

*Advocacy Messages from
the French Water Partnership
for COP17 on Biodiversity*

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

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Context

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 the following targets:

- **Target 2:** Restore 30 percent of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems,
- **Target 3:** Conserve 30 percent of terrestrial and inland water areas, as well as marine and coastal areas,
- **Target 7:** Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030,
- **Target 10:** Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry are managed sustainably, including through a substantial increase in the application of biodiversity-friendly practices such as agroecological approaches,
- **Target 11:** Restore, maintain, and enhance nature's contributions to people, such as the regulation of air, water, and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches,
- **Target 12:** Significantly increase the area, quality, and connectivity of green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas, as well as access to these spaces,
- **Target 14:** Ensure that biodiversity and its multiple values are fully integrated in the development of policies and planning processes at all levels of government and across all sectors,
- **Target 18:** By 2025, identify incentives, including subsidies, that are harmful to biodiversity, and eliminate, phase out or reform them in a proportionate, fair, effective, and equitable way,
- **Target 19:** Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources.

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. As such, inadequate wastewater treatment is identified as an obstacle to achieving Target 7 of the KMGBF.

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. The other two Rio Conventions have, in fact, gradually increased the focus on water-related issues in their processes, notably through the recent water-related indicators of the Global Goal on Adaptation and the Water Pavilions organized during the Climate COPs, as well as by including a dedicated water day in the official program of COP17 on Desertification. The CBD, however, lags behind in terms of institutional recognition of these issues. Political impetus is therefore needed to strengthen the role of water within the CBD and to fully recognize that its sustainable management is essential to achieving the KMGBF's goals.

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:

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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 first version of the *Global Report on Collective Progress in Implementing the KMGBF*¹ reveals insufficient integration of freshwater, coastal, and marine ecosystems² into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, as well as persistent gaps in ecological data and monitoring.

In response to this observation, the FWP:

- **CALLS** on the Parties to ensure reliable data collection on the water-related indicators already included in the KMGBF monitoring framework³, and to ensure that these indicators are fully taken into account in the upcoming review cycles scheduled for 2028 and 2030. Several of these indicators are classified as component indicators or complementary indicators (see Appendix I). The voluntary nature of reporting for these categories of indicators may help explain why data on water and the ecosystems that depend on it is still insufficient in terms of availability and comparability. As a result, there is an incomplete picture of the progress made in implementing the KMGBF with regard to water resources.
- **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. These measures would help improve the availability of the data on which the collective assessment of the KMGBF's progress is based and would help better target the efforts that still need to be undertaken.
- **RECOMMENDS** strengthening and systematizing the use of existing data, particularly data related to SDG 6 and climate policy monitoring, in the monitoring of the KMGBF. While some SDG 6 indicators are already included in the KMGBF's Monitoring Framework - particularly those related to water quality (6.3.2), wastewater treatment (6.3.1), water stress (6.4.2), and water-related ecosystems (6.6.1) - their optional nature and the fact that they are still only partially mobilized make it impossible to take full advantage of the available data. The FWP therefore calls for better coordination between the various monitoring frameworks, with greater reliance on data generated through other international monitoring mechanisms to inform the KMGBF indicators. We advocate that this approach be extended to data from the monitoring of targets related to sustainable forest management (15.2), combating land degradation

¹ CBD. *Draft global report on collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. (July 26, 2026). <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/5611/c35f/aa96bdcd816f5952d586a777/sbstta-28-02-add1-rev1-en.pdf>

² "[...], progress is uneven between the targets, with targets addressing indirect drivers of biodiversity loss particularly lagging behind; uneven across different ecosystems, with marine, coastal and inland water ecosystems showing consistent gaps in coverage [...]"

³ 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 "

(15.3), and sustainable and resilient agriculture (2.4), as well as to the indicators for Global Adaptation Goal 9.a (*Reducing climate-induced water shortages*)⁴ and 9.d (*Reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity*)⁵, once they are operationalized. This approach would make better use of existing national monitoring systems, reduce redundant reporting efforts, and improve the coverage of water-related data in the assessment of KMGBF progress.



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. Funding for NbS is essential, as many of them contribute directly to regulating the water cycle and preventing droughts and floods, at a time when climate change is altering precipitation patterns and increasing the risks associated with extreme hydrometeorological events. In 2026, several regions around the world face particularly severe droughts, compounded by the expected effects of El Niño on precipitation. In the long term, NbS also offer economic advantages compared to gray solutions⁶. 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. While NbS alone cannot address all of the challenges, they can

4 Target 9a) of the Global Goal on Adaptation: "Significantly reducing climate-induced water scarcity and enhancing climate resilience to water-related hazards towards a climate-resilient water supply, climate-resilient sanitation, and access to safe and affordable potable water for all."

5 Target 9d) of the Global Goal on Adaptation: "Reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, and accelerating the use of ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solutions, including through their management, enhancement, restoration, and conservation and the protection of terrestrial, inland water, mountain, marine and coastal ecosystems."

⁶ CDC Biodiversité. *Evaluation socioéconomique des SfN*. (May 2019). https://www.cdc-biodiversite.fr/publications/evaluation-socioeconomique-des-solutions-fondees-sur-la-nature_revue-biodiv-2050-n17_2019/

nevertheless play a strategic role when they are part of a systemic approach. This involves integrating biodiversity across all public policies, in line with climate change adaptation policies, as well as those related to agriculture and land management.

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)**

- **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; this monitoring must allow projects to be adapted in light of the observed effects.
- **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 biodiversity⁷.
- **IMPROVING** data production on the impacts and dependency of economic activities on biodiversity is essential for better targeted funding. The recent IPBES assessment of businesses' dependency and impacts on biodiversity highlights the importance of gaining a better understanding of businesses' *dependency* on biodiversity, that is, the resources and contributions of biodiversity on which their activities depend, and of documenting the *impacts* of economic activities on biodiversity - namely, the pressures exerted. This data should provide a better understanding of the risks associated with biodiversity loss and the benefits associated with preserving biodiversity for the sustainability of their operations, thereby encouraging greater consideration of the delayed effects of these impacts and long-term resilience challenges. The work carried out as part of cost recovery studies conducted for Water Development and Management Master Plans (SDAGE) in France, as well as the data generated at the European level under the Water Framework Directive, demonstrates the value of better documenting the pressures on water resources and ecosystems, and their effects on various business sectors.
- **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. By providing funding for practices that promote biodiversity, these mechanisms serve as a necessary complement to the reform of subsidies harmful to biodiversity called for in Target 18 of the KMGBF.

⁷ 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.



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 report⁸,
- **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. These interdependencies are particularly critical for the most vulnerable population groups who depend more directly on natural resources and bear a disproportionate share of the consequences of droughts, floods, land degradation, and pollution, all of which severely impact their living conditions and economic activities. Access to enough clean water, food security, and health all therefore depend directly on the resilience of ecosystems, an interdependence that lies at the heart of the "One Health" approach.⁹ Implementing the Rio Conventions requires greater consideration of these vulnerabilities, so that the synergies between their agendas can help reduce the risks faced by the populations most exposed.
- **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. Agroecology is a prime example of this, as it can generate co-benefits in terms of sustainable soil and water

⁸ 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.

⁹ WHO's One Health concept: WHO. One Health. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/one-health>

management, climate change adaptation, and biodiversity restoration, while also offering significant potential for improving farmers' living conditions and incomes.

- **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. The topic of mountains, highlighted by the COP17 presidency through the Yerevan Dialogue on Mountain and Freshwater Biodiversity initiative, offers another concrete starting point for strengthening these synergies. Mountain ecosystems are essential to biodiversity, water cycle regulation, and food and energy security, and are particularly vulnerable to climate change and land degradation. They also play a major role in regional water supplies, particularly through watershed heads and the cryosphere, which partly determine the availability of water for various downstream uses. The importance of mountain ecosystems is clearly recognized in IUCN Resolution WCC-2025-Res-021, adopted at the 2025 World Conservation Congress, which calls for the establishment of an international framework to strengthen their conservation and resilience in the face of climate change. The UNFCCC also addresses mountain-related issues through the Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change, which is on the agenda of official negotiations at the Convention. The various initiatives concerning mountains, some of which involve the same countries, would therefore benefit from better coordination of their efforts in order to capitalize on their complementary strengths.
- **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.



MESSAGE 4:

Water quality as an entry point for strengthening the links between the commitments made at COP17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 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 Abu Dhabi Conference should play a role in strengthening the dialog between water stakeholders and the CBD. 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. Water quality is a barometer of ecosystems' condition, an indicator of the pressures on biodiversity, and a prerequisite for maintaining the ecosystem services that are essential to societies and economies. 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, which serve as key benchmarks for ensuring transboundary waters are managed in a coordinated, equitable, and sustainable way. The *Global report on collective progress in implementing the KMGBF* identifies transboundary cooperation as a crucial condition for implementing the Global Biodiversity Framework, while noting that it remains underdeveloped, particularly with regard to the management of shared water resources.¹⁰

¹⁰ "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."

Appendix

Appendix 1: Water-related indicators in the KMGBF monitoring framework

Reference	Type	Official title
1.CY.1	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation (SDG indicator 6.5.2)
7.CT.2	<i>Component indicator</i>	Proportion of domestic and industrial wastewater flows safely treated (SDG indicator 6.3.1)
11.CT.2	<i>Component indicator</i>	Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality (SDG indicator 6.3.2)
11.CT.3	<i>Component indicator</i>	Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (SDG indicator 6.4.2)
11.CY.2	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management (SDG indicator 6.b.1)
11.CY.3	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (SDG indicator 6.1.1)
11.CY.4	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation, and lack of hygiene (SDG indicator 3.9.2)
A.CY.8	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Wetland Extent Trends Index
A.CY.15	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	River Fragmentation Index
7.CY.5	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Trends in the amount of litter, including microplastics, in the water column and on the seafloor
7.1	<i>Headline indicator</i>	Index of coastal eutrophication (SDG indicator 14.1.1(a))
8.CY.4	<i>Complementary indicator</i>	Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations (SDG indicator 14.3.1)



The French Water Partnership

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.



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