

ALIGNING BIODIVERSITY MEASURES FOR BUSINESS

The Aligning Biodiversity Measures for Business initiative aims to form a common view amongst key stakeholders on the measurement, monitoring and disclosure of corporate biodiversity impacts and dependencies. It will encourage the development of more credible indicators of corporate contribution to global biodiversity goals into corporate reporting and global policy frameworks.

The issue

Most businesses depend on biodiversity, either directly or through their supply chains. Biodiversity provides critical resources on which industrial processes depend. In negatively impacting biodiversity, businesses risk losing these essential resources. Financial organisations investing in such businesses may also be exposed to risk if biodiversity impacts are not minimised. Financial institutions are also exposed to risk if the businesses they invest in negatively impact biodiversity. As the implications of the decline of nature become clearer, it is increasingly important for the private sector and its key stakeholders (governments, finance institutions etc.) to demonstrate robust and improved performance on biodiversity.

The measurement of corporate performance on biodiversity issues is hampered due to a lack of broadly agreed measurement approaches. Existing reporting standards focus on measures of process implementation rather than performance on the ground. Recent years have seen the development of a range of measurement approaches. However, these are developing in parallel with little opportunity for alignment to develop between the different approaches. This has the potential to undermine their uptake by companies, confused by a

proliferation of initiatives. Furthermore, these developments are taking place in parallel with broader discussions on government discussions on science based targets for biodiversity and targets for the post 2020 biodiversity policy framework.

The solution

The Aligning Biodiversity Measures for Business project addresses these issues by convening 20 institutions across relevant business, policy and biodiversity conservation groups with expertise in the emerging biodiversity measurement approaches for business. Through a series of workshops, the project aims to form a common view among key stakeholders on the measurement, monitoring and disclosure of corporate impact and then communicate this into key corporate reporting and disclosure mechanisms and global policy discussions and global policy frameworks.

As part of this project, three workshops are planned, the first of which was held in Brussels in March 2019 and the second of which will be held in Brazil on 29/30/31 October 2019, a third will be held in the first quarter of 2020, subject to securing funding.

The first workshop sought to explore existing methodologies and identify common ground between measurement approaches which help

business account for biodiversity. The workshop minutes and presentations can be accessed [here](#).

Four sub-groups – working groups aimed at driving the work forward and creating common thinking between the different measurement approaches – were developed at the workshop on the following topics:

1. Business applications and targets. Sub-group 1 will agree a typology of business applications and targets to help business select a relevant biodiversity measurement approach.

2. Scope, boundaries and baselines. Sub-group 2 will develop alignment among approaches on how biodiversity impact from business can be measured focusing on creating alignment in the scope of assessments, their focus e.g. biodiversity versus ecosystem services, impacts versus dependencies, baselines and boundaries of assessment.

3. Data and metrics. Sub-group 3 will develop alignment on and clearer links between the datasets used in measuring biodiversity impact from business across the different indicator initiatives.

4. Mainstreaming. Sub-group 4 will explore how the measurement approaches can better link with disclosure initiatives such as the Global Reporting Initiative and policy discussions on the post 2020 biodiversity framework.

Each subgroup will identify and explore methodological challenges/ discrepancies between measurement approaches and identify common ground principles for discussion at subsequent workshops. Each will consider key definitions and terms – a current area of confusion and misalignment across the different initiatives.

The second workshop in Brazil will be used to refine this understanding of common ground and explore the potential for a suite of measures that can meet the needs of the private sector and policy makers. The third, and final workshop will further refine a set of recommendations for policy makers and companies on measurement approaches for

biodiversity.

Key outputs

- Recommendations for the private sector and policy makers on methodologies to measure corporate biodiversity performance.
- A summary information document for submission to the Convention on Biological Diversity parties highlighting the results of the process.

Collaborating institutions

IUCN, Cambridge University (Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership), The Nature Conservancy, the European Business @ Biodiversity Platform, CDC Biodiversité, PRé, CREM, Fauna & Flora International, Conservation International, Biodiversity International, The Biodiversity Consultancy, Arcadis, Endangered Wildlife Trust, PBL Netherlands Environment Assessment Agency, the Natural Capital Coalition, Ecoacsa, Global Nature Fund and Arizona State University.

How you can engage

- As a developer of measurement approaches: input into sub-group discussions and attend the workshops.
- As a user of measurement approaches: input into sub-group discussions and attend periodic update webinars.
- As an observer: attend periodic update webinars.

For more information, contact:

Annelisa Grigg, Principal Specialist,
Business and Biodiversity Programme,
UNEP-WCMC
Email: annelisa.grigg@unep-wcmc.org