



Water as a Key Dimension for Tracking Biodiversity Progress: Strengthening its Place in the Global Review of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The first review of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) - a major objective of COP17 - is part of a unique chapter in the history of environmental diplomacy. 2026 will see the three COPs of the Rio Conventions held, culminating with the third United Nations Water Conference in history, scheduled to take place in Abu Dhabi in December. The converging schedules offer a rare opportunity to better recognize the interdependencies among biodiversity, desertification, climate, and water resources.

Although none of the 23 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework is specifically dedicated to water, its sustainable management is nonetheless a prerequisite for achieving the Framework's objectives. Water is a cross-cutting issue affecting all of the Framework's targets, and is even more directly linked to **Targets 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18 et 19**.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognizes that the transition to sustainable water management is an essential prerequisite for implementing the KMGBF and achieving the CBD's 2050 Vision, whose goal is "living in harmony with nature" (*Global Biodiversity Outlook-5 Inland Water Highlights*, 2021).



The Global Report on Collective Progress in the Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (July 2026), which represents an initial attempt to assess collective progress and will serve as the basis for the review of the KMGBF's implementation conducted at COP17, highlights the underrepresentation of marine, coastal, and inland water ecosystems in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). It also identifies gaps in data availability and in the implementation of measures to restore inland, coastal, and marine waters and ensure they remain in good condition. Additionally, it highlights the difficulties faced by many Parties in reducing the ecosystem pressures caused by wastewater discharges.

Despite this, water-related issues have currently received minimal institutionalization at COP17 of the CBD compared to the progress observed within the multilateral frameworks of the UNFCCC and the UNCCD.



On the occasion of COP17, the French Water Partnership (FWP) calls on the Parties to view the condition, availability, and resilience of water resources as an indicator of the progress that still needs to be made in terms of biodiversity. While water quality reflects the state of ecosystems, reveals the pressures on biodiversity, and determines essential ecological functions, healthy ecosystems, in turn, contribute to the conservation of water resources. Water-related issues must therefore play a central role in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the KMGBF. To help achieve this goal, the FWP makes four priority recommendations.

The identified gaps underscore the need to give greater prominence to water-related issues in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CMBKM.

MESSAGE

1



Create the conditions for comprehensive data collection on indicators related to water and the ecosystems that depend on it, with the aim of strengthening assessment of the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

The FWP:

- **CALLS** on the Parties to ensure reliable data collection on the water-related indicators already included in the KMGBF monitoring framework¹, and to ensure that these indicators are fully taken into account in the upcoming review cycles scheduled for 2028 and 2030.
- **RECOMMENDS** that the CBD include in its work program a focus on raising awareness among the Parties of the importance of water-related indicators, and that it strengthen the capacity of countries—particularly those with limited resources – to generate, monitor, and share the necessary data.
- **RECOMMENDS** strengthening and systematizing the use of existing data, particularly data related to SDGs 6, 15 and 2, and climate policy monitoring, in the monitoring of the KMGBF.

MESSAGE

2



Mobilize funding commensurate with the Global Biodiversity Framework's targets to achieve co-benefits for biodiversity and water, and prioritize funding for NbS.

We commend the Armenian presidency's ambition to keep biodiversity financing among the top priorities at COP17, building on the progress made at COP16, and to make this meeting a key opportunity to secure new financial commitments.

In this regard, the FWP identifies several priorities:

- **INCREASING** commitments to match the requirements identified as necessary to address the annual shortfall of \$700 billion as estimated by the High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources Needed to Implement the KMGBF.
- **INCREASING** funding for Nature-based Solutions (NbS) that provide environmental, social, and economic co-benefits. By contributing to sustainable water management and the preservation of ecosystems on which many economic sectors depend, NbS support various water uses and serve as a powerful driver of cross-sectoral collaboration. Increasing funding for these efforts therefore contributes to the objectives set forth in the draft decision on the mainstreaming of biodiversity, which is expected to be adopted at COP17.



NbS finance in numbers:
TIME TO SCALE-UP!

\$220 billion was invested in 2023, while \$571 billion per year will be needed by 2030.

(UNEP, State of Finance for Nature 2026)

US\$23.4 billion in private finance directed to NbS in 2023, accounting for approximately 10% of total NbS finance.

(UNEP, 2026)

1. See Annex II to Decision CBD/COP/DEC/16/31, adopted by the CBD COP on February 27, 2025, entitled "Optional disaggregations of the headline indicators and voluntary component and complementary indicators in the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework "

- **COUPLING** funding allocated to NbS with a systemic assessment of their benefits and potential impacts on biodiversity, the water cycle, carbon sequestration, and affected populations.
- **MOBILIZING** funding commensurate with the KMGBF's objectives requires diversifying funding sources, particularly through increased contributions from the private sector, as recommended in the recent IPBES assessment on businesses' dependencies and impacts on biodiversity².
- **IMPROVING** data production on the impacts and dependency of economic activities on biodiversity is essential for better targeted funding.
- **SUPPORTING** private-sector engagement through positive incentive mechanisms, such as payments for environmental services, to promote practices that preserve or restore the ecosystems on which economic activities depend.

MESSAGE

3

Take concrete measures to strengthen synergies between COP17 on Biodiversity and the COPs on Climate Change and Desertification, and address the interrelated challenges of biodiversity, climate, water, food security, and health



The draft *Global Report on Collective Progress in Implementing the KMGBF* highlights the lack of synergy between the Rio Conventions. However, water makes a coordinated approach to the three agendas essential: its cycle and availability are directly linked to the condition of ecosystems, the climate, and land management against a backdrop of increasingly severe droughts and land degradation.

On the occasion of COP17, the FWP calls on the Parties to:

- **INTEGRATE** the interdependencies between biodiversity, climate, water, soils, agriculture, and health into the development of policy and operational responses to ecosystem degradation and water imbalances, in light of the findings of the IPBES *Nexus* assessment report³,
- **TAKE better ACCOUNT** of the links between water, ecosystem resilience, and the vulnerabilities experienced by population groups most exposed to droughts, floods, land degradation, and pollution, ensuring that synergies between the agendas of the three Rio Conventions can help reduce the risks they face.
- **STRENGTHEN** coherence across biodiversity, climate, water, soil, and agriculture policies by further integrating the concept of "green water", which refers to water from precipitation that is stored in the soil and available to vegetation.
- **MOVE** from a general awareness of the synergies between the three Rio Conventions to their operational implementation, particularly through NbS. NbS serve as a practical tool for strengthening this coherence and translating the synergies between the three Rio Conventions into concrete actions at the local level, by providing an integrated response to the objectives they set out.
- **FOSTER** discussions and complementarity between initiatives related to mountains, including the Yerevan Dialogue on Mountain and Freshwater Biodiversity and the UNFCCC Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change, to better coordinate actions undertaken under the three Rio agendas.
- **IMPROVE** the coherence of monitoring mechanisms across the three Conventions by identifying common or complementary indicators, particularly regarding water and the ecosystems that depend on it, and by facilitating the use of shared data to report on progress made under multiple Conventions.

2. IPBES. Rueda, X., Jones, M., and Polasky, S. (eds.). *Methodological Assessment on the Impact and Dependency of Business on Biodiversity and Nature's Contributions to People*. (2026). IPBES Secretariat. Bonn.

3. IPBES. Harrison, P. A., McElwee, P. D., and van Huysen, T. L. (eds.). *Thematic Assessment Report on the Interlinkages among Biodiversity, Water, Food and Health*. (2024). IPBES Secretariat. Bonn.

Water quality as an entry point for strengthening the links between the commitments made at COP17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2026 United Nations Water Conference

To strengthen alignment between the international biodiversity and water agendas, the FWP makes the following recommendations:

- **BUILD** bridges between the work of the international biodiversity and water communities so that the outcomes and commitments from COP17 inform the work of the United Nations Water Conference (December 8–10, 2026, Abu Dhabi), particularly within the framework of Interactive Dialogue C, *Water for Planet*. The FWP recommends that Interactive Dialogue C result in the adoption of a joint statement on the areas of convergence between the UN Water and CBD agendas, identifying priority areas for collaboration. At the same time, the FWP calls for water-related issues to be better institutionalized within the work of the CBD, particularly during its COPs, and for water-related indicators to be more thoroughly documented as part of the global review of the KMGBF.
- **MAKE** water quality a unifying issue that serves to strengthen coordination between the CBD and the international water agenda and to foster dialog between the relevant bodies. At the national level, this coordination must result in alignment between NBSAPs and national water policies.
- **STRENGTHEN** cross-border cooperation to ensure integrated and sustainable management of water resources and biodiversity in shared river basins to better address pressures that jointly affect water quality and aquatic ecosystems. This cooperation must be based on existing international frameworks, in particular the 1992 Water Convention and the 1997 Convention on International Watercourses, so as to address a gap identified in the *Global report on collective progress in implementing the KMGBF* with regard to transboundary cooperation on shared water resources⁴.

4. "Transboundary cooperation is identified as both essential and underdeveloped, including with regard to the cross-border movement of invasive alien species, shared transboundary waters, migratory species, and the implementation of biosafety frameworks under the Cartagena Protocol on the transboundary movement of living modified organisms."

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The French Water Partnership (FWP) is a one-of-a-kind platform for French public, private and civil society stakeholders seeking to contribute to the French mobilisation on international water issues.

For nearly 20 years, the FWP has pursued collective advocacy to make water a priority in international policies and action. Its strength lies in a simple conviction: a united, structured and representative voice carries more weight in international negotiations than a series of isolated initiatives.

Its diversity makes it a unique space for dialogue and co-creation, bringing together stakeholders from multiple sectors and backgrounds and strengthening the legitimacy and reach of its advocacy.

The French Water Partnership's activities are made possible thanks to the support of its donors :

CONTACT :

Karine Caussé

Programme Officer for Water,
Biodiversity, NbS
and Agroecology

French Water Partnership

