

# Workshop of the German G7 Presidency on "Nature-based Solutions to tackle multiple planetary crises - best practices and lessons learned"

## Chair's Summary

Berlin, 13 December 2022

### Abstract

In May 2022, the G7 Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers committed to mainstreaming, enhancing, and scaling up, across all sectors, at home and abroad, the implementation of Nature-based-Solutions (NbS), to benefit biodiversity and climate. To transform commitments into action, this workshop, that took place virtually on 20 October 2022, provided a platform for the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on NbS implementation – with the aim of scaling-up action, creating synergies and incentivizing cooperation. A special focus was placed on marine and coastal NbS as the oceans are a priority of the German G7 Presidency. The meeting also built on the G7 Leaders' Communiqué including their strong references to NbS as well as the G7 Ocean Deal, which was endorsed by the Heads of State and Government in Elmau.

Three keynote presentations provided a range of insights. Radhika Murti (IUCN) discussed key factors for success in mainstreaming NbS and the role of social and environmental safeguards. Barney Dickson (UNEP) outlined the significance of the UNEA 5/5 NbS resolution in scaling up NbS. And Dorothee Herr (IUCN) highlighted the importance of promoting coastal and marine NbS for climate, biodiversity and resilience. The workshop also considered the role of NbS in Ukraine: Olesya Petrovych (WWF Ukraine) pointed out that NbS could play an important part in building back better in a post-war recovery. Germany presented its [Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity](#). Japan, as the upcoming G7 Presidency, provided additional insights. G7 countries, as well as Indonesia, who joined the workshop as the current G20 Presidency, presented their best practices on NbS in terrestrial, marine, and coastal ecosystems.

The workshop highlighted the diverse and ambitious actions countries are already taking to scale up the implementation of NbS. These include ambitious cross-sector programmes to mainstream NbS and the establishment of innovative financing mechanisms. NbS were highlighted as important multipurpose tools to sequester carbon and reduce emissions, to contribute to climate resilience and adaptation, and to support

biodiversity as well as sustainable development. In addition to terrestrial ecosystems, oceans, marine and coastal ecosystems were shown to be vital in providing important ecosystem services such as climate regulation and biodiversity conservation.

There was broad agreement that we need to step up the implementation of NbS now. Doing so will require mainstreaming NbS in policy decisions as well as increased resource mobilisation, while building on the landmark UNEA 5/5 Resolution on NbS and ensuring effective and sustainable implementation through social and environmental safeguards. The outcomes of the workshop's discussions will motivate increased action and deepen consideration of NbS within the G7 in the future.

The important take-aways from the workshop were:

- High-level governmental commitment is key to mainstreaming NbS
- Cooperation as well as inclusion and outreach towards stakeholders and affected communities are essential to advance NbS
- Scaling up successful NbS projects is crucial for mainstreaming robust action
- Addressing all ecosystems, at land and sea, is indispensable to reach the full potential of NbS
- Science and data is vital for dealing with complex, dynamic systems
- Setting concrete targets and leveraging existing policies and frameworks is critical
- Scaling-up finance for NbS is urgently needed

## Key outcomes

### **High-level governmental commitment is key to mainstreaming NbS –**

Commitment is required at the highest levels of government backed by policies and resources to incentivise the uptake of NbS. Several countries have already made major commitments as well as investments at international, national and sub-national level, embracing and promoting NbS. One example for this is the G7 high-level recognition of the importance of marine and coastal ecosystems as well as the need to tackle climate change, overuse and pollution, all of which are threatening the ocean, by endorsing and providing key contributions to the G7 Ocean Deal. This provides important linkages to the CBD COP15 as well as to the development of a new international legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), which is due to be concluded next year. Better quantification and monitoring of NbS will further contribute to promoting the integration of NbS into policies and planning at all levels. In addition, there is need for increased coordination and cooperation between and within countries to effectively implement NbS. The definition of NbS that was multilaterally agreed at UNEA (Resolution 5/5), together with the intergovernmental consultations on NbS that were requested in the resolution, will be an important starting point to build a common understanding of NbS that will facilitate increased global implementation.

**Cooperation as well as inclusion and outreach towards stakeholders and affected communities are essential to advance NbS** – In addition to high-level commitments, engaging partners at the local, municipal or regional level is vital when implementing NbS. Working with different partners, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, youth and other relevant stakeholders, is required to implement NbS effectively. This should take into account and address the concerns of affected stakeholders about some aspects of NbS implementation. It is essential to recognise that climate change disproportionately affects Indigenous Peoples, who at the same time are often stewards of resources and ecosystems. Therefore, implementing NbS needs to be an inherently inclusive process. Additionally, it is crucial to spread knowledge about NbS to local and regional stakeholders in order to support implementation. There is a need for effective, impactful and results-oriented cross-sectoral partnerships, which aim for synergies rather than competing for existing resources. This holds true at both the national and sub-national as well as the international level. Synergies between international agendas and processes such as between the Rio Conventions (UNCCD, UNCBD and UNFCCC) can additionally provide opportunities to scale up NbS as well as identify and discuss their potential multiple benefits and trade-offs.

**Scaling up successful NbS projects is crucial for mainstreaming robust action** – Countries are already implementing a range of NbS in different ecosystems and sectors. However, many projects related to NbS are modest in size and scale. There is need to identify, multiply and scale-up projects that have proven successful, and manage interconnectedness between projects to develop and promote large-scale NbS implementation, which has the potential to drive ambitious action and impact. At the same time, social and environmental safeguards, including respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and avoidance of negative impacts on biodiversity, need to be applied. As healthy ecosystems are the foundation for economies and societies, NbS can be powerful tools to restore and conserve ecosystems for a green and sustainable recovery, including in post-war recovery plans.

**Addressing all ecosystems, at land and sea, is indispensable to reach the full potential of NbS** – It is important to employ NbS in all ecosystems, both terrestrial and marine or coastal as well as urban and rural. Additionally, challenges need to be addressed at the landscape level as well as taking into account regional and spatial planning rather than only focussing on individual ecosystems.

**Science and data is vital for dealing with complex, dynamic systems** – Monitoring and assessing NbS projects is needed to better understand the complex socio-ecological interactions involved in NbS. This will inform the development and implementation of sustainable and effective NbS. Collating the wealth of data and knowledge on NbS implemented within and beyond the G7 will greatly contribute to making the case for NbS. Opportunities and benefits emerging from NbS as well as

potential trade-offs need to be included in the discussions. In addition, there is a large and growing literature on NbS, which supports building a common understanding of NbS. Recent examples mentioned in the workshop included: [IUCN Global Standard for NbS](#), [State of Finance for Nature 2022](#); [Nature-based Solutions: Opportunities and Challenges for Scaling Up](#); and *Decent work in Nature-based Solutions 2022* (UNEP, forthcoming).

**Setting concrete targets and leveraging existing policies is critical** – This may include integrating NbS into existing instruments and strategies such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) or National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPS), to be promoted through cross-sectoral implementation. For example, some G7 countries have strong reference to coastal and marine NbS in their NDCs and there is room to boost these efforts. Better links are required between ocean protection and climate action, e.g. by protecting and restoring blue carbon ecosystems to store and sequester CO<sub>2</sub> while creating and maintaining biodiversity. It is crucial to integrate NbS as cross-sectoral approaches, including in areas like trade, labour or health, for example through joint work plans. We need to ensure that NbS are embedded in policies with concrete targets and backed up by appropriate financial resources, taking into account factors such as their job creation potential, their contribution to the livelihoods of local communities, and their role in promoting health and well-being, including in cities.

**Scaling-up finance for NbS is urgently needed** – Innovative Finance is required to scale up funding for NbS as well as developing new business models that attract different markets and funding sources, including the private sector. Matching large sums of money with a multitude of small-scale project approaches is another important challenge. Although also public sources of finance for NbS should be significantly scaled up, there is a need to go beyond those funding sources in order to increase ambition. This will require re-thinking policy and finance mechanisms and shifting from time-bound interventions to enabling change processes that can foster long-term transformation.