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# NATURE AND PEOPLE

UNEP-WCMC Strategy 2022-25

# Nature is in crisis.

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The loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems is undermining progress towards a sustainable future for people and is a key cause of climate change.

**The strategy we present here is our response to this crisis as we work towards a positive vision of a world living in harmony with nature. It will be used to provide direction and purpose to all the work we do and to help us communicate clearly what we are aiming to achieve to current and prospective partners.**

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Underpinning our strategy is the recognition that the Sustainable Development Goals can only be achieved if we halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. Healthy, resilient societies and economies depend fundamentally on healthy, resilient nature.

Achieving our vision of a world living in harmony with nature will require transformative and systemic change across all sectors. We will therefore place a greater emphasis in our work on tackling the underlying drivers of the nature crisis including unsustainable economic systems and patterns of consumption and production. In putting a sharper focus on these underlying drivers, we will, by extension, seek to achieve dramatic reductions in the direct threats to biodiversity, including those arising from changes in land and ocean use, overexploitation of natural capital and climate change. Scaling up existing efforts which are proven to be effective will be as essential as the development of innovative new approaches to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity.

For over 40 years, UNEP-WCMC has worked with partners to ensure the world is equipped with trusted science, data, knowledge and the capacity and policy advice to use this for better decision-making. During this time there have been some notable successes. Our work under Protected Planet has helped bring increased areas of land and ocean under protected or conserved status. Our work on wildlife trade has informed policies and laws that have helped to secure a future for exploited species and the communities that depend on them.

Our work at the interface between biodiversity and climate science has helped to drive a common response to the nature and climate crises, and our work with business and the finance sector has delivered a better understanding of the relevance of biodiversity loss for society and the economy, and drive action towards a nature-positive world.

UNEP-WCMC will continue and strengthen our work to build capacity and bring innovative approaches for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature on land and in the ocean. We will work with partners to bring and support the use of best-available data, knowledge and digital innovation for effective policy and practice across public and private sectors for the benefit of people and nature. We will work across both natural and managed areas, including an increased focus on cities and urban areas, to strengthen our delivery with partners at the local, national and regional levels, whilst continuing our global reach and impact.

Delivery of the strategy will provide UNEP-WCMC's contribution to the UNEP 2022-2025 Medium Term Strategy and Programmes of Work, the UN Decades on Ecosystem Restoration and on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

## A focus on impact

The theory of change underpinning this strategy connects our programmes of activities and outputs to the change we seek through our contribution to outcomes and long-term impacts.

Our four interdependent impact areas are (see Figure A):



### Nature Conserved

Resilient, connected ecosystems and their species are conserved, sustaining all life on Earth.



### Nature Restored

Degraded lands, inland waters and the ocean are restored for the benefit of people and nature.



### Nature-Based Solutions

Public and private sectors make effective use of nature to address sustainable development challenges.



### Nature Economy

The world transitions to a nature-positive global economy.

These impact areas are complemented by three cross-cutting innovation areas. Our innovation areas will provide enabling and foundational support to achieving our impact, including through the technical capability to ensure all our work is technically excellent, has policy impact, and harnesses cutting edge digital technology. Our three innovation areas are:



### Science



### Policy

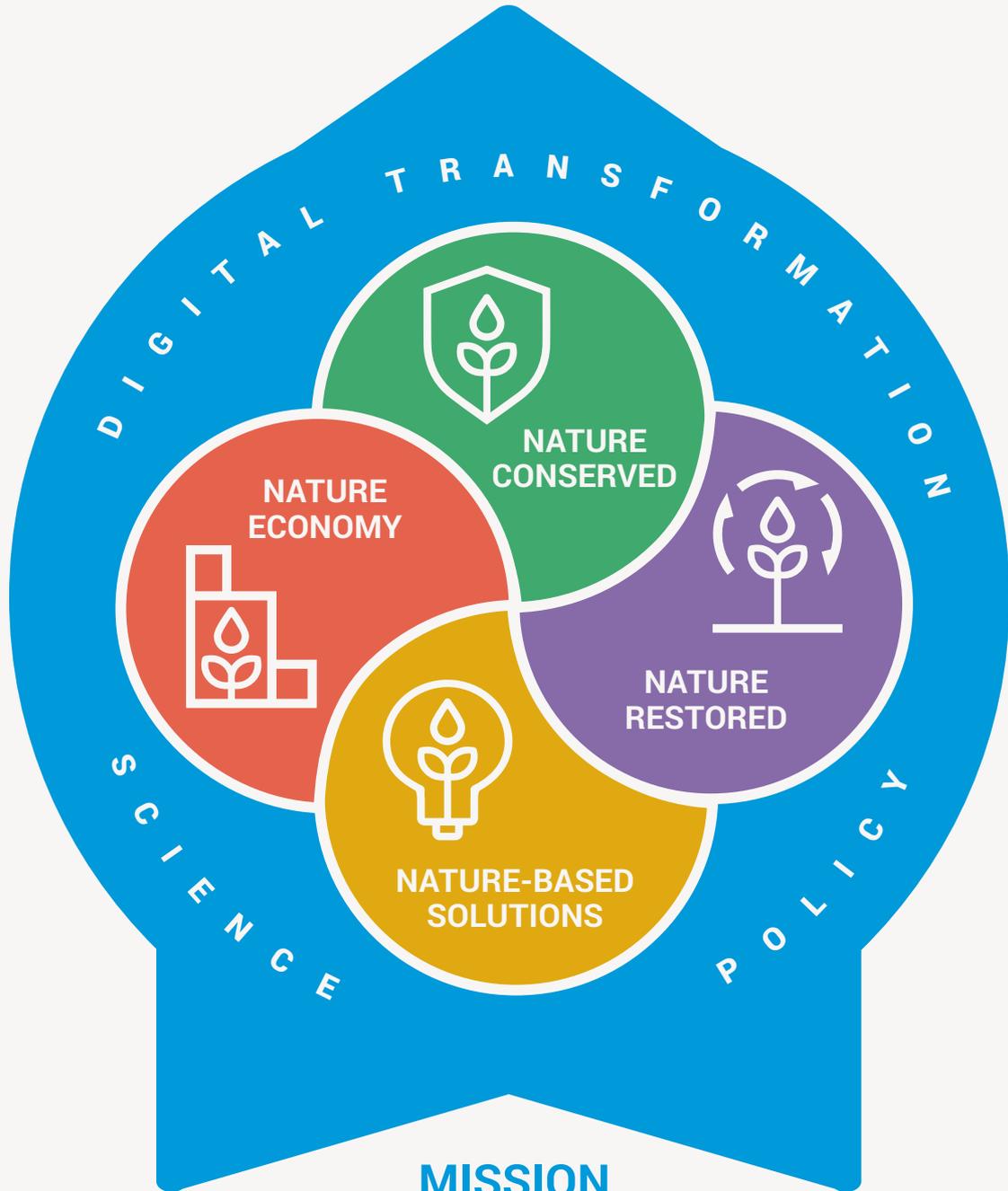


### Digital Transformation

Each impact and innovation area will have a set of focal initiatives designed to contribute to the outcomes as shown in Figure B. Focal initiatives may develop and change over the course of the strategy.

## VISION 2050

Living in harmony with nature



We develop knowledge and capacity for a nature-positive world

Figure A

IMPACT AREAS



**NATURE  
CONSERVED**

Global Wildlife  
Trade  
Protected Planet  
Connectivity  
Conservation



**NATURE  
RESTORED**

Restoration for  
Sustainable  
Development  
Ocean Recovery  
Sustainable  
Agricultural  
Landscapes



**NATURE-BASED  
SOLUTIONS**

Ecosystem-based  
Adaptation  
Ecosystem-based  
Mitigation  
Nature for Health  
and Well-being



**NATURE  
ECONOMY**

Economy  
Transformations  
Proteus  
Partnership  
Nature and  
Trade  
Targets and  
Metrics for  
Business  
Finance for  
Nature  
Natural Capital  
Approaches



**SCIENCE**

Futures Modelling  
Nature trends



**POLICY**

International  
Policy &  
Conventions  
Nature Indicators  
National  
Ecosystem  
Assessments  
Nature, Gender  
& Rights



**DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION**

Planet+  
Data Innovation

Focal Initiatives  
are in black text

INNOVATION AREAS

Figure B

## Outcomes by 2025

Our work across impact and innovation areas will focus on our contributions by 2025 to the following outcomes.

### Nature Conserved

#### Outcome 1

Legal, policy and planning frameworks for area-based and species conservation are in place and being effectively implemented, scaling up progress towards area-based, connectivity and species conservation targets.

#### Outcome 2

Governments are equipped with the knowledge, tools and capacity needed to assess and improve the sustainability of international wildlife trade, and these are used by decision makers to improve outcomes for species and ecosystems.

#### Outcome 3

Knowledge on the state of biodiversity and its threats is accessible and is driving decision-making across sectors and scales to improve outcomes for nature.

### Nature Restored

#### Outcome 1

The global community is supported via legal, policy and planning frameworks to scale-up efficient restoration action to achieve restoration ambitions at local to global scales.

#### Outcome 2

An accessible knowledge base allowing planners and practitioners to prioritise effective restoration efforts that deliver measurable, long-term environmental, social and economic benefits.

#### Outcome 3

A monitoring framework is in place to track and incentivise effective global restoration efforts and enhance adaptive management.

### Nature-based solutions

#### Outcome 1

The benefits of Nature-based Solutions for multiple societal challenges across scales are widely understood and valued in public and private sectors.

#### Outcome 2

Tools and knowledge required to implement resilient Nature-based Solutions successfully, and monitor their results are effective, available and well-used.

#### Outcome 3

Legal, policy and planning frameworks are in place to enable the effective implementation of Nature-based Solutions.

### Nature Economy

#### Outcome 1

Businesses and governments have the knowledge, tools and capacity to measure and account for their impacts and dependencies on natural capital.

#### Outcome 2

Legal, policy, planning and accountability frameworks are reformed to enable nature-positive and carbon-neutral outcomes.

#### Outcome 3

Financial flows incentivise nature-positive and carbon-neutral outcomes.

## One Organisation working

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Delivery of the strategy will be guided by the principle of One Organisation working, whereby the four impact areas and three innovation areas will drive collective action towards the 2050 vision. We will embrace the synergies and blurred boundaries between these areas. We will embrace a culture of innovation and a focus on creating real, lasting and positive change for nature and people. We will also continually build the capacity and skills of our staff and our partners including through training and knowledge sharing.

## Our partners

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We work with a range of partners from national and sub-national governments, businesses, UN entities, intergovernmental, non-governmental and other international organisations, research institutions and communities. We understand that working in partnership will be essential to the successful delivery of this strategy.

## Our foundations

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In taking forward this strategy we recognise we are dependent on strong organisational, operational and financial foundations and a continuing focus on safeguarding people and nature. In particular, over the period of the strategy we will invest in:

- Recruiting and retaining leading talent and promoting diversity in the workplace
- Growing and diversifying our sources of funding
- Excellence in operations and financial management
- Enhancing our regional approaches
- High impact, compelling communications

Building on existing presence and partnerships, UNEP-WCMC will invest in regional engagement in line with the UNEP delivery model.<sup>1</sup>

Accompanying this strategy, an Impact Measurement Framework will enable us to track and report our progress towards the impact area outcomes, organisational Key Performance Indicators and focal initiatives.

## Focal initiatives

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Delivery of the innovation and impact areas will be through a series of focal initiatives. These are portfolios of projects with a particular focus and have been chosen for a combination of their impact value and alignment with our organisational niche, skills, knowledge and expertise. Focal initiatives may vary in size, scope and number under each impact and innovation area.

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<sup>1</sup> WCMC has established two regional entities, WCMC Europe and WCMC Beijing, to facilitate operational support for the delivery of this strategy in Europe and China respectively.

# Nature Conserved



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## Global Wildlife Trade

We will support efforts to regulate the international trade in wildlife for the benefit of nature and people. This will include providing dedicated scientific, policy and knowledge management support to global and national efforts to implement CITES, as well as regional initiatives in the EU and elsewhere working to minimise the threats to biodiversity posed by unsustainable trade and use.

## Protected Planet

We will maintain and develop the Protected Planet Initiative as the global platform for knowledge and data on the status and trends of protected and conserved areas. By providing policymakers with the best possible information on these areas, it will support monitoring progress towards global targets, build capacity for improved conservation planning, deliver better decision-making for nature and people, and enhance conservation outcomes on land and in the ocean.

## Connectivity Conservation

We will support international efforts to promote ecological connectivity and conserve migratory species by bringing knowledge and experience to bear on connectivity conservation across terrestrial, marine and freshwater systems around the world. This includes supporting the implementation of the Convention on Migratory Species (and the wider CMS family), the Convention on Biological Diversity and the proposed international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, to conserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

# Nature Restored



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## Restoration for Sustainable Development

As a contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, we will support efforts to restore functioning ecosystems, to halt and reverse global biodiversity loss and sustain nature's contributions to people. This will involve supporting policy, planning, implementation and monitoring processes to achieve multiple benefits from restoration thereby delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals. We will collate and use the evidence base to make a strong case for restoration, to inform planning and prioritisation of effective restoration across ecosystems and to deliver restoration that works for all.

## Ocean Recovery

We will scale-up and speed-up the restoration of coastal and ocean ecosystems through supporting processes that improve national and international governance of oceans and through catalysing the transition towards a sustainable blue economy. We will help the world to understand, prioritise and monitor the conservation and restoration of key ocean habitats at all scales.

## Sustainable Agricultural Landscapes

We will contribute to the transformation of unsustainable approaches to the management of agricultural landscapes towards truly regenerative nature-positive and carbon-neutral models of food production. We will help to understand risks, opportunities and trade-offs between different objectives in agricultural landscapes and improve policy coherence with wider land-use planning processes.

# Nature-Based Solutions



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## Ecosystem-based Adaptation

We will raise awareness of the opportunities and good practice to support decision makers and practitioners on the role of ecosystem management in adaptation and resilience to climate change. This will include support and capacity building to identify and prioritise ecosystem management options for adaptation, and on planning, implementation and monitoring of Nature-based Solutions that provide climate adaptation (and other societal) benefits, whilst generating wider nature-positive outcomes.

## Ecosystem-based Mitigation

We will raise awareness and support decision makers and practitioners on the vital role of ecosystem protection, restoration and sustainable use in mitigating climate change. We will focus on developing and supporting the scaling up of natural climate mitigation solutions that are also nature-positive and deliver a range of other societal benefits.

## Nature for Health and Well-being

We will strengthen the evidence base understanding how human health and well-being is dependent upon and linked to the health of nature. This will involve exploring the complex relationships between nature and people and supporting further development of the “One Health” approach.

# Nature Economy



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## Economy Transformations

We will work with governments, businesses and finance institutions, including banks, to create an enabling environment for a nature-positive economy. This work will include the whole economy, blue economy, green economy, and the creation and dissemination of data, knowledge, platforms and tools to assist transformational change.

## Proteus Partnership

We will support best practice private sector decision-making towards nature-positive outcomes so that businesses are empowered to contribute to a clean, healthy, and resilient environment for all.

## Nature and Trade

We will identify leverage points to shift global supply chains, particularly of commodities, towards nature-positive outcomes. The work will address high impact commodities, highly impacted land/seascapes and influential actors at pinch points and clusters. Areas of work will encompass trade between nations, associated trade rule regimes and trade facilitated by the corporate sector for specific commodities.

## Targets and Metrics for Business

We will work to overcome the barriers related to measuring performance by businesses seeking to address their impacts on biodiversity, including setting science-based targets, aligned metrics, business-relevant indicators and through access to reliable decision-grade data.

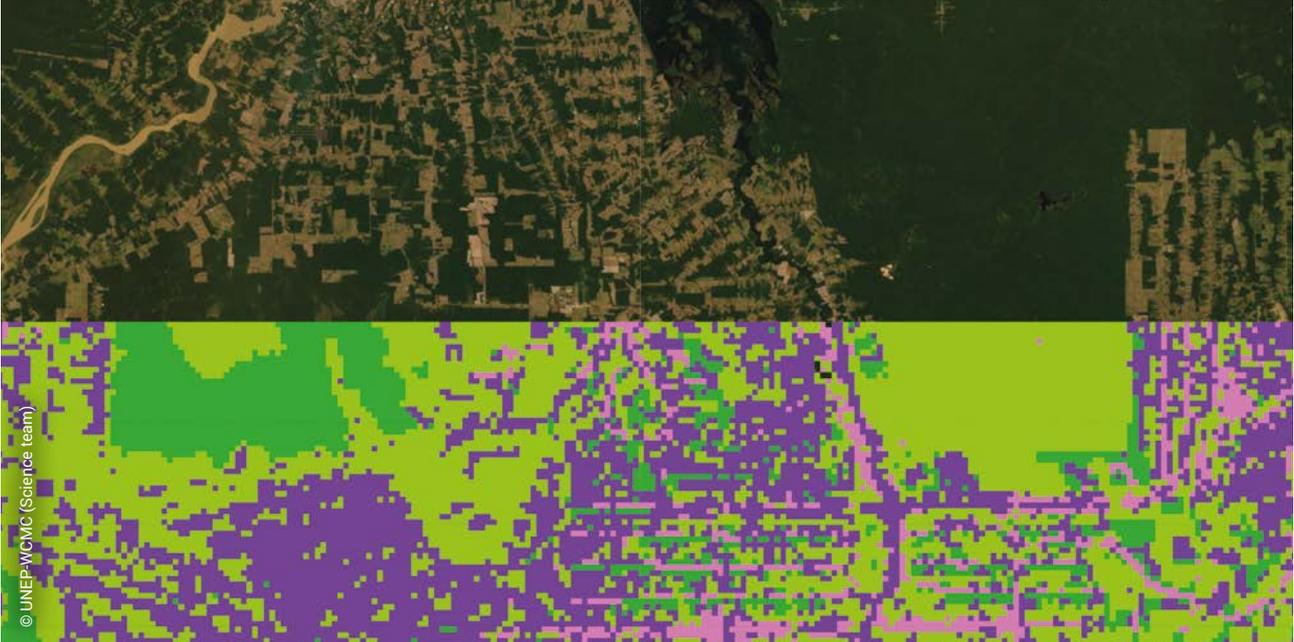
## Finance for Nature

We will help change the business case for action on biodiversity loss by addressing unsustainable short-term financial behaviours which incentivise the depletion of natural capital. We will mobilise financing for nature-positive outcomes through tools such as ENCORE and our work on land-use finance.

## Natural Capital Approaches

We will provide tools, advice and expertise to overcome the barriers to the widespread adoption of natural capital approaches at national, subnational levels and within the private sector. We will create synergies between our work on natural capital approaches with our science-based mapping and modelling work, and our work on ecosystem assessments.

# Science



## Futures Modelling

We will use scientific innovation and our position at the forefront of global research with partners to develop scenarios and map pathways for sustainable futures and societal transformation. We will continue to integrate data products with a growing body of biodiversity knowledge.

## Nature trends

We will use leading-edge knowledge and data, including remote sensing and other advanced data analyses to improve our understanding of biodiversity baselines (state, pressure, response), develop powerful indicators of changes in biodiversity, natural capital and nature's contributions to people over time, and assess the relative successes of conservation and restoration actions.

# Policy



## International Policy & Conventions

We will support intergovernmental conventions and processes, including identifying opportunities for increased co-operation and synergies. This will include supporting delivery of the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity, implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and multiple other conventions and UN processes.

## Nature Indicators

We will support intergovernmental processes in developing and using biodiversity indicators, supporting and building capacity for their adoption and effective use by businesses and at national and subnational levels, including cities. We will continue to convene the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership.

## National Ecosystem Assessments

We will work with countries to support decision makers to assess biodiversity and ecosystem services and their contributions to society and human well-being. We will work in partnership with national governments, their agencies and international organisations to strengthen technical capacities and stakeholder engagement for harnessing this knowledge for informed policymaking. Our approach will leverage knowledge sharing and networking across levels and sectors and will strengthen countries engagement with intergovernmental processes, supporting the national level implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.

## Nature, Gender and Rights

We will work with partners to promote equitable and ethical approaches in policy and governance, and for the conservation and use of biodiversity. Strengthening our use of social science approaches and insights, we will incorporate gender mainstreaming and a human rights-based approach across our work, with a particular focus on the rights and critical roles of women and girls, and indigenous peoples and local communities in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

# Digital Transformation



## Planet+

We will provide leadership and convening capacity towards a digital transformation in the way data and knowledge on biodiversity is collected, analysed, accessed and used. We will also link this to sector-specific needs to ensure evidence-based, rapid and impactful decisions are being made for nature and people.

## Data Innovation

We will develop workflows and data pipelines to ensure the timely delivery of data and insights that assist decision-making at different scales.

The UN Environment Programme  
World Conservation Monitoring  
Centre (UNEP-WCMC) is a  
specialist Centre on biodiversity,  
and nature's contributions to  
society and the economy.

We operate as a collaboration between UNEP and WCMC, a UK-registered charity<sup>2</sup>. Together, we are confronting the global crisis facing nature.

We do this through our unique position ensuring science, knowledge and insights shape global and national policy, and by collaborating with partners around the world to build capacity and create innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

We use our position as respected custodians of powerful and trusted environmental data to create positive impact for people and nature.