

# Report from the launch of the European Subregional TSCC

Prepared upon the request of the Knowledge Centre  
for Biodiversity

24-25 September 2025, Brussels

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## List of abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EASIN	European Alien Species Information Network
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
EU	European Union
IAS	Invasive alien species
INCA	Integrated system for Natural Capital Accounting
KM-GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
OECMs	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
PCA	Protected and Conserved Areas
SEEA - EA	System of Environmental Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting
TSCC	Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Center



# Introduction

From 24 to 25 September 2025, in Brussels, Belgium, the European Union, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN Med), and the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS), have launched the European Subregional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC). This meeting was organized with the support of the CO-OP4CBD project.



A total of 44 participants online, 50 participants in person, representing 36 different institutions and 18 different countries attended the event. This included the participation of several TSCCs i.e., from Central America: Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute; Africa: Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), Ecological Monitoring Centre (CSE), the Observatory of Central African Forests of the Central African Forest Commission (OFAC-COMIFAC), the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD); and Asia: the Asian Regional Office of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN ARO).

At the heart of the TSCC's operational model is a network of Knowledge Hubs, each aligned with one of the KM-GBF's 23 targets.

Participants, including national representatives and other key actors, were introduced to the TSCC's structure, its general modus operandi, the types of support the Hubs can offer, and the existing Knowledge Hubs were presented. During this two-day presentation, participants were asked about their capacity-building needs, discussed the Knowledge Hubs' minimum service, matchmaking and demonstration cases, and made recommendations.

## Key highlights from the meeting

### TSCC structure, governance, and modus operandi

The European Subregional TSCC will support 44<sup>1</sup> countries and is composed of three partners:

- The Joint Research Centre (EC JRC) of the European Commission, which oversees the organizational structure of the TSCC through its Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity (EC KCBD) of the European Commission. The EC KCBD was established to track and assess progress by the European Union and its partners, including in relation to implementing commitments from biodiversity-related international instruments. The EC KCBD brings together several services of the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is part of the EC KCBD via its Steering Group. EEA's partner network - The European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet) - consists of the EEA's member (32) and cooperating countries (6). Eionet brings together around 3,000 experts from more than 600 national institutions across Europe that collaborate to collect, process and disseminate environmental and biodiversity data.

- The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (**RBINS**), through its scientific expertise and institutional networks, contributes as a key partner to the European subregional TSCC. Building on its long-standing role in biodiversity monitoring, science-policy interface, research, and policy support at national and international levels, RBINS facilitates the mobilisation and coordination of relevant Belgian scientific institutions and experts. In addition to its national coordination role, RBINS also supports collaboration among Western European Parties assigned to the subregional TSCC, while promoting synergies with relevant EU-level processes and platforms.
- The Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN-Med**)<sup>2</sup> brings expertise around protected areas, as well as 4 agencies in the region. IUCN-Med acts as a node facilitating the involvement of Parties of the Southern European region, while also leveraging the participation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN ECARO) to support representation and engagement of those Balkan states that are included in the selection of Parties assigned to the European subregional TSCC. IUCN-Med also serves as a channel to facilitate the participation of the broader IUCN network in supporting efforts across the 44 European Parties assigned to the European subregional TSCC.

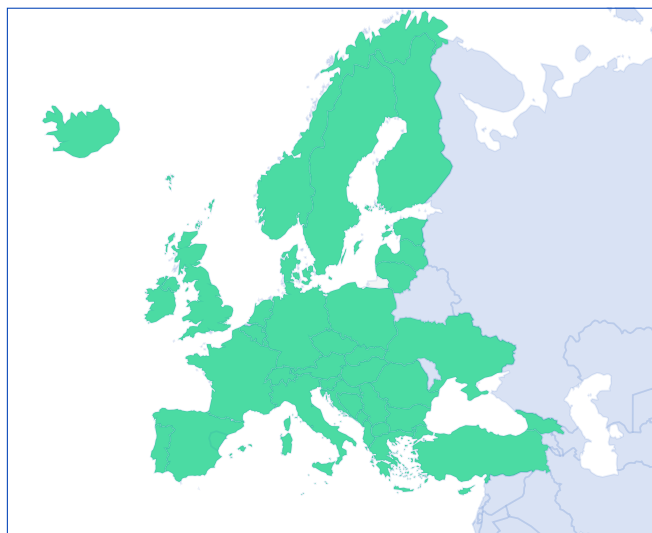


Figure 1: Geographical coverage of the European subregional TSCC covered by the EC KCBD in collaboration with RBINS and IUCN-Med (credit: EC JRC)

<sup>1</sup> Indicative list (<https://www.cbd.int/tsc/tscm/subregionalcentres>): Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that IUCN is also involved in other TSCCs in other CBD regions.

## Grégoire Dubois (EC JRC) presented the European subregional TSCC, with five specific goals:

- Tracking and assessing progresses of EU/partners biodiversity instruments;
- Fostering cooperation and partnership;
- Underpinning policy development;
- Tools development supporting the implementation;
- Information management and dissemination.

The European subregional TSCC will be organised in Knowledge Hubs, each aligned with one of the KM-GBF's 23 targets. It aims to strengthen the science-policy interface to help filter and organize the knowledge flow, and bring clarity, for a more coordinated and participatory approach to biodiversity governance across Europe and beyond. To date, four Knowledge Hubs have been set up based on existing institutions with scalable activities. A call will be issued to identify Knowledge Hubs' hosts institutions for the remaining KM-GBF targets. Outside the European scope, the CBD Secretariat acts as a [global coordination entity](#) and has requested TSCCs to collaborate and engage with one another.

Within its core functions, each Knowledge Hub will operate at four complementary levels: technical, capacity building, outreach and governance.

## Each Hub will provide four key areas of service:

- 1 Access to methods, tools, technologies and, when possible, data;
- 2 Capacity building and resources;
- 3 Technical and scientific cooperation for policy implementation;
- 4 Technical guidance and methodology alignment.

In terms of activities and support provided, the Knowledge Hubs will ensure training and skill development, peer-learning and exchange, information brokerage, resource mobilization, scientific knowledge and tools, expert network engagement, data quality and harmonization, best practices and lessons learned, awareness raising and communication.

Most of the work will be based on the requests sent in by Parties, addressing their identified needs. Some of the modalities for the TSCC's modus operandi still remain to be defined, also based on future Knowledge Hubs.

## High-level Panel

**Michel Van Camp (Director General of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences)** highlighted that science policy interfaces are the pillar of the work conducted by RBINS. As the notions of biodiversity and environmental conservation break through into the social consciousness, RBINS endeavours to ensure that our research actively supports policy. This has translated into making one of their primary missions to link research to public action and governance by providing expertise to policymakers.

**Astrid Schomaker (Executive Secretary of the CBD)** flagged that the launch of the European subregional TSCC was a major milestone, congratulated the team and indicated that it will be instrumental to supporting the implementation of the KM-GBF.

**Jihyun Lee (Deputy Executive Secretary of CBD)** recalled that target 20 of the KM-GBF requires strong capacity building, along with deeper scientific and technical cooperation. This approach ensures that technical and scientific capacities reach the ones who need it the most. While the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation (IAG-TSC) set up by the COP provides strategic advice, the Global Coordination Entity (GCE) will be hosted by the CBD Secretariat thanks to the EU's generous support and help in implementing it, along with Korea's support to the Biobridge initiative.

**Patrick Child (Deputy Director of DG Environment)** mentioned that the credibility of international cooperation is at stake but that the adoption of the KM-GBF at COP15 shows that it is still possible. Implementing the KM-GBF will not be easy for the EU, but it will do everything in its power to reach the goals. He stressed that now more than ever, we need scientists and scientific work to give credibility to the whole process.

**Leena Yla-Mononen (General Director of the EEA)** cited EIONET as an example of building an initiative from data collection to a network community. The KM-GBF provides a direction, and the TSCCs will help us move together, while EIONET is a tool to respond to these challenges.

**Grethel Aguilar (Director General of the IUCN)** celebrated the appointment of IUCN-Med as a member of the TSCC, which is an opportunity to deepen collaboration. She stressed the importance of the Mediterranean space for connecting Europe with other continents.

**Alessanda Zampieri (Director of Directorate D of the EC JRC)** described the launch as a historical moment, celebrating that the EC KCBD was appointed as the coordination entity for the TSCC. The implementation of the KM-GBF is an important challenge. In order to reach this goal, we have to rely on science. She called for action to implement the GBF and translate the targets to tangible action on the ground, highlighting that scientific excellence will help.

## Presentation of existing Knowledge Hubs

### Target 3

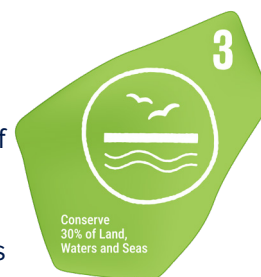
**Conserve 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas.**

In this knowledge hub, both the [EEA](#) and [IUCN-Med](#) will support the implementation of Target 3 of the KM-GBF.

IUCN Med, bringing global expertise and counting with four agencies in the region, brings know-how around protected areas and would have the capacity to develop standards.

The EEA will build on its existing work with the European Environment Information and Observation Network ([EIONET](#)) on protected areas covering data flows, data standards, management effectiveness, indicators, the Biodiversity information system for Europe ([BISE](#)), briefings and reports.

Together, they would provide guidelines, technical notes, training materials, toolkits, webinars on PCA and OECMs, as well as e-modules and platforms. Finally, they could provide peer-learning and mentoring opportunities to strengthen institutional capacities.



### Next steps:

- A CBD-led training for Eastern European countries on target 3 is already scheduled to be held in December 2025 (it is now foreseen for Feb/March 2026).
- In the coming months, this Knowledge Hub will also focus on consolidating and promoting its ongoing activities, including organizing EIONET meetings.
- Parties can reach out to this Knowledge Hub to get support in reporting to the CBD on the implementation of Target 3, to get a view on how things are going from a European perspective, to get information on knowledge gaps, but also to provide case studies to the Knowledge Hub.

### Target 6

**Eliminate, minimize, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services.**

This Knowledge Hub, led by the [EC JRC](#), will leverage the European Alien Species Information Network ([EASIN](#)) in collaboration with [IUCN](#).

EASIN is an official information system under EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species, providing expertise to support the European Commission's services, Member States, and related institutions. Composed of a multidisciplinary team with expertise on biodiversity, data management and citizen science, it provides a scalable infrastructure, that enables access to scientific data and information across 64 countries, including the 44 under the TSCC. EASIN hosts the early detection Notification System (NOTSYS), and has expertise in engaging with stakeholders via webinars, workshops and the EASIN smartphone and web apps to foster inclusive monitoring and decision-making. Finally, EASIN collaborates with international research institutions, including IUCN.





## Within the TSCC context, EASIN can provide:

- Access to data resources, tools and technologies, including harmonized data on over 14,000 invasive alien species, integrating national, EU-level and regional data sets;
- Species search and mapping tools, web services, and real time reporting through citizen science apps, supporting Parties to monitor, report, and manage IAS effectively;
- Capacity-building and development resources, such as customized training workshops and webinars to enhance national and regional capacities for data collection, reporting, and analysis.

## Next steps:

- The Knowledge Hub will develop the target 6 headline indicator and submit one component – the rate of IAS introduction – for review (2025).
- It will develop the pressure and establishment components of the indicator (2026).
- It will enhance EASIN data and information by explicitly considering all Parties of the TSCC and facilitating responses to identified needs.

### Target 11 **Restore, maintain, and enhance nature's contributions to people**

The Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) is a statistical framework for organizing data, tracking change in the extent and the condition of ecosystem, measuring ecosystem services and linking this information to economic and other human activities. NCA serves as an important tool for implementing and tracking progress on the GBF, and it can support multiple GBF targets, including Target 11: restoring, maintaining, and enhancing nature's contributions to people.



The **Integrated Natural Capital Accounting (INCA)** project pioneered the application of NCA across the EU, creating an essential basis for incorporating natural capital into policy and decision-making. INCA follows the principles of the global statistical standard of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA). INCA has delivered applications offering a systematic way to evaluate, value, and report ecosystem (ecosystem extent and ecosystem condition) and ecosystem services accounts. Ecosystem services accounts include information on the potential supply, demand, actual use or flow of ecosystem services, along with any gaps between potential supply and demand. They are expressed in both biophysical and monetary values.

By 2027, Member States will have to report yearly on ecosystem services accounts to comply with the Regulation (EU) 2024/3024. INCA will provide capacity building and skills development to support the implementation of the regulation through: technical demand-driven support (e.g., training sessions or FAQs), access to scientific knowledge and technical tools, knowledge sharing through INCA reports, access to open-source data, methodological guidelines and tools such as INCA tool (a QGIS plugin). INCA tool will be applicable and usable outside the 27 EU Member States, and its data mostly originates from official open sources such as [Eurostat](#) database.

## Target 16 **Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices**



The European Platform on Life Cycle Assessment ([EPLCA](#)) is the EU's knowledge base that responds to business and policy needs towards sustainable production and consumption. The EPLCA supports the methodological development of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) for the analysis of supply chains and end-of-life waste management, as basis for integrated environmental assessments for the support of EU policy. LCA-based approaches can be used to provide assess at micro-, meso- and macro-scale impact of consumption, including the combination of LCA with other approaches such as Material Flow Analysis (MFA). LCA-based approaches can be employed to address specific challenges and modelling production to provide support to technical questions (e.g., via training sessions and FAQs), reading material, and support in integrating data into its tools.

## Capacity needs identified (CO-OP4CBD)

Brooke Wilkerson and Jorge Luis Ventocilla (CO-OP4CBD) presented a report finalised a year ago, providing a picture of the landscape of capacity needs at the time. For this report, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) submitted by 2 September 2023 were studied, two questionnaires were shared with Parties, COOP4CBD project feedback was used and national targets from the [Online Reporting Tool](#) were analysed.

The study found that most Parties did not explicitly include capacity building needs in the NBSAPs. Potential reasons for this are a lack of guidance, low priority, discomfort with expressing what could be perceived as a weakness, difficulty assessing transversal issues such as capacity building needs across ministries and with different scopes. Only three Parties had completed the section on capacity building needs on the ORT. All three had also submitted NBSAPs.

## 148 capacity building needs were expressed in the NBSAPs, divided into four categories:

### 1 Knowledge

- Knowledge creation: where knowledge is not available;
- Knowledge management (including facilitation): knowledge exists but needs to be curated, shared, etc.

### 2 Management

- Management actions: activities related to the management of species or ecosystems (management plans or strategies);
- Assessments (including monitoring): activities related to the evaluation and monitoring.

<sup>3</sup> <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC143088>

<sup>4</sup> The official statistical standard of ecosystem accounting is the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting ([SEEA](#))

<sup>5</sup> <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3024/oj>

### 3 Policy

- Implementation and enforcement: activities related to, or having an impact implementation and enforcement;
- Sectorial integration: integrating biodiversity into sectoral policies;
- Legal frameworks: developing new policies or strategies;
- Funding: cross cutting issues that underline other categories.

### 4 Cooperation

- National and international cooperation: aligning strategies to enhance regional cooperation and maintaining cooperation with neighbouring countries;
- Outreach: awareness raising for target groups; education measures.

As a conclusion, Parties are facing a number of cooperation and coordination challenges where support would be beneficial. Capacity needs lie both at the individual and institutional level, with cross-cutting funding needs faced by Parties. Few Parties had directly identified their capacity-building needs but Parties which have done so are in the best position to get help on meeting said needs.

**Recommendations from this report** include developing a standard template to be used for capacity building needs and to help Parties structure a difficult task as well as streamline their reporting. Developing standard categories for defining and prioritizing needs and increasing the responsiveness of TSCCs to emerging needs would be helpful for Parties.

## Presentations from Malta and Ukraine

### Capacity needs for nature conservation in Ukraine

Ukraine has identified most of its capacity needs for implementing the KM-GBF, among which financial resources, knowledge, legislation, data, methodology, infrastructure, equipment, technology and skills. Funding is an overarching need for most of these elements. Ukraine also faces a lack of political will, low institutional capacity and an insufficient level of scientific knowledge.

- Financial needs for the implementation of Ukraine's NBSAP are estimated at 61,159,330.90 euros.
- Identified needs for staff at different levels (ministries, regional administrations, protected areas of administration) are estimated to be around 40 people.

The numbers were put together with the NBSAP prepared with the help of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The estimates do not cover the entire NBSAP but rather the first three years of implementation, which entails a lot of legislative work. The case of Ukraine is closer to the Czech Republic's than one would think, as they face similar environmental problems, including with invasive alien species. One of the ways the TSCC could provide support would be with capacity building in learning English and working in English.

## Malta as a case study

Malta has one of the highest population densities in the EU, along with intense land use practices, lots of development, and invasive alien species. The country aims to address challenges through their NBSAP, divided into five policy areas. Malta's challenge lies mostly in implementing the NBSAP on the ground.

### Malta's identified capacity needs are:

- Human resources: limited time, competing priorities (high priority);
- In-house expertise: limited time, competing priorities (medium priority), especially on biosafety, biotechnologies, engaging with the private sector, biodiversity and health, educational tools;
- Mainstreaming and coordinating (medium priority): when engaging with colleagues in different administrations, challenges arise in gathering information for the 7th National Report, for example;
- Data (medium priority): fragmented and localized data. There is limited time to identify where the data is. Malta has good data on monitoring requirements but not on engaging with the private sector or on funding;
- Funding (low priority): Malta experiences challenges in getting feedback on best practices in implementing projects between colleagues;
- International collaboration (low priority): a solution would be match-making with municipalities with similar unique conditions;
- Engaging with the public and private sectors (low priority).

As a result, Malta has come up with the preliminary idea of putting together an NBSAP forum core group chaired by the Environment and Resources Authority, with a plenary and technical working groups on specific topics. There is, however, a lack of capacity to implement this structure. One conference a year would invite all relevant stakeholders to present their initiatives and contribute to reporting on the implementation of the NBSAP. Data presented during the forum would go directly into the national reports.

Malta also shared that different colleagues from different ministries also have limited resources and time, along with different priorities. In-house expertise is limited, and it has been hard to communicate and engage across ministries.

## Breakout groups - Recommendations from participants



Figure 2: Participants filled out a Mentimeter to indicate their expectations for the meeting  
(Source: CO-OP4CBD)

## The minimum offer of the Knowledge Hubs

Participants in this breakout group were asked to answer the following questions:

- Based on the background provided, what do you see as the minimum services or core offer that Knowledge Hubs should provide to ensure they are truly useful for your country in implementing the GBF?
- If you had to highlight just one essential service or function that every Knowledge Hub should guarantee, regardless of its specific focus, what would it be?

In the discussions, Iceland has shared its challenges, namely with having only two people working on the topic in the country and difficulties involving other colleagues and sectors in the work. It is important to have the capacity to even know what the needs are.

Participants discussed the need for a minimum service from the TSCC and its Knowledge Hubs. Parties have indicated that until February 2026, they will be under pressure at the national level to focus on the 7th national report, which will impact the expression of needs and may require extra time later in the year to express said needs.

In the meantime, and at the very least, Parties expect Knowledge Hubs to ensure responsiveness, short, clear and synthetic outputs, practical step-by-step guidelines, to provide ranges of options when addressing a request, an open Q&A platform sorted by targets of the GBF, peer-to-peer exchange facilitation, as well as case studies (with contact information for the networks of actors behind them).

## Providing a matchmaking service

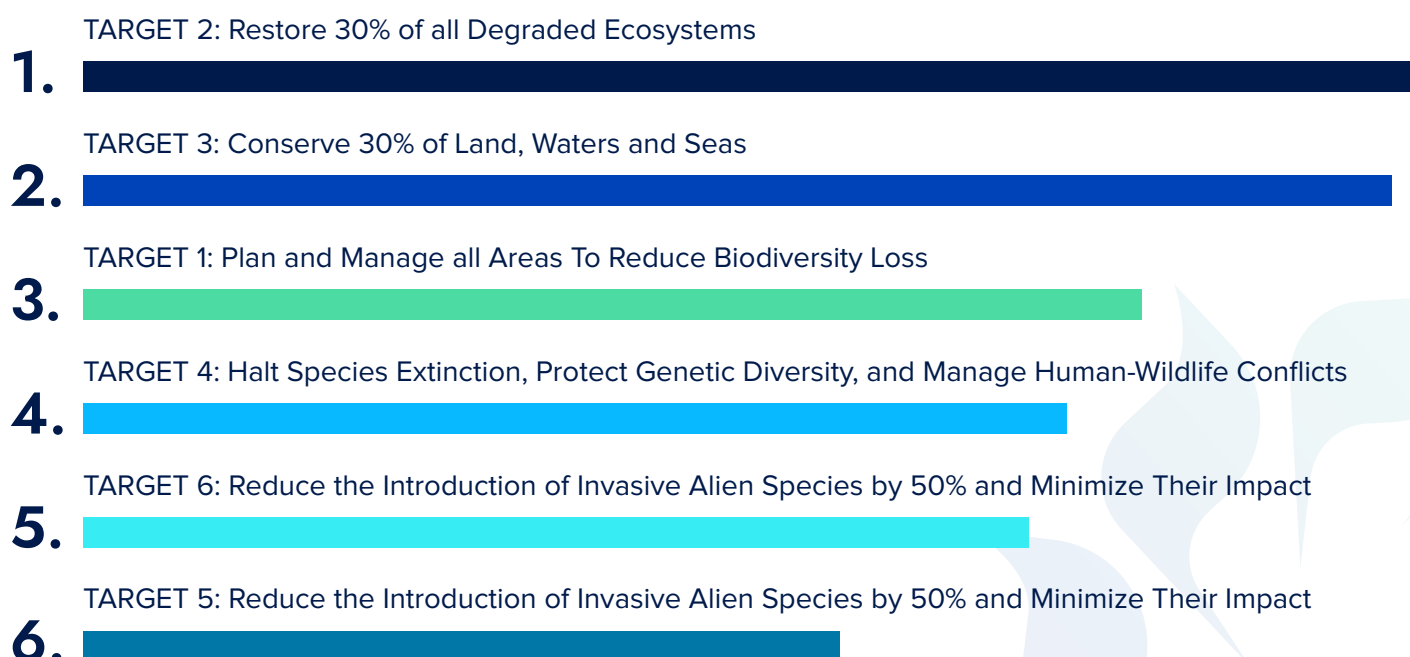
Participants in this breakout group were asked to answer the following questions:

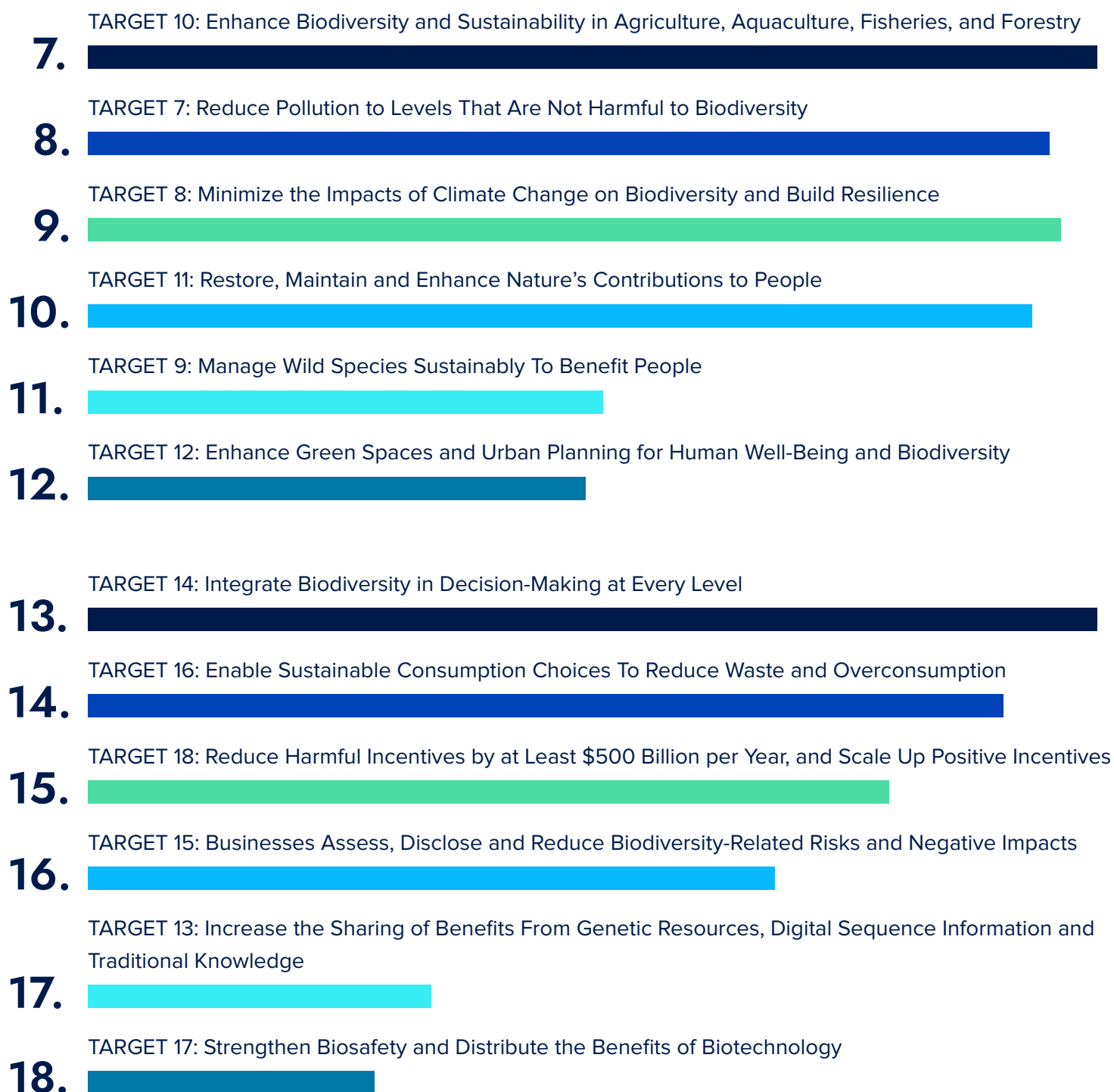
- Thinking about the 23 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework, in which areas do you feel your country already has technical or institutional strengths that could be shared with others?
- Have you participated in any cooperation or matchmaking process that worked well? What made it successful?

Parties in the room were given an opportunity to list what they were good at and could share best practices on. Among other things, the following were mentioned:

- Indicator development;
- Fisheries management;
- Coordination;
- Biodiversity mainstreaming;
- Protected areas;
- Internal cooperation with agencies;
- Avoiding double reporting;
- Capacity building;
- Youth involvement;
- Restorative finance;
- Data standards.

## Rank GBF targets according to national priorities





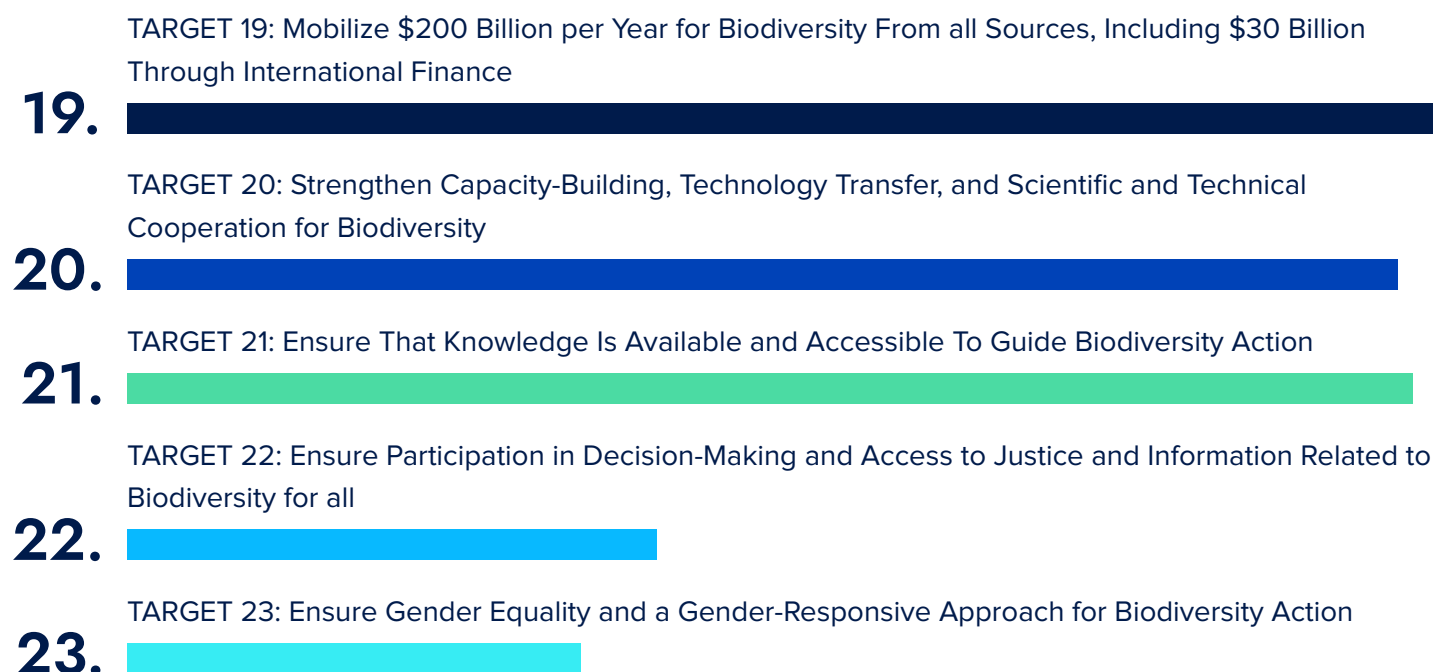


Figure 3: Parties expressed their national priorities in GBF target implementation. Targets were previously divided into 4 groups (Source: CO-OP4CBD).

**Parties expressed the wish for a matchmaking service** Parties to help align similar situations, define and build around case studies, that would be target-specific (based on the GBF targets), while not avoiding negotiation-related aspects, using online CBD materials as support. They expressed an interest in having access to a help desk in addition to the matchmaking service, for peer-to-peer learning support. Additionally, it was stressed that Knowledge Hubs should not provide a one-size-fits all solution but rather a range of options tailored to the Parties' needs.

Parties expressed the wish to see equitable governance included in the modus operandi of Knowledge Hubs.

The CBD Secretariat indicated that through forums, some of the challenges could be addressed by leveraging volunteers. There may be ways through NBSAP work to get more people to engage. With regards to overseas territories, the Secretariat has indicated that it may make more sense for them to share best practices with neighbouring countries facing similar challenges even though the coordination would still go through National Focal Points.

In the expected next steps, participants mentioned a platform and periodic notifications as a useful tool to stay up to date on TSCCs.



## Next steps and practical information

While the TSCC Coordination Group is developing a request submission form to enable Parties to submit structured requests for capacity-building and development support, a dedicated functional mailbox has been set up for Parties to engage with the European subregional TSCC Coordination Group via the newly established and still under development single-entry-point website: [EU-SUBREGIONAL-TSC@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EU-SUBREGIONAL-TSC@ec.europa.eu)

The EC KCBD website dedicated to GBF implementation support can be found here: [Support to the Global Biodiversity Framework | Knowledge for policy](#)

- Communication on the centre's activities will most likely be handled through social media and/or a website, potentially even a newsletter.
- A training for Eastern European countries on Target 3, organized by EEA is scheduled to be held in December 2025.
- COOP4CBD training on technical and scientific cooperation and the Clearing House Mechanism will be held in Malaga, Spain from 18-20 November.

Finally, this leaflet summarizes the TSCC's activities and purpose:

[https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Leaflet\\_TSC\\_20102025.pdf](https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Leaflet_TSC_20102025.pdf)

## Participants\*

\*The list may not be exhaustive.

Australia	Kingdom of the Netherlands	DG ENV
Belgium	New Zealand	DG JRC
Croatia	North Macedonia	EEA
Estonia	Norway	RBINS
France	Poland	CBD Secretariat
Germany	Serbia	CO-OP4CBD
Hungary	Slovakia	DG RTD
Iceland	Sweden	DG INTPA
Ireland	Switzerland	IUCN
Luxembourg	Ukraine	Sahara and Sahel Observatory
Malta	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Politecnico di Milano

Juno Evidence Alliance / CABI	German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research Halle-Jena-Leipzig, iDiv e.v.
Finnish Environment Institute	
University of Okara	Nord University
Senckenberg	Charles Darwin Foundation
Leibniz Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries	Association Mérou "AMPESA"
GEOBON	ANEF
HIFMB	INRGREF
CREAF	Association Labouirat pour le Sport et le Développement
Copenhagen Zoo	Evenflow
Stefano Boeri Architetti	
University of Stirling	

## Acknowledgements

The organizers thank the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences for hosting the event and the CO-OP4CBD project for their support throughout its organization and implementation.

We would like to thank Grégoire Dubois<sup>1</sup>, Ioanna Grammatikopolou<sup>1</sup>, Esther Sanyé Mengual<sup>1</sup>, Ana Cristina Cardoso<sup>1</sup>, Chiara Magliozzi<sup>1</sup>, Carla Danelutti<sup>2</sup>, Frank Wugt Larsen<sup>3</sup>, Brian Mac Sharry<sup>3</sup>, Jorge Luis Ventocilla<sup>4</sup> for their feedback on an earlier draft of this report.

European Commission Joint Research Centre<sup>1</sup>, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation<sup>2</sup>, European Environment Agency<sup>3</sup>, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences<sup>4</sup>