

Enabling business action on biodiversity in Armenia, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova

A regional business position paper for CBD COP17 (Yerevan, 19–30 October 2026)

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This paper is addressed to national governments and delegations attending CBD COP17 in Yerevan, and to the ministries and agencies in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine responsible for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It sets out the shared position of the business community in the four countries.

The adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) in 2022 marked an important global commitment to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 through 23 action-oriented targets for 2030. In October 2026, governments will gather at COP17 in Yerevan, Armenia, where the first Global Review of progress under the KMGBF will take stock of global progress towards the Framework's 2030 targets. With only four years left until 2030, this review comes at a critical juncture.

As part of the preparations for COP17, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has released the first draft¹ (June 2026) and a revised draft (July 2026) of the Global Report on Collective Progress. The draft highlights substantial efforts across countries and sectors since 2022, while also identifying a number of implementation challenges that may hinder progress towards the 2030 targets if left unaddressed.²

Of particular relevance to businesses is target 15 “Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts”. The draft of the Global Report highlights that this ambition is not yet consistently reflected in national targets and implementation measures, limiting the enabling conditions needed for companies to contribute effectively to the targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

More than half of the world's GDP is generated in sectors that are moderately to highly dependent on nature³, making biodiversity loss not only an environmental challenge but also an economic and business risk. Nature provides the foundation for productive sectors throughout our region, including agriculture, forestry, fishery, wine and food production, tourism, energy and manufacturing. As business organisations representing companies across the region, we recognise the critical role the private sector plays in halting and reversing biodiversity loss and in supporting the implementation of the KMGBF. However, unlocking the full potential of business action requires enabling frameworks, access to finance, reliable biodiversity data and targeted capacity-building measures. It also requires a targeted approach where biodiversity-related requirements are proportionate to company size, sector, biodiversity impacts and administrative capacity, particularly for SMEs, so that implementation supports meaningful action without creating disproportionate compliance burdens.

¹ [Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

² As the report is still being finalised at the time of writing (a revised draft was published in July 2026), the specific findings referenced below may be refined before COP17.

³ [Half of World's GDP Moderately or Highly Dependent on Nature, Says New Report > Press releases | World Economic Forum](#)

Regional context

Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine possess significant biodiversity assets and a wide range of ecosystems, including forests, rivers, wetlands, steppes, mountain ecosystems and coastal environments. The region hosts numerous endemic species and globally important habitats, with parts of Georgia and Armenia forming part of the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot. At the same time, biodiversity across the region is under increasing pressure. In Ukraine, the ongoing war has created additional pressures on ecosystems and natural resources.

The growing alignment of biodiversity disclosure requirements with initiatives such as the TNFD (Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures) recommendations and evolving EU sustainability regulation means that biodiversity management is increasingly becoming a business issue. Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia are EU candidate countries, and all signatory countries have a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements with the European Union with companies actively engaged in European value chains. Therefore, (the ability to assess and manage biodiversity-related impacts and risks is becoming increasingly important for market access, investment and competitiveness.

The draft of the Global Report shows that Eastern European States have the lowest submission rates of any regional group for several of the planning and reporting instruments that support implementation of the KMGBF, indicating significant scope to strengthen national biodiversity governance and implementation.

Despite these challenges, important biodiversity initiatives are already underway across the region. Armenia, as host of COP17, has completed Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) analyses, and is developing its first Biodiversity Finance Plan, creating opportunities to strengthen biodiversity-positive incentives, mobilise finance and increase private-sector engagement⁴. In Ukraine, the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy until 2035, approved in 2026, establishes a long-term vision for protecting and restoring ecosystems and integrates biodiversity considerations into national development, climate resilience and recovery policies.⁵ Moldova has completed EU LIFE-funded biodiversity project in 2026 which delivered a roadmap and the technical and legal tools needed to transition Moldova's Emerald Network to the EU's Natura 2000 standard⁶.

Moldova's ongoing BIOFIN process also provides an opportunity to strengthen the evidence base on biodiversity finance and the contribution of the private sector. This experience reinforces the importance of involving business organisations not only in mobilising finance, but also in the design of biodiversity policies, incentives and investment mechanisms.

⁴ [Armenia Advances Biodiversity Finance Ahead of CBD COP17 | United Nations Development Programme](#)

⁵ <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/press-releases/government-ukraine-approves-biodiversity-conservation-strategy-until-2035>

⁶ [Emerald Network to Natura 2000 Transition – The first LIFE project in Moldova presents its Roadmap and tools at the project's final conference – liferenata](#)

Moldova has also adopted its Biodiversity Programme for 2026–2030, establishing the national framework for improving the state of biodiversity and natural ecosystems through conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, restoration of degraded ecosystems, reduction of pressures on biodiversity, and stronger institutional and information systems. The Programme is aligned with Moldova's EU accession agenda, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Approximately 69% of the Programme's estimated financing needs remain to be mobilised during the implementation period. This highlights the importance of mobilising additional finance, incentives and investment mechanisms, while avoiding a disproportionate transfer of implementation costs or administrative burdens to businesses, particularly SMEs.

Georgia is currently finalising an updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) aligned with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, together with its Seventh National Report to the CBD. The process builds on earlier work to define national biodiversity targets, strengthen monitoring and assess institutional and financing needs. Georgia has also expanded its protected-area system to more than one million hectares, representing approximately 14.6% of the country's territory, while continuing work on ecological connectivity and management of the Emerald Network.

Georgia also has experience with biodiversity finance through BIOFIN: its first Biodiversity Finance Plan was adopted in 2019 and finance solutions have been piloted in areas including protected-area and forest management, environmental impact assessment and sustainable natural-resource use. The ongoing NBSAP process provides an opportunity to strengthen structured private-sector participation in biodiversity policy and financing.

Building on this progress, Georgia continues to modernise its biodiversity governance framework. Existing legislation provides important safeguards through environmental assessment, environmental liability and sustainable forest management, while further work is needed to establish a comprehensive and predictable framework for species, habitats and internationally designated conservation areas

In Ukraine, due consideration should be given to the fact that Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, conducted on the territory of a sovereign State, is causing extensive and irreversible damage to natural ecosystems and is consequently contributing to the degradation and loss of biodiversity. At the same time, Ukrainian enterprises remain subject to a wide range of environmental regulatory requirements and restrictions governing emissions and discharges into the environment, reflecting Ukraine's commitments and obligations under the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union.

These circumstances should be duly taken into account when assessing the environmental performance and regulatory compliance of Ukrainian enterprises, as well as when considering the implementation of further EU-aligned environmental requirements in Ukraine.

Across the region, biodiversity-rich areas support important economic sectors, including agriculture, forestry, tourism, food production and renewable energy. Protecting and restoring these natural assets can therefore contribute not only to biodiversity objectives, but also to economic resilience, investment and sustainable growth. We see stronger regional cooperation as an important enabler of more effective biodiversity governance, business engagement and implementation across the region.

Meeting the KMGBF's 2030 targets will require sustained action from business as well as government.

As representatives of our national business communities we are ready to:

- Improve businesses understanding of biodiversity-related impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities across business operations and value chains.
- Assist companies integrate biodiversity considerations into business decision-making and long-term strategies.
- Promote and facilitate business participation in biodiversity finance initiatives and biodiversity-positive investment opportunities.

Creating the scale of transformation required by the KMGBF requires governments to establish the enabling conditions that allow businesses to act effectively and confidently. According to the IPBES Business and Biodiversity Assessment⁷, an effective enabling environment includes policy and regulatory frameworks, access to finance, biodiversity data and monitoring systems, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing arrangements that make biodiversity action both possible and attractive for businesses.

The recommendations below identify the areas where stronger government action can unlock greater private-sector contributions to biodiversity. The business community in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine calls on our governments to create the enabling conditions necessary for business action:

1. Strengthen data, monitoring and regional cooperation

- Establish and strengthen regional biodiversity knowledge and cooperation centres to support capacity-building, knowledge exchange and technical assistance across the region.
- Invest in national biodiversity monitoring systems, ecosystem mapping and accessible biodiversity data infrastructure.
- Improve the availability, consistency and interoperability of biodiversity data and methodologies across countries to facilitate transparency, reporting and cross-border cooperation.
- Support biodiversity-related capacity-building programmes for businesses, enabling companies to understand and manage biodiversity-related impacts, dependencies and risks.

2. Strengthen the policy and regulatory framework

- Create clear, predictable and incentive-based regulatory frameworks that support biodiversity-positive business action and investment.
- Prioritise incentives, technical assistance and access to finance over additional administrative or reporting burdens, particularly for SMEs and companies at an early stage of biodiversity integration.
- Ensure systematic and early consultation with representative business and employers' organisations when designing biodiversity legislation, national strategies, reporting requirements and financing instruments.

⁷ [Business and Biodiversity Assessment | IPBES ICT guide](#)

- Support gradual and proportionate alignment with relevant European biodiversity, sustainability and disclosure frameworks, taking into account company size, sectoral impacts and implementation capacity, to facilitate market access, investment and integration into European value chains.
- Ensure that new biodiversity legislation, standards and reporting requirements are introduced through predictable implementation roadmaps, adequate transition periods, practical sector-specific guidance and early consultation with affected businesses.

3. Mobilise finance for biodiversity

- Improve access to finance for biodiversity-related investments by businesses, including through blended finance and other green financing mechanisms.
- Develop practical financing and risk-sharing instruments for business investment in biodiversity, including grants and co-financing, guarantees, preferential green lending, appropriate fiscal incentives and dedicated mechanisms accessible to SMEs.
- Complete or accelerate national Biodiversity Finance Plans based on the BIOFIN methodology and ensure structured private-sector engagement throughout the process.
- Develop biodiversity investment roadmaps that identify priority sectors and concrete opportunities for private-sector investment.
- Develop national frameworks for nature credits and biodiversity markets, building on the direction set by the European Commission's 2025 Roadmap towards Nature Credits⁸.

⁸ [Nature Credits Roadmap to reward nature-positive action and boost private finance](#)

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