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# WWF BRIEFING: ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY 25.07.2024

## **Background**

Nature is in a state of emergency. There has been a 69% decline in global wildlife populations on average since 1970, and 15 billion trees are cut down globally each year. Here in the UK, we have lost 97% of our wildflower meadows since the 1930s and a quarter of all our mammals are at risk of extinction. Around the world, nature is in crisis. We need to see action.

COP16 is the sixteenth Conference of the Parties under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and takes place in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024. These COPs take place every two years and determine global efforts for nature in the years ahead. There are only six years left to achieve the goals and targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) as well as its mission to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

When the UK signed on to the GBF, it committed to four goals and 23 targets which together are meant to halt and reverse nature loss by the end of the decade. These include:

- Recovering and conserving populations of the most critically endangered animals and plants.
- Conserving 30 per cent of the world's lands, waters and oceans and restoring 30 per cent of degraded ecosystems (30x30).
- Tackling the direct drivers of nature loss by transforming sectors and industries like agriculture, fisheries, forestry, infrastructure and resource extraction.
- Redirecting the flow of finance away from activities that harm our planet toward those that heal, including businesses and financial institutions investing in nature and regularly monitoring, assessing and disclosing the biodiversity-related impacts of their work.

**Implementation is off track.** A [one-year-on assessment](#) by Wildlife and Countryside Link found the UK is currently not on track to deliver a single target under the GBF. The UK Government must communicate revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) by COP16 in October to ensure that national efforts add up to the scale of action needed to deliver the GBF. The UK NBSAP was initially expected to be published in late May, but publication was postponed due to the 2024 General Election.

With a new government in place that has promised 'global leadership on climate and nature', the UK's NBSAP could and should be **a world-leading policy instrument that addresses the drivers of biodiversity loss in the UK and overseas.**

## **A blueprint for action**

### **1. Spur implementation of the GBF**

In addition to commitments around nature conservation in the UK and its four countries, the government should use the UK NBSAP to **commit to rapid action on its global footprint on nature**. For example, by outlining how the UK will deliver the deforestation due diligence obligation within the Environment Act, or by linking the fight against deforestation and conversion with finance mechanisms that can help in securing sustainable supply chains.

This could lead to a world-leading NBSAP tackling the drivers of biodiversity loss and embracing the production and consumption elements of the GBF. A NBSAP only focusing on nature conservation in the UK will be insufficient and unambitious. **A bold and comprehensive UK NBSAP must tackle the drivers of biodiversity loss.**

### **2. Show global leadership on nature and climate**

The new government has a chance to build on the cross-party consensus on action for nature, with the UK having played a role in the achievement of agreeing the GBF. The UK presidency centred biodiversity in the COP26 negotiations and the Glasgow Climate Pact, which expressly references the importance of nature-based solutions, encouraging countries to recognise the role of biodiversity in NDCs, and protecting critical ecosystems.

Collectively, these events laid the groundwork for an ambitious agreement. Ambition should continue by **sending senior representatives to COP16 in Colombia, including the Prime Minister. The government should also present a bid to host COP17 in the UK in 2026.** This would be an exciting chance to lead the world in tackling biodiversity loss, assess progress in the delivery of the Global Biodiversity Framework, and accelerate action if needed. If the Government is serious about being back on the world stage, this is a pivotal avenue to demonstrate that.

### **3. Mobilising finance**

The world must keep up the positive momentum that the GBF has created. The successful implementation of the GBF will depend on whether the world meets its financing targets. The 2025 target is the first test: \$20 billion from developed to developing countries. The world is already spending [\\$1.8 trillion](#) each year on subsidies that are driving the destruction of ecosystems and causing species to go extinct. The \$20 billion package is equivalent to only 1.1%, or about four days, of those subsidies.

Developing countries host much of the world's most important biodiversity and will bear a disproportionate part of the responsibility and costs of delivering key goals of the GBF. Most donor countries are lagging behind on their commitments to deliver their fair share of the \$20 billion. At COP16, we urgently need to see trust building between developed and developing countries, and progress towards the delivery of finance from all sources, including the redirection of harmful financial subsidies and incentives towards nature-positive activities and investments.

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