

**Canada's Submission ahead of the First Global Intergovernmental Consultation on Nature-based Solutions**  
**May 2023**

**Introduction**

Canada was a strong supporter of the adoption of UNEA Resolution 5/5 *Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development* at UNEA-5.2 in February 2022, and in particular its establishment of the first multilaterally agreed definition of nature-based solutions (NBS). We also welcome its call for further intergovernmental consultations to support the implementation of NBS, and look forward to the opportunity for continued multilateral discussions in this regard. Canada is, therefore, pleased to provide this submission of views to help inform the first Global Intergovernmental Consultation on Nature-based Solutions.

**Overall Aim of the Intergovernmental Consultations**

With the adoption of the landmark Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) at CBD-COP15 in December 2022, the world must now turn its efforts towards advancing the full, swift and effective implementation of the KMGBF in order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Notably, the KMGBF recognizes the interlinked nature of the climate and biodiversity crises, and recognizes the role of NBS in addressing them (Targets 8 and 11).

The intergovernmental consultations on NBS, therefore, come at an opportune time for Member States to consider how NBS can be advanced to support the implementation of the KMGBF, along with other key multilateral agreements and frameworks, such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Specifically, there is an opportunity to use these consultations to share experiences, lessons learned and best practices in advancing NBS, including in the following areas:

- Raising understanding of the value of nature
- Embedding NBS into integrated climate and biodiversity planning and policies
- Increasing investment in nature-based solutions
- Promoting the leadership and engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of NBS.

In doing so, these consultations should take into account and build on the work of other key initiatives and processes, including those under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Enhancing Nature-based Solutions for an Accelerated Climate Transformation (ENACT) Partnership, and others.

Critically, any outcomes of the consultations must also recognize the importance of working with Indigenous Peoples, and respecting their rights, in advancing the implementation of NBS,

noting their longstanding leadership in environmental stewardship and their unique knowledge and experiences.

### **Examples of Best Practices in NBS**

Canada sees great value in using the opportunity of the intergovernmental consultations to share and discuss experiences, lessons learned, and best practices in advancing NBS, both domestically and internationally. Canada has much to share in this regard, drawing on our experiences in areas such as: delivering funding to support NBS and natural infrastructure domestically; supporting projects and initiatives internationally that advance NBS, including to help build the resilience of vulnerable communities around the world; supporting the scale-up of finance for NBS, including supporting initiatives that crowd-in private and philanthropic investment; and partnering with Indigenous Peoples and supporting Indigenous leadership in advancing NBS. Canada looks forward to sharing further on these best practices, and to learning from the experiences of fellow Member States and organizations.

### **Criteria, Standards and Guidelines for NBS**

Advancing the implementation of NBS globally requires convergence around common standards and guidelines. The [IUCN Global Standard](#) establishes important overarching principles (through 8 criteria and associated indicators) for NBS implementation. However, in practice, there has been a plethora of guidelines, principles and tools developed over the last few years to support implementation on the ground. Some of these are broad-based or related to specific application of NBS, such as:

- The CBD's [Ecosystem Approach Principles, Operational Guidance and Sourcebook](#)
- The IUCN's [Handbook System for the Design and Implementation of EbA](#)
- UNEP/CBD's [Eco-DRR - Voluntary Guidelines for Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction](#)
- FAO's [Principles for ecosystem restoration to guide the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030](#)
- NBS Initiative's [Nature-Based Solutions Guidelines](#)

Others, which are more specialized and focused on particular ecosystems or landscapes, include, for example:

- Global Water Partnership's [Integrated Water Resources Management Toolbox](#)
- Global Restoration Initiative's [Forest Landscape Restoration Principles](#) and the plethora of Forest Landscape Restoration principles in place.

While the multiplicity of tools and guidelines is desirable and can allow for criteria and approaches that are fit for purpose, there is an important opportunity to advance work towards avoiding duplication, promoting convergence around common standards, and supporting the development of common tools and criteria for specific applications of NBS.

### **Supporting Sustainable Investment in NBS**

Canada acknowledges the current nature financing gap and supports the increasing of domestic and international financing for nature. This is why the Government of Canada has allocated a minimum of 20 percent (over \$1 billion) of its \$5.3 billion climate finance commitment to projects that leverage NBS and contribute biodiversity co-benefits. As well, at CBD COP15, Canada announced a new contribution of \$350 million to assist developing countries to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and implement the KMGBF. Canada has also pledged an initial \$219 million for the GEF-8 replenishment. Overall, the GEF-8 replenishment has achieved a historic US\$5.33 billion envelope, of which biodiversity will receive the largest share (36 percent, or US\$1.92 billion).

Nevertheless, Canada recognizes that public financing alone will not be sufficient to meet the global demand for investment in NBS. This is why Canada, through its climate finance, is supporting innovative initiatives like the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA) and the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR), which are leveraging blended finance to scale up private and philanthropic investment in order to increase the resilience of Small Island Developing States and other coastal communities to the impacts of climate change through NBS, as well as conserving and restoring coastal ecosystems. Other international initiatives, such as the ENACT Partnership, launched at COP27 in November 2022, are also advancing work to mobilize private investment in NBS.

Building on these ongoing efforts, there remains an opportunity to advance work to raise understanding of the value of nature for addressing climate change and biodiversity loss, while providing a multitude of co-benefits. This is a key priority, for example, that emerged from the Nature-Based Solutions Action Track under the Global Commission on Adaptation, which Canada co-led with Mexico. Notably, the outcomes of this Action Track called for further work to develop common guidelines and standards that help to define, measure, evaluate, and quantify the outcomes of NBS for climate adaptation, and Canada welcomes the emphasis on this topic as part of the intergovernmental consultations on NBS under UNEA.