



SDG 15 – Life on Land | Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Primary contributors: Yvonne Walz (UNU-EHS) and Nakul Chettri (ICIMOD), Nakul Chettri and Biraj Adhikari (ICIMOD), Liette Vasseur (Brock University/IUCN-CEM), Amitha Bachan K Hyder (MES Asmabi College), Antoine Libert (FAO)

Climate change is a recognised threat to terrestrial ecosystems and the services they provide. EbA can support the achievement of SDG 15, which underpins success for all other SDGs, as does SDG 14. EbA projects restore and protect ecosystems - including expanding green space, habitats and biodiversity – and improve environmental conditions, such as air quality and waste management, restoration of wetlands for provision of a wide range of ecosystem services, and others. EbA also incorporates regeneration, land-use and urban development to better protect and restore ecosystems (Science for Environment Policy, 2021). However, as ecosystem degradation is exacerbated by a variety of factors especially unsustainable management of natural resources, coupled with climate change, there is an urgent need to prioritise ecosystem health and incorporate a climate risk context while developing and implementing sustainable land management policies.

Adaptation and mitigation measures in the land sector have the potential to be highly synergistic, and could clearly benefit from early identification and safeguarding of vulnerable ecosystems and threats to biodiversity on which human wellbeing is dependent. Distribution and training of EbA resources and guidance will support integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning and development processes.

EbA can provide benefits and co-benefits to all terrestrial ecosystems by:

- Supporting conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements (SDG target 15.1);
 - Reducing the impact of desertification and soil degradation through the use of sustainable practices such as conservation agriculture (SDG target 15.3);
 - Reducing the loss of biodiversity in all ecosystems, especially those more at risk due to their exploitation or their vulnerability (SDG target 15.5);
 - Promoting and ensuring that native species are used, and their genetic makeup protected for future generations, while preventing invasion of exotic species (SDG targets 15.6 and 15.8); and
 - Demonstrating the capacity of EbA to protect biodiversity, improve investment and promote integrate of natural ecosystems into planning, development process, and poverty reduction action in developing countries (SDG targets 15.9, 15.A, and 15.B).
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FEBA

Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation

SwedBio

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Ecosystem-based Adaptation and the successful implementation and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

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The designation of geographical entities in this report, and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of any participating organisations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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Principal author: Amber Bjerre.

Working group co-chairs: Amber Bjerre (IUCN) and Tristan Tyrrell (SwedBio), with support from Ashanapuri Hertz (SwedBio), Annika Min (IUCN), and Emily Goodwin (IUCN).

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Friends of EbA (FEBA) is a global collaborative network of more than 100 agencies and organisations involved in Ecosystem-based Adaptation working jointly to share experiences and knowledge, to improve the implementation of EbA activities on the ground, and to raise awareness and understanding of nature-based solutions in adaptation planning processes and multilateral policy frameworks. FEBA convenes the global adaptation community around expert working groups, technical workshops, and high-level events. The CBD COP recognizes FEBA as a key partner “to support Parties in their efforts to promote ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation” (Decision 14/5).



SwedBio is a programme for biodiversity and equitable development in harmony with nature at Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University. SwedBio focuses its effort on two impact pathways for engaging with biodiversity and equitable development, namely the Dialogue for knowledge and policy pathway and the Collaborative partner implementation pathway. Through these pathways to change, SwedBio aims to advance sustainable and equitable governance of biodiversity knowledge and policy, contributing to address biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation that undermine people’s rights to sustainable and equitable development, and those living in poverty are especially vulnerable.

This report is a collaboration of the [FEBA Working Group on Ecosystem-based Adaptation and the Sustainable Development Goals](#).

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Alvin Chandra, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Karen Podvin, IUCN SUR
Amitha Bachan K Hyder, MES Asmabi College	Kim Vercruyse, Join For Water
Amy Duchelle, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Kristin Meyer, IUCN Environmental Law Centre
Angela Prias, UNEP	Liette Vasseur, Brock University / IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)
Anna Kilponen, UNEP	Lisa Schindler Murray, Rare
Annika Min, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Marcus Nield, UNEP
Antoine Libert, FAO	Miriam Seemann, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Bolivia
Ashanapuri Hertz, SwedBio	Mohammad Aminur Rahman, University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI)
Biraj Adhikari, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)	Nakul Chettri, ICIMOD
Camila Donatti, Conservation International (CI)	Norah Cherotich Ngeny, UNEP
Carolina Chambi, United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)	Oscar Ivanova, UNEP
Emily Goodwin, IUCN	Pia Hernandez, IUCN ORMACC
Förster Johannes, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ)	Suyeon Yang, UNEP / Global Adaptation Network (GAN)
Gabriel Quijandria, IUCN Regional Office for South America (SUR)	Tania Ammour, IUCN Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (ORMACC)
Jack O'Connor, United Nations University – Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)	Verónica Mendieta, National Commission of Natural Protected Areas Mexico - La Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP) Mexico / Sinergia Plus
Julika Tribukait, WWF	Yvonne Walz, UNU-EHS

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Ana Plana Casado, CI	Luise Richter, GIZ
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Dorothee Herr, IUCN	Nakul Chettri, ICIMOD
Emily Corwin, Conservation International	Rachel Asante, IUCN
Heidi Tuhkanen, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)	Rachel Nisbet, University of Lausanne
Jamie Wen-Besson, IUCN	Reuben Sessa, FAO
Kelli Palaka, IUCN	Russell Galt, IUCN Urban Alliance
Laura Cooper Hall, IUCN	Stephanie Borcea, IUCN
Laura Sabater, IUCN	Wendy C. Atieno, IUCN
	Yulia Rubleva, IUCN

Acronyms

BMZ	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CI	Conservation International
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation (<i>AbE in Spanish</i>)
EbM	Ecosystem-based Mitigation
Eco-DRR	Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction
EHA	EcoHealth Alliance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEBA	Friends of EbA
GAN	Global Adaptation Network
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN-CEM	IUCN – Commission on Ecosystem Management
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-IEMP	UNEP – International Ecosystem Management Partnership
UNEP-WCMC	UNEP – World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNU-EHS	United Nations University – Institute for Environment and Human Security
UN-WWAP	United Nations – World Water Assessment Programme
UPEI	University of Prince Edward Island
USD	US Dollars
WHO	World Health Organization
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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3. Conclusion

Primary contributor: Emily Goodwin (IUCN)

Climate change is here, and we are already feeling its impacts around the world, from higher temperatures, rising sea levels, and increasing incidences of extreme events. The most vulnerable people and ecosystems – for example in Least Developed Countries and Small Islands Developing States – are the hardest hit, with recent studies demonstrating that over 3.3 billion people live in places that are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts (IFRC & WWF, 2022). Climate hazards can undermine historical development progress by increasing food and water insecurity, exacerbating inequalities, and impacting livelihoods and economies – to name a few. Even under the most optimistic emissions scenarios (IPCC, 2022), society will still need to adapt to these climate impacts. We cannot achieve progress towards sustainable development goals, or preserve our global development gains to date, without urgent adaptation action.

Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development

Recent estimates share that adaptation of wetlands, rivers, agricultural lands, construction, infrastructure, water, electricity, and housing in the most vulnerable countries is required to safeguard achievement of 68% of SDG targets from near-term climate risk by 2030 (Fuldauer et al., 2022). Aligning adaptation and development approaches offers huge potential to accelerate resilient development gains. As demonstrated throughout this report, the health and preservation of ecosystems underpin human well-being in incredible ways. Investing in adaptation efforts for both ecosystems and humanity can enable transformative progress toward sustainable development. Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation, such as EbA, have the potential to provide vulnerable countries with valuable protection against the economic cost of climate change – reducing the intensity of climate hazards by 26 percent, representing protection against the economic cost of climate change by USD 104 billion by 2030 and USD 393 billion by 2050 (IFRC & WWF, 2022). **These nature-based climate solutions have an interconnected role across sustainable development goals – from health, water and nutrition to clean energy, sustainable infrastructure, and equality - with incredible potential to drive progress across the SDGs while building more equitable and resilient societies.**

Scaling Up Adaptation Ambition and Finance

However, it is important to note that estimated adaptation costs in developing countries are five to ten times greater than current public adaptation finance flows, and the adaptation finance gap is widening. (UNEP, 2022). Accelerated ambition across finance and implementation is critical to drive progress on managing climate risks, particularly in developing countries. Despite the cost-effectiveness of ecosystem-based adaptation as a strategy to tackle climate change, so far only 5% of global climate finance flows are spent on adaptation (UNEP, 2021) and only 1.4% of this on nature-based solutions for adaptation (Swann et al., 2021). **The world needs to scale up adaptation commitments and public adaptation finance, and more broadly integrate climate resilience across other windows of public finance, such as for development, infrastructure, clean energy and beyond.**

Global Ambition for Local Action: EbA and the SDGs

As the world collectively faces the impacts of a changing climate, the incorporation of EbA strategies across sectors presents an important, cost-effective, and multi-solution approach for development, humanitarian, and climate practitioners to build climate-resilient societies and promote sustainable development. EbA approaches can be applied across numerous contexts, geographical areas, and ecosystems. While these approaches utilize healthy ecosystems, it's important to understand that the use of these nature-based solutions is not limited to climate change and biodiversity strategies, but spans across sectoral priorities. **EbA approaches are not meant to stand in isolation, but be integrated into broader adaptation planning, with far-reaching impact across SDGs. The integration of such approaches into wider development goals can play a key role in promoting sustainable development and sustaining progress to date – but in order to do so, countries and practitioners must urgently push for transformative action in a rapidly changing world.**

Finally, it is critical to note that while adaptation is essential to reduce harm and spur development and human well-being: if it is to be effective, it must go hand-in-hand with ambitious reductions in greenhouse gas emissions because with increased warming, the effectiveness of many adaptation options declines. Together with adaptation action, collective global progress towards climate mitigation is critical to safeguard the world. **This work is urgent, but it's not too late. We have an opportunity to re-orient the world towards a more climate-resilient and nature-positive future, for progress towards sustainable development and ensuring the well-being of all.**



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