

[Below is the MDB [joint statement on Nature, People and Planet](#). We have aggregated civil society partners' comments and recommendations for additions, changes and specific commitments to the statement including footnotes to enhance the statement's implementation and impact, consistent with its stated goals, the Paris Agreement, and the [Global Framework for Managing Nature Through 2030](#).]

**Overarching comment:** While this is a welcome statement, and we welcome a broader group of MDBs working together to promote outcomes that incorporate the role of nature in sustainable development, the statement suffers from generality/a lack of specificity and an over-reliance on continuing, rather than increasing or enhancing, actions to benefit nature, people, and planet and to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030. Specifically:

- The long **timeline** merely for establishing strategic approaches for mainstreaming nature in 1.8 is particularly disappointing.
- Similarly, the absence of reference to **metrics** is worrying since failure to measure impacts often means a failure to manage them.
- Concerning safeguards (para. 1.3): Minimizing and managing impacts is secondary in the mitigation hierarchy to **anticipating and avoiding**, and mainstreaming through safeguards is more limited than mainstreaming in programming.
- Moreover, while safeguards are a means of mainstreaming environmental sustainability, and reducing harm, given the degraded and destabilized status of nature and the climate, a more **pro-active effort** is needed to reverse damage and do good.
- Finally, given that efforts to protect and restore nature, while having tremendous benefit to cost ratios, require upfront and sustained investment, the absence of a **commitment on finance** is glaring, especially as a joint statement by financial institutions.

## **Joint Statement by the Multilateral Development Banks: Nature, People and Planet.**

The following MDBs endorse this joint statement: Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, IDB Invest, Islamic Development Bank, and World Bank Group.

### **Preamble**

1.26 Nature<sup>i</sup>, (including ecosystems and their biodiversity),<sup>ii</sup> plays a critical role in providing resources and services that underpin and support the planet and people in terms of: human health and wellbeing; economic growth, jobs, and livelihoods <sup>iii</sup>; food security; and air, water, and soil quality. Nature also plays a crucial role in helping to regulate our climate, acting as both a carbon sink as well as promoting resilience and adaptation to climate change through well-functioning and diverse ecosystems. When thriving and intact, nature can also help reduce the risks of future pandemics, and support a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient recovery from the impacts of COVID 19. Indeed, recent research such as the IPBES Global

Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Dasgupta Review of the Economics of Biodiversity<sup>iv</sup>, show, human activity is causing biodiversity loss at an unprecedented level, with potentially far-reaching systemic implications for wellbeing, livelihoods, and economies. They have also explored the role of nature as capital and an essential form of infrastructure. Therefore, progress on global sustainable development, climate and biodiversity goals cannot be achieved without addressing the direct and indirect drivers of nature loss<sup>v</sup> and transforming the way in which we value, use, conserve and share the benefits from nature.

## Building from a solid base

1.2. We, the MDBs, have mainstreamed environmental sustainability considerations, including nature, into all our policies and operations through the implementation of our environment and social policies, standards, and procedures. We reiterate our commitment to continue assisting our clients to anticipate, avoid, minimize, and manage environmental and social risks and impacts of their operations, and to improving these standards and their implementation to address current and emerging challenges such as infectious diseases and climate change.

1.3 We will continue to systematically integrate a gender perspective and consider the different needs of women and men, especially traditional and indigenous communities, in designing and undertaking actions on the use, management and protection of nature and environmental sustainability.

1.4 We will continue to meaningfully engage with traditional and indigenous communities as experts and rights-holders in protecting and managing biodiversity and natural resources, while respecting their rights to their lands, resources, culture and spirituality, and the need for their free, prior, informed consent in projects affecting these, and ensuring the protection of land and environmental defenders, who are particularly vulnerable.

1.5 We will build on our experience and track record in risk mitigation and promoting sustainability to support our client countries and the private sector to tackle the interconnected challenges of sustainable development, climate change, and nature loss. This underpins our commitments to support client countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, their Paris aligned climate goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) goals<sup>vi</sup>.

## Commitments

1.6 We will further mainstream nature into our plans, policies, analysis, assessments, advice, investments, and operations, working to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030, in line with our respective mandates and operating models, through:

1. Leadership:

1.7 We aim to support a sustainable, inclusive, green, and resilient post-COVID recovery that upholds our respective environmental, climate, economic, gender, social, and institutional sustainability standards, supporting green growth and jobs. Through our respective policy analyses, dialogues, ~~and~~ operations, and multi-stakeholder engagement processes, we contribute to and will continue supporting countries in implementing their commitments made in relation to the Parties' implementation of CBD, the Global Framework for Managing Nature Through 2030, the Paris Agreement, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration On Forests And Land Use, and the Leaders' Pledge for Nature.

1.8 We commit to clearly setting out institutional strategic approaches and action plans to further mainstream nature into our analysis, assessments, advice, investments, metrics and operations by 2023 for public sector operations and 2025 for private sector operations. These will inform, where applicable, sector and country strategies/papers.

1.9 We will work in partnership together and with others and seek to support reforms in the public and private sectors to redirect, repurpose, reform or eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies, while at the same time scaling up incentives that are ~~either~~ positive ~~or neutral~~ for biodiversity.

1.10 We will continue and increase~~to~~ support for public and private sector clients to participate in and benefit from global carbon markets and other green financial products, as these contribute to the above-cited climate and biodiversity goals~~appropriate~~, and in line with their respective priorities, while ensuring environmental integrity vii.

2. Tackling the drivers of nature loss by fostering and making 'nature positive' viii investments:

1.11 We will work together to ~~begin the process to~~ better understand and act on the financial and systemic risk of nature loss to our public and private portfolios and the current impacts of our portfolios on nature; and ~~seek to~~ agree ~~that~~~~en~~ an operational definition of 'nature positive' in the context of our operations and investments must include protecting coastal ecosystems such as wetlands and mangroves and securing and improving the ability of indigenous and local communities to manage the roughly 35% of the world's intact forests they inhabit.

1.12 We commit to develop projects, business models, tools/metrics, and/or financing instruments to support economic activity that seeks to reverse the drivers of nature loss and promote the protection, restoration and sustainable use of nature and its services to people.

1.13 We will develop, test, and expand the use of innovative instruments, tools and metrics, and more broadly apply existing ones, to support nature positive investment.

1.14 We will increase effort on greening finance by helping build an understanding of the dependencies on nature and the financial risks posed by nature loss to help direct financial flows away from business-as-usual models towards economic activity that addresses drivers of nature loss and generates nature co-benefits.

### 3. Fostering national and regional level synergies:

1.15 ~~Where possible, we~~ will increase support for cooperation among and within countries and ministries of finance and economic development and relevant departments/agencies (including those working on human rights) to develop appropriate policies, investment frameworks and agreements across all sectors that better value and enhance natural assets for the benefit of all people, including women and children <sup>viii-b</sup>, Indigenous People, vulnerable and marginalized populations while promosupporting climate and nature goals.

1.16 We will support government clients to revise their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) according to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, including adjustrengthening policies and relevant investment plans, as needed, as early as feasible.

1.17 As appropriate, we commit to raise support to countries to secure high ambition for implementing nature-based solutions (NbS)<sup>ix</sup>, across their relevant plans and strategies, including: Long-term Strategies (LTS); Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); National Adaptation Plans (NAPs); NBSAPs; and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets. In supporting NbS, we will adhere to four guiding principles to enable NbS to provide sustainable benefits to society: (1) NbS are not a substitute for the rapid phase out of fossil fuels; (2) NbS involve a wide range of ecosystems on land and in the sea, not just forests; (3) NbS are implemented with the full engagement and consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in a way that respects their political, cultural and ecological rights; and (4) NbS must be explicitly designed to provide measurable benefits for biodiversity. By following these principles, we will ensure robust and resilient NbS that address the urgent challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, sustaining nature and people together. <sup>ix bis</sup>

1.18 We will work with clients look for opportunities to step up and prioritize nature financing and efforts to mobilize or leverage private finance for investments in nature, including NbS for climate change mitigation and adaptation with co-benefits for nature and people, while taking care to avoid and eliminate private abuse of public goods.

1.19 We will support client countries and the private sector to identify and access appropriate forms of finance from multilateral climate and environment funds, as appropriate, and leverage additional ordinary capital and private sector finance for 'nature positive' investments. This will include supporting countries in delivering their commitments under climate, biodiversity, and other environmental conventions in an accelerated manner.

1.20 We will encourage and support our public and private sector borrowers to build, share and exchange biodiversity and ecosystem services information, including valuations, through online data portals <sup>ix</sup> to better inform mainstreaming, project design, and decision-making processes.

### 4. Valuing nature to guide decision making

1.21 We commit to use existing and new tools and metrics, including natural capital accounting as ~~these are proven to be~~ appropriate, to help public and private sector clients better value, sustainably manage, protect, and restore nature and its natural assets to deliver development

benefits which include the contribution natural assets make to climate mitigation and adaptation, jobs, livelihoods, gross national income, inclusion, productivity, health, nutrition, well-being, cultural heritage, and raising incomes.

1.22 We will ~~look for~~use all opportunities to incorporate ~~the use of~~ these tools and metrics into our project and/or country-level decision making, as relevant, especially in those sectors which historically have converted natural lands, harmed biodiversity, polluted the environment, and/or reduced natural capital. These may include food production, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, energy, tourism, infrastructure and extractive industries, transport and supply chains which have often benefited from perverse subsidies. We will support countries and private sector clients with technical assistance, where possible and appropriate, to use these tools to better incorporate the multiple values of intact and restored ecosystems ~~in form~~ economic planning and decision making, by applying the polluter pays principle and aligning incentives with values.

1.23 We will share knowledge and build capacity from community to national level to ~~help~~ enhance the evidence base and evaluate success and efficacy of various solutions.

## 5. Reporting and Transparency

1.24 We will ~~work actively~~seek to align our objectives and develop tools, metrics, and methodologies for tracking 'nature positive' investments across our portfolios.

1.25 We commit to enhancing accountability for and public reporting on our efforts and initiatives to mainstream nature in our analyses, strategies, and operations, including through multi-stakeholder engagement.

## 6. Financing:

1.26 We commit to progressively raising the percentage of concessional finance provided to public sector clients to achieve countries' commitments to the international climate and biodiversity conventions, in line with the foregoing commitments, in a sustained manner.

## Endnotes.

1 IPBES (2019a), Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, S. Díaz, et al. (Bonn: IPBES Secretariat) and IPBES (2019b), 'Glossary', <https://ipbes.net/glossary> Nature is used to refer to the natural world with an emphasis on its living components. Within the context of western science, it includes categories such as biodiversity, ecosystems (both structure and functioning), evolution, the biosphere, humankind's shared evolutionary heritage, and biocultural diversity. Within the context of other knowledge systems, it includes categories such as Mother Earth and systems of life, and it is often viewed as inextricably linked to humans, not as a separate entity (see "Mother Earth"). Both of these contexts apply to our work.

ii Biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms, and at all levels, including genes, species, and ecosystems. The CBD defines biodiversity as ‘the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.’

iii Benefits of ecosystem restoration include increased employment, increased business spending, improved gender equity, increased local investment in education and improved human health, well-being, and livelihoods. Investments in nature-based solutions can typically create low-skill and fast-implementing jobs — on average, between 7 and 40 jobs per \$1 million invested <https://www.wri.org/news/coronavirus-nature-based-solutions-economic-recovery>. Nature-related jobs are also an important potential source of employment in the green recovery. A study found that around 11 jobs were directly attributable per USD 1 million investment in ecosystem restoration projects, while total direct and indirect restoration jobs generated by USD 1 million investment, reached 31.5 <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/making-the-green-recovery-work-for-jobs-income-and-growth-a505f3e7/#endnotea0z19>

iv Dasgupta, P. (2021), The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review. (London: HM Treasury) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/final-report-the-economics-of-biodiversity-the-dasgupta-review>

v IPBES 2019 identifies the five direct drivers of change in nature with the largest global impact (starting with those with most impact) as: (i) changes in land and sea use; (ii) direct exploitation of organisms; (iii) climate change; (iv) pollution; and (v) invasion of alien species. Those five direct drivers result from an array of underlying causes – the indirect drivers of change and nature loss – which are in turn underpinned by societal values and behaviours that include production and consumption patterns, human population dynamics and trends, trade, technological innovations and local through global governance.

vi <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-technical-note-en.pdf>

vii As per Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

[https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris\\_nov\\_2015/application/pdf/paris\\_agreement\\_english.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english.pdf).

viii WEF. Nature positive means enhancing the resilience of our planet and societies to halt and reverse nature loss. A nature positive approach [enhances the integrity of natural ecosystems](#), enriches biodiversity [and soil](#), stores carbon, purifies water and reduces pandemic risk.

[Viii-b Express mention of children is important in light of the recent jurisprudence from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\) : “10.13 The Committee considers that, as children, the authors are particularly affected by climate change, both in terms of the manner in which they experience its effects and the potential of climate change to have an impact on them throughout their lifetimes, particularly if immediate action is not taken. Due to the particular impact on children, and the recognition by States parties to the Convention that children are entitled to special](#)

safeguards, including appropriate legal protection, States have heightened obligations to protect children from foreseeable harm”

ix IUCN definition for NbS: Actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

[https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our work/nature-based-solutions](https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our%20work/nature-based-solutions). Natural Climate solutions are a subset of NbS which specifically address the challenge of climate change e.g. conservation, restoration, and improved land management actions that increase carbon storage and/or avoid greenhouse gas emissions across global forests, wetlands, grasslands, and agricultural lands. Ecosystem based adaptation is subset of natural climate solutions that harness biodiversity and ecosystem services to reduce vulnerability and build resilience to climate change.

[https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/ecosystem-based adaptation issues brief final.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/ecosystem-based%20adaptation%20issues%20brief%20final.pdf) E.g. restoration of mangroves to protect coastal populations from storm surges and higher sea levels. This is also aligned to IPBES (2019a) and recent CBD definitions which note that ‘nature-based solutions with biodiversity safeguards are an essential component of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction.’

[Ix bis See Getting the message right on nature-based solutions to climate change, Global Change Biology, 01 February 2021 https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.15513.](https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.15513)

ix Such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). <https://www.gbif.org/>

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The foregoing is submitted by/on behalf of:

- 1 AMATE El Salvador
- 2 Asociación Ambiente y Sociedad
- 3 Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente (AIDA)
- 4 Bank Information Center
- 5 BioVision Africa (Uganda)
- 6 BirdLife International
- 7 Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
- 8 Derecho Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR)
- 9 Ecoa - Ecologia e Ação
- 10 Fundación CAUCE: Cultura Ambiental - Causa Ecologista
- 11 Fundación para el Desarrollo de Políticas Sustentables (Fundeps)
- 12 Inesc- Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos
- 13 International Accountability Project (IAP)
- 14 International Rivers
- 15 Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad (PICI)
- 16 Pro-biodiversity Conservationists in Uganda (PROBICOU)
- 17 Protección Internacional Mesoamérica
- 18 Wetlands International LAC / Fundación Humedales