Notes for the Wilton Park Conference, September 2024](https://www.ids.ac.uk/publications/transformative-change-for-global-biodiversity-the-role-of-gender-equality-and-social-inclusion-background-notes-for-the-wilton-park-conference-september-2024) ([ids.ac.uk](https://www.ids.ac.uk))

## **Recognise and respect the rights, knowledge and capabilities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially women and youth.**

Recognise, acknowledge and advance the rights, knowledge and capabilities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially women and youth as essential partners for reversing biodiversity loss, combating climate change, and achieving sustainable development. Accept the universality of human rights while at the same time recognizing the specific characteristics and needs within those communities of women and girls, youth and people with disabilities. Adopt policies and procedures to ensure that rights are respected, protected and fulfilled. Provide space for IPs and LCs, especially women and youth, to articulate their own visions and tell their stories. Respect their voice and agency, self-determined priorities, strategies and decision-making processes and align programming with these priorities, building on IPs' and LCs' own institutions and systems for implementation of activities.

## **Devolve decision making to, and build capacity at, the appropriate local level**

Ensure that local institutions, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities have increased decision-making power over how biodiversity protection, restoration and sustainable use interventions are defined, prioritised, designed and implemented; how progress is monitored, and how success is evaluated. Improve the capabilities, leadership and capacity of local institutions and organisations, particularly those led by women and other underrepresented groups, to ensure they have the resources, decision-making power, and autonomy to lead generate solutions, and facilitate and manage impactful biodiversity initiatives over the long term and reduce dependence on project-based funding.

## **Recognise and address structural and intersectional inequalities faced by women, youth, children, disabled, displaced, Indigenous Peoples and marginalised ethnic groups**

Recognise and address the intersectional gender-based, racial and other inequalities that are often the root causes of social, economic and political inequality and vulnerability and seek to integrate these at the core of biodiversity action. This includes by actively creating and sustaining environments and mechanisms for full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive participation, leadership and decision-making, and ensuring equitable access to resources and benefits arising from biodiversity action.

## **Encourage flexible, adaptive biodiversity programming through the provision of patient, flexible, predictable and accessible funding**

Encourage flexible, adaptive, and locally-driven management of biodiversity programming to address and respond to the inherent uncertainty of biodiversity under a changing climate, and to recognise and adapt to diverse ecological and cultural contexts. Make the processes of financing, designing, and delivering gender-responsive, locally led programmes more streamlined, simple and transparent, ensuring mutual accountability between local stakeholders and donors or intermediaries, ensuring that decision-making power is shared and transparent across all levels. This requires adequate, direct, transparent, gender-responsive funding – including core support – for long-term biodiversity protection, restoration and sustainable management. Provide funding with longer term, more predictable funding horizons. Funders and intermediaries should be prepared and supported to hold risk, take a holistic and cross-sectoral approach, and invest in building capacity at all levels.

## **Utilise scientific, local and traditional knowledge to fully understand biodiversity risks and opportunities, and learn from experience**

Build a robust understanding of biodiversity risks, opportunities, uncertainties and definitions of success through a combination of different forms and sources of knowledge. Recognise and protect the leadership of women from Indigenous Peoples and local communities in safeguarding intergenerational traditional or ancestral knowledge that sustains biodiversity. Prioritise the protection, intergenerational transfer and application of this knowledge for future use to enable societal and ecological resilience under a planetary crisis. Recognise, account for and report local actions and achievements as contributions to formal national and international targets and commitments and share experience to inspire others. Share these experiences widely to inspire others and amplify the voices of local leaders who are driving transformative biodiversity action.

## **Promote collaborative and coherent action and investment**

Encourage inclusive collaboration between stakeholders across sectors, initiatives and levels to ensure that different initiatives and different sources of funding support each other. Help leverage additional resources and avoid duplication. Prioritize partnerships that amplify the leadership of local actors, particularly women and underrepresented groups, and ensure that their priorities and knowledge drive collective action to enhance efficiencies and good practice. States should adopt a co-ordinated “whole of

government” approach, across the environmental challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and desertification, recognising these are not distinct challenges at a community level. In addition, states’ approach to biodiversity should engage with non-environmental policy which has the potential to enhance or undermine environmental and human rights commitments such as agriculture, trade and investment.

### **Actively prevent, or mitigate the risk of, harm**

Go beyond harm prevention by actively promoting the well-being and resilience of local actors, especially women and youth. Create enabling environments that support their leadership and agency. This includes taking proactive actions to protect local stakeholders - including environmental human rights defenders - from harm (including gender-based violence and actions which undermine their agency or cause further marginalization), rather than reacting to problems once they have arisen.

**Georgia Patt**

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