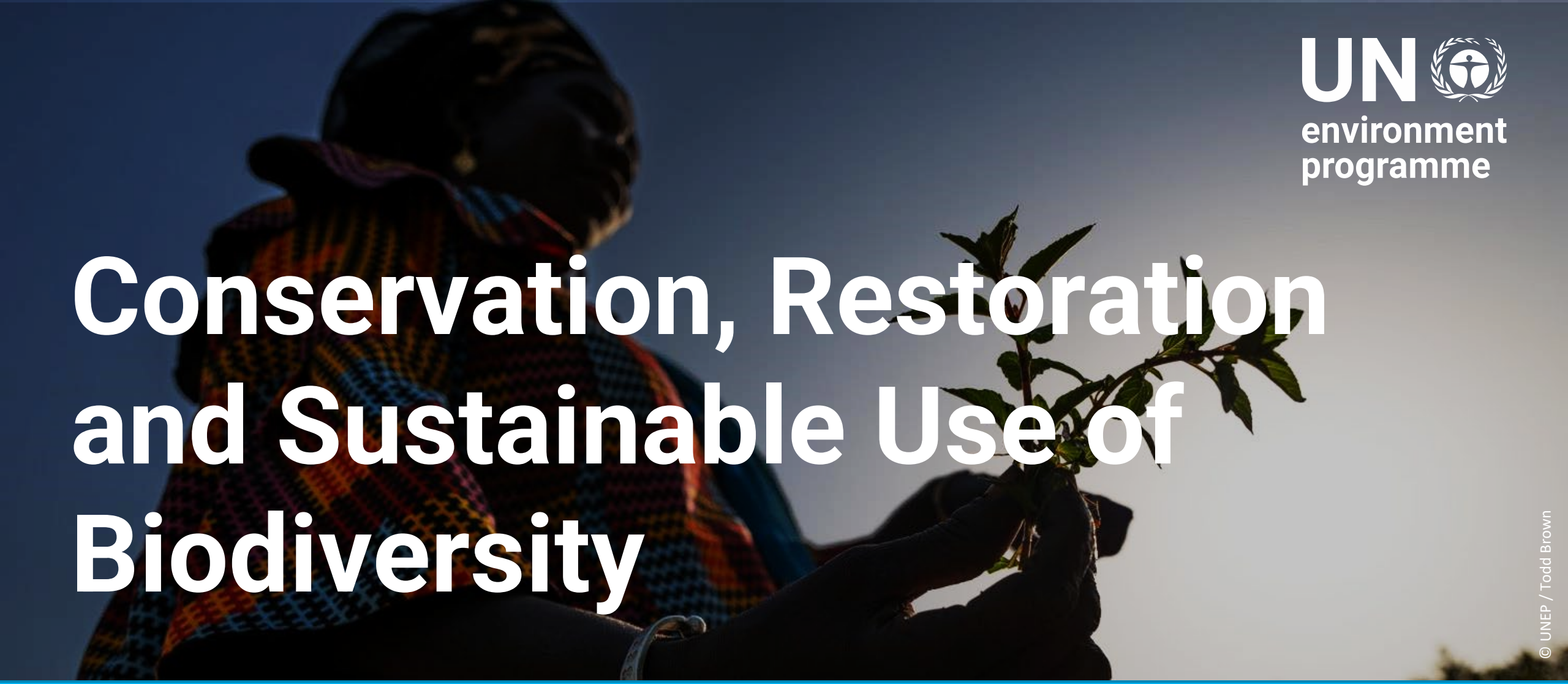


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Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

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A. Background: Programme Direction

Programme Objective:

- Improved health and resilience and sustainable management of terrestrial, marine and coastal, and freshwater ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature.

Programme Outcomes:

- Enhanced conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of natural and productive terrestrial, marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems.
- Mobilized finance and investment for conservation, restoration, and sustainable use, including for indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs).
- Implemented and upscaled Nature-based solutions for sustainable development

Programme Outputs (key areas of work):

1. Decision-makers supported to improve policies, legislation and planning.
2. Enhanced technical and institutional capacity.
3. Implementation of conservation, restoration, sustainable management actions.
4. Increased investment for conservation, restoration, and sustainable use.
5. Increased benefits and income to IPLCs.
6. Enhanced understanding amongst Member States on nature-based solutions.
7. Implementation and upscaling of NbS interventions.



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A. Background: Envisaged Impact and Strategic Coherence

Envisaged impact of programme:

- Tackle major drivers of ecosystems degradation and biodiversity loss by advancing a holistic and integrated approach to support member states to increase the area and integrity of healthy terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems under effective conservation, restoration and sustainable management.

Synergies with other programmes within MTS:

- Adaptation and Resilience
- Governance and Accountability for Biodiversity
- Science and Policy
- Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Sectors and Systems



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A. Background: Contribution to MTS and PoW



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Contribution to MTS Outcomes (PoW 2025 Outcomes):

- 2B. Sustainable management of nature is adopted and implemented in development frameworks.
- 2C. Nature conservation and restoration are enhanced.
- 1B. Countries and stakeholders have increased capacity, finance and access to technologies to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement.

Contribution to PoW Direct Outcomes:

Nature:

Outcomes 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.8, 2.11, 2.13, 2.14 and 2.16.

Climate:

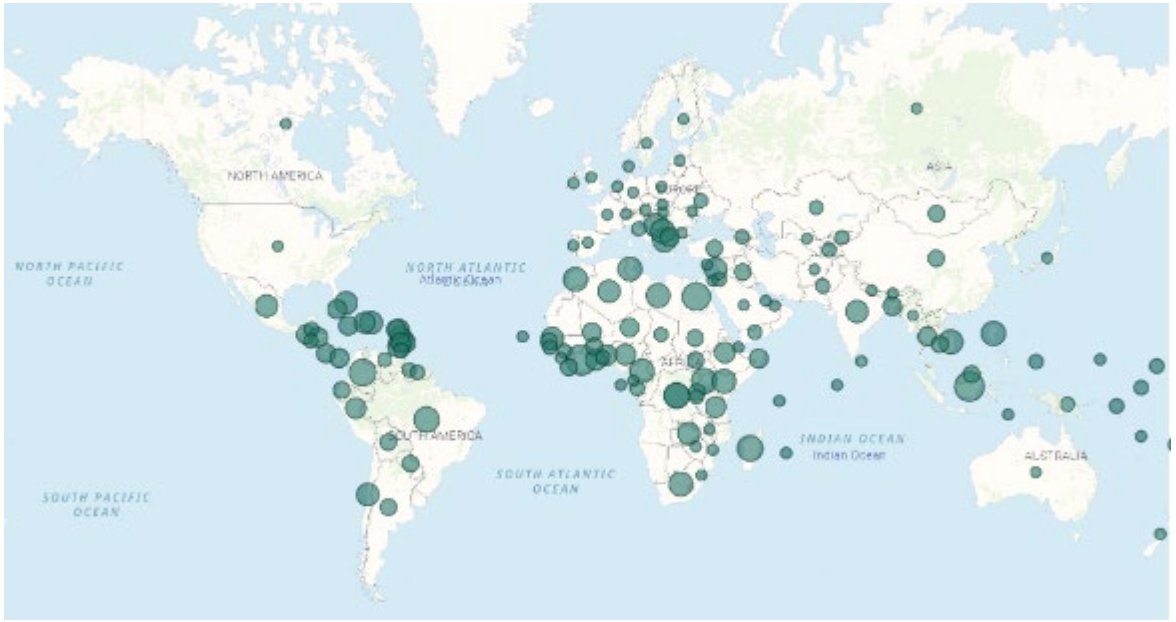
Outcome 1.7.

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B. Project Portfolio: Overview



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Project Portfolio:

- **192 projects** under implementation (1.05 billion USD budget)
- **56 projects** in the design pipeline (471.7 million USD proposed budget)

Source of funds:

- **87.2%** projects supported through Vertical funds
- Others supported through Planetary Funds.

Geographical scope:

- Projects implemented across **155** countries.
    - **20** projects with global scope
    - **44** projects with regional scope
    - **6** multi-country projects
    - **122** single country initiatives

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B. Project Portfolio: Illustrative Examples







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Great Green Wall Initiative

GEF/LDCF: $ 77,888,167

Scope: Regional: Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal

Objective: To restore landscapes and ecosystems services for resilient communities living in arid and semi-arid environments

Conservation of wildcats and prey species

GEF: $ 1,784,862;

Co-fin: $ 16,122,550

Scope: National: Panama

Objective: To strengthen jaguar conservation capacity, human-wildlife conflict management, connectivity between core protected areas

Conservation and Sustainable Development

GEF: $ 4,854,566;

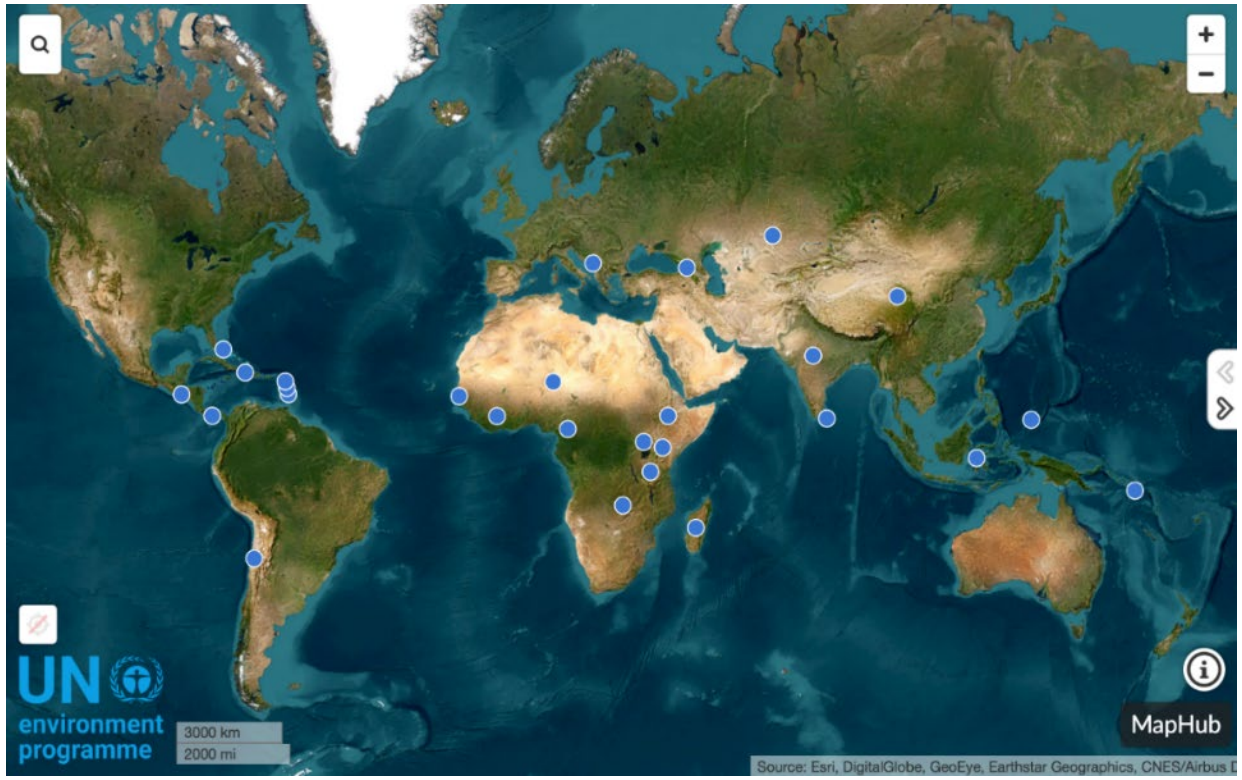
Co-fin: $ 15,042,521

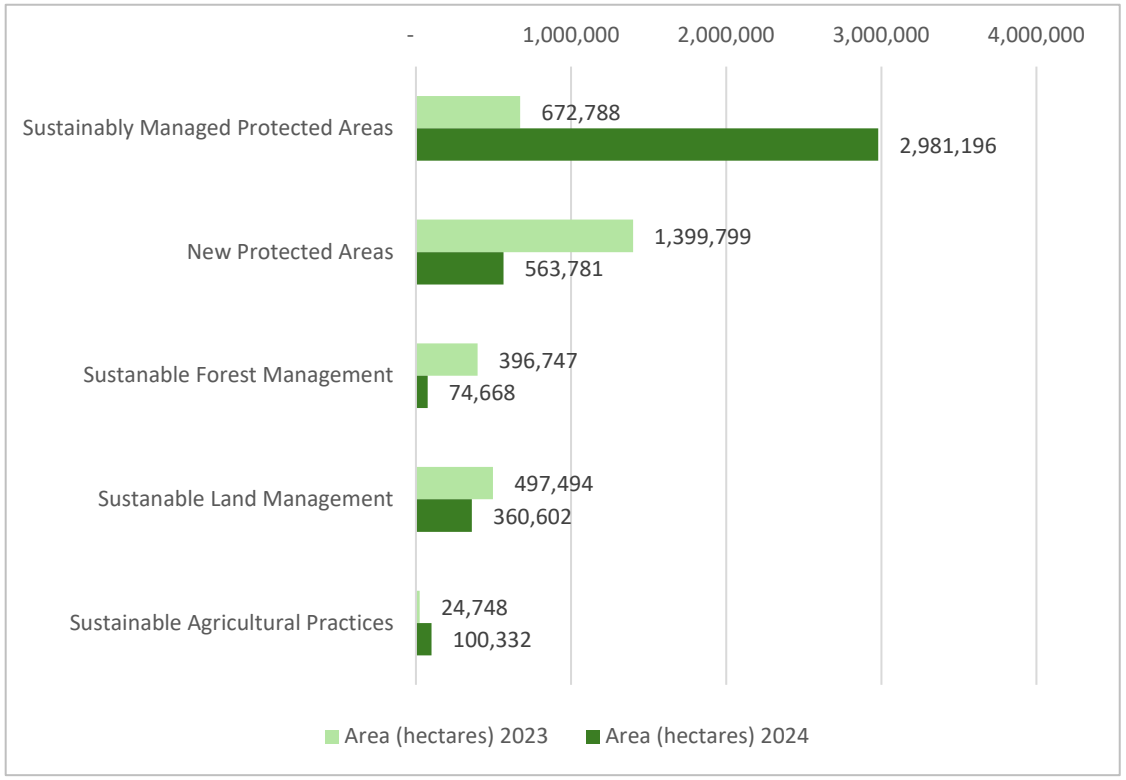
Scope: National: Yemen

Objective: To strengthen govt and non-govt capacities to manage and protect the Socotra Archipelago WHS

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C. Results Achieved





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Sustainable management of **4,080,579** hectares of terrestrial ecosystems supported by December 2024:

- **2,981,196** hectares sustainably managed under protected areas
- **563,781** hectares of new protected areas created
- **74,668** hectares under sustainable forest management
- **360,602** hectares under sustainable land management
- **100,332** hectares under sustainable agricultural practices

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C. Results Achieved



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Coastal Wetlands Conservation

Location: Chile
GEF support: $ 5,146,804
Co-financing: $ 19,991,990

Challenges

- Lagoon shrunk; connection to ocean lost
- Species began to die off
- Algae proliferated due to pollution
- Fishing, tourism, salt mining industries threatened

Solutions

- Section of the sandbar removed; saltwater reintroduced
- Birdwatching posts installed
- Conservation protocol developed
- Law to protect wetlands in populated areas

Key Results

- 11,000 ha wetlands restored [video]
- Algae blooms controlled.
- Reduced threat to local wildlife from tourism; rebound of several bird species
- Tourism and fishing industries recovered

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C. Results Achieved



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Eco-villages for halting deforestation in the highlands

Location: Madagascar
GEF support: $ 5,653,425
Co-financing: $ 27,476,346

Challenges

- Impacts of cyclones and droughts; widespread food insecurity and malnutrition
- Deforestation, illegal logging; slash-and-burn agriculture
- Invasive alien species

Solutions

- Eco-villages with resource management rights to local communities
- Trainings in livelihoods skills
- Natural capital accounting
- Sustainable farming

Key Results

- Halting deforestation
- Enhanced food security
- Combating bushfires
- Action plan for improved management of 53,092 ha protected area
- Benefits to inhabitants of 18 eco-villages (7,732 M; 10,025 F) [Video]

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C. Results Achieved



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© Fernando Jorge

Management of Marine Protected Areas

Location: The Bahamas
GEF support: $ 6,243,004
Co-financing: $ 11,972,306

Challenges

- Lack of Marine Protected Area(MPA) management
- Lack of integration of MPAs in broader landscape and landuse planning

Solutions

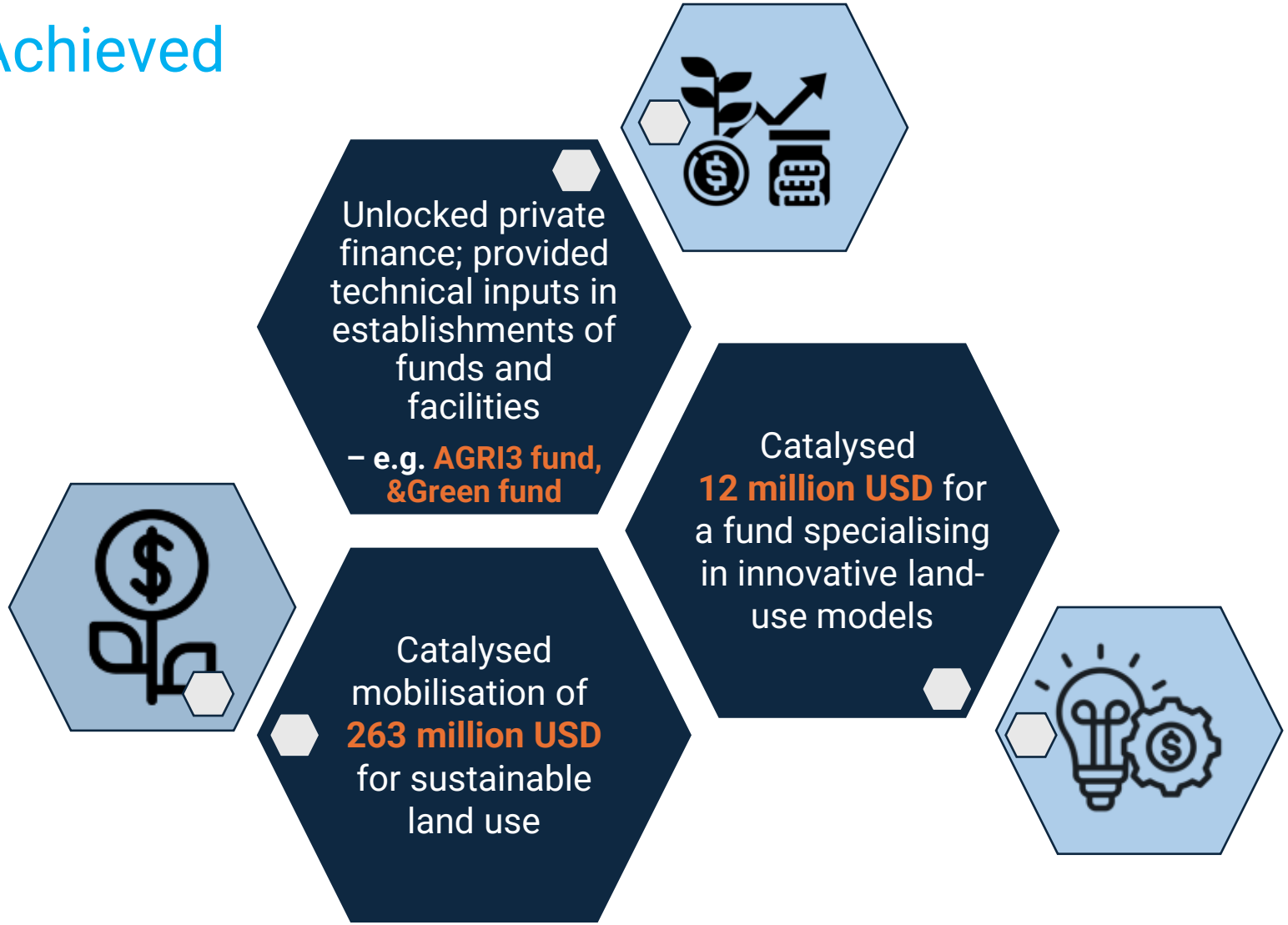
- Capacity building on Marine Spatial Planning
- Drafting zoning plans; MPA dashboards
- Invasive alien species removal, planting mangroves
- Community-based monitoring

Key Results

- 583,150 ha of marine protected areas under improved management
- 45 ha restored
- Protection of ecological diversity and economically important species

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C. Results Achieved



- Continued engagement with donors, private sector actors, and development banks.
- Mobilized investments to bridge funding gaps in conservation.

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C. Results Achieved



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Regional consultative workshops **(LAC, Asia Pacific, Africa)** identified key priorities for scaling up NbS globally

Indigenous/ Community Leadership

- Prioritise integration of local and traditional knowledge in design of interventions
- Accelerate funding for local/indigenous community-led NbS projects

Information sharing

- Knowledge-sharing platforms with practical, context-specific tools
- Connecting academia with the practitioners

Policy integration

- Prioritise agile funding for cross-sectoral nature of work under NbS
- Harmonise policies at the local, national, regional and global levels

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D. Lessons Learnt

LESSONS

While investment in terrestrial restoration is growing, there is need for increased financing towards conserving, restoring marine and freshwater ecosystems.

Progress towards conservation, restoration and sustainable use is affected by cross-sectoral initiatives, delivering lasting change takes time

Co-creation enhances ownership and helps align local, national, regional priorities with global agenda. However, the process is complex, requires change in mindset, significant resources.

ADAPTATIONS



Focus on enhancing portfolio of marine and freshwater ecosystems under the UN Decade of Restoration flagships; leverage UNOC, BBNJ for raising support



Enhanced coordination within Nature Action Programmes and beyond; advocating for continued long-term funding; finetuning priorities and indicators under new MTS



Promote and incentivize co-creation and cross-sectoral coordination.

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E. Way Forward

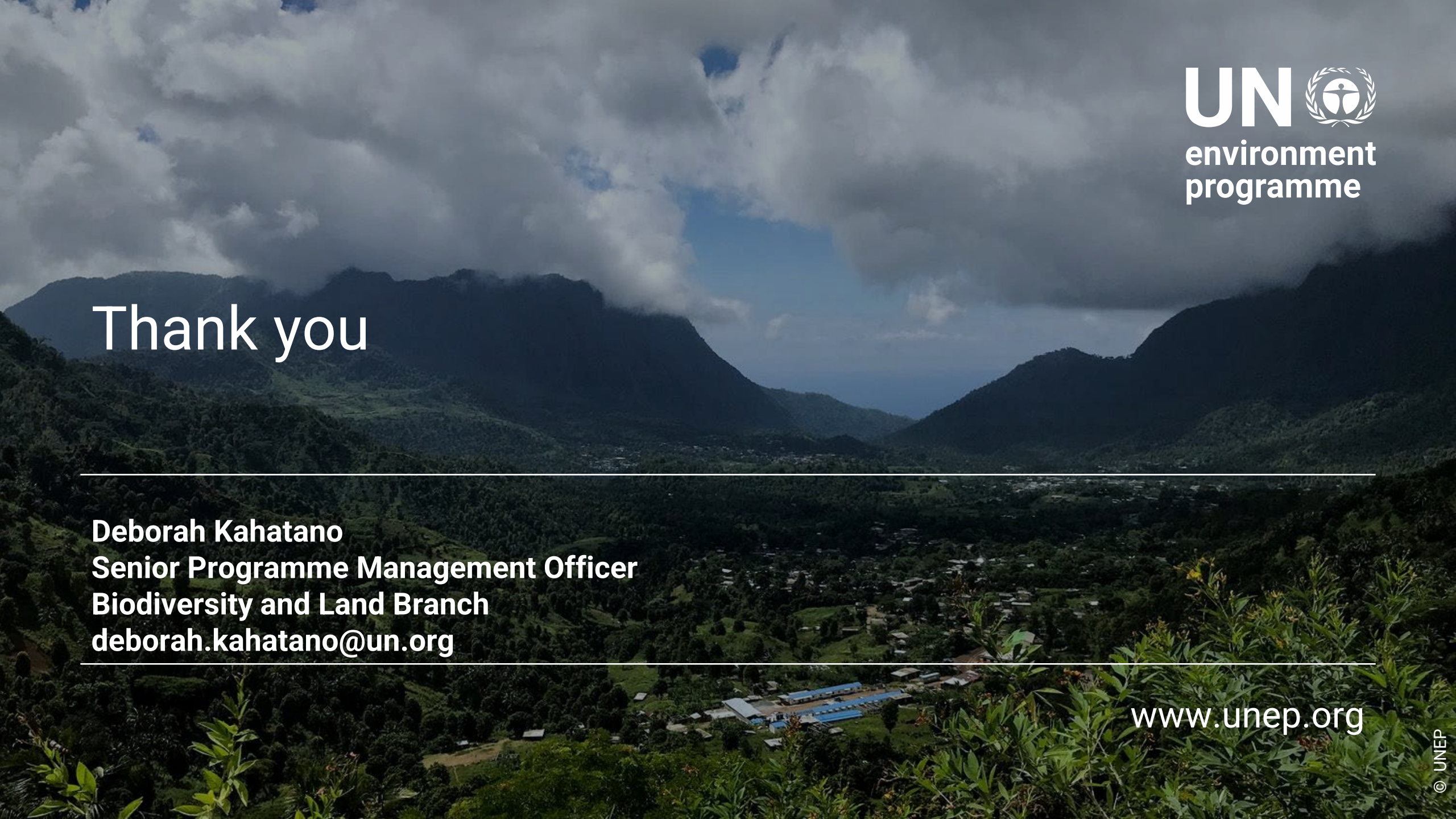
A: Diversify sources of funding to bridge the resource gap towards conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity.

B: With support from Member States, expand portfolio addressing land degradation, desertification, water security and drought.

C: In keeping with recent developments under the Rio COPs empower indigenous peoples and local communities as co-creators and leaders for landscape and seascape level initiatives.

D: Replicate and scale up best practices in NbS for delivering co-benefits towards climate, nature, pollution pillars.

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Thank you

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