



The Commonwealth Living Lands Charter

Implementation Framework



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The Commonwealth

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CALL	the Living Lands Charter's Call to Action on Living Lands
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCFAH	Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub
EbA	ecosystem-based approach
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	greenhouse gas
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management (approach)
LDC	least developed country
MEA	multilateral environmental agreements
NAP	national adaptation plan
NbS	nature-based solutions
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
REDD+	reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Glossary

Biodiversity loss¹	This is the reduction of any aspect of biological diversity in a particular area, which can be lost through death (including extinction), destruction or manual removal.
Biological diversity ('biodiversity')	'Biological diversity' means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD], Article 2).
Climate change	A change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC], Article 1)
Climate-resilient agriculture²	Climate-resilient agriculture employs agricultural practices, technologies and innovations that enhance productivity in a sustainable manner, increase resilience and food security, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ensure higher incomes for small-scale producers.
Climate-smart agriculture (CSA)³	Agriculture that sustainably increases productivity, enhances resilience (adaptation), reduces/removes GHGs (mitigation) where possible, and enhances achievement of national food security and development goals.
Climate-smart livestock production⁴	The climate-smart livestock approach is a comprehensive approach that works towards sustainable livestock production systems that support climate change adaptation and mitigation activities, food security, sustainable incomes, animal welfare, and minimal environmental impact.
Ecosystem-based approach (EbA)⁵	An ecosystem-based approach (EbA) is a comprehensive strategy that integrates the management of land, water and living resources to support conservation and sustainable use in a fair and balanced manner. It relies on scientific methods focused on various levels of biological organisation, studying the fundamental structure, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment, including human cultural diversity. To manage these diverse elements effectively, EbA employs adaptive management because ecosystem processes often behave non-linearly and their outcomes can have delayed effects. This approach requires flexibility and incorporates 'learning-by-doing' principles and ongoing research feedback to navigate uncertainties. Sometimes, actions need to be taken even in the absence of fully established cause-and-effect relationships through scientific investigation.
Global biodiversity hotspots⁶	To qualify as a biodiversity hotspot, an area must meet two strict criteria, namely: (i) contain at least 1,500 species of vascular plants found nowhere else on Earth (known as 'endemic' species); and (ii) have lost at least 70 per cent of its primary native vegetation.
Indigenous knowledge⁷	Indigenous knowledge is the understanding, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings.
Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)⁸	IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximise the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

(Continued)

Land	'Land' refers to both land and the natural resources on it, such as water, wetlands, pastures and forests.
Land degradation⁹	This is the deterioration or loss of the productive capacity of the soils for present and future.
Least developed countries (LDCs)¹⁰	Least developed countries (LDCs) are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets.
Local knowledge¹¹	This comprises the understandings and skills developed by individuals and populations, specific to the place where they live.
Megadiverse countries¹²	The term 'megadiverse country' refers to any one of a group of nations that harbour the majority of Earth's species and high numbers of endemic species. Conservation International has identified 17 megadiverse countries: Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, United States of America and Venezuela.
Nature-based solutions (NbS)¹³	These are actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits.
One Health¹⁴	One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognises that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and inter-dependent. The approach mobilises multiple sectors, disciplines and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems, while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change, and contributing to sustainable development.
Regenerative agriculture¹⁵	This involves farming and grazing practices that, among other benefits, reverse climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity – resulting in both carbon enhancement and improving the water cycle.
Rio Conventions¹⁶	The three Rio Conventions – on Biodiversity (CBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD) – derive directly from the 1992 Earth Summit. Each instrument represents a way of contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 21. The three conventions are intrinsically linked, operating in the same ecosystems and addressing interdependent issues.
Small island developing states (SIDS)¹⁷	Small island developing states (SIDS) are a distinct group of 38 UN member countries and 20 non-UN members/associate members of United Nations regional commissions that face unique social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities.
Sustainable land management¹⁸	This involves the stewardship and use of land resources, including soils, water, animals and plants, to meet changing human needs, while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of these resources and the maintenance of their environmental functions.
Tenure security	Tenure security is the certainty that a person's rights to land will be recognised by others and protected in cases of specific challenges. People with insecure tenure face the risk that their rights to land will be threatened by competing claims.

Foreword

Terrestrial ecosystems and the services they provide are fundamental to human well-being. However, they face an increasing triple threat from climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss. Our vital natural resources – food, land, water, soil and biodiversity – are vanishing before our eyes.

I am determined that the Commonwealth Secretariat provides our member states with the support they need to rise to this challenge. The *Commonwealth Living Lands Charter Implementation Framework* is a vital part of that effort. It will serve as the blueprint for the synergistic and coherent pan-Commonwealth implementation of the Rio Convention commitments. The Commonwealth has a proud history of environmental leadership. The Commonwealth Leaders' Langkawi Declaration of 1989 was the forerunner of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, which birthed the United Nations Conventions on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Desertification (UNCCD) and Biological Diversity (CBD).



More than three decades later we continue to lead the way – most notably through our Living Lands Charter, ratified at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kigali in June 2022. Our leaders are unequivocal that it is our shared responsibility to advance sustainable development, nature restoration, and better and more responsible environmental and land management.

The Commonwealth encompasses a quarter of the world's land area, with 11 million square kilometres of arable land and nine million square kilometres of forest. Almost a third of the mega-biodiverse countries of the world are part of our family, with more than 400 endemic species found in our Small Island Developing States. This immense biodiversity holds unrivalled potential, significantly contributing to achieving the goals and targets set forth by the three Rio conventions, to which all Commonwealth member countries are signatories.

Our capacity and potential are enormous, but so are our challenges. Climate change is devastating many of our nations, with climate-related disasters costing lives and livelihoods, slashing significant percentages off national GDPs, and pushing already vulnerable countries further into debt. Commonwealth countries are among the top 10 most water-stressed nations in the world. Food insecurity is rising, and our soils are depleting. The intensification of climate impacts is the driving force behind this Implementation Framework. Restoring our lands is a vital defence in the face of the continued advance of climate change.

The role, scale and capacity of the Commonwealth compels us to take bold and decisive action across the five critical themes of climate resilient agriculture; soil and water management; biodiversity conservation; carbon neutral livestock rearing; and the inclusion of Indigenous and local people for climate resilient development. Our holistic vision empowers us to safeguard our precious planet and the remaining natural ecosystems within the Commonwealth, ensuring their vitality for current and future generations.

As a people we must rekindle our bond with the land, just as our ancestors once did and as our cherished Indigenous communities continue to do. As we step into the future, we acknowledge that we are not merely stewards of the natural world: we are an integral part of it. Leveraging the combined strength of the Commonwealth and learning from each other will reflect our care for the land, which in turn reflects our care for humanity and a sustainable future for all.

The active implementation of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter will be the most fitting expression of our reverence for Mother Earth and our commitment to the well-being of everyone in the Commonwealth family and across the world.

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC
Secretary-General of the Commonwealth
June 2024

Introduction

The challenge

Terrestrial ecosystems and the services they provide are fundamental to human well-being.¹⁹ However, they face an increasing triple threat from climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss.²⁰ On current trends, 95 per cent of the Earth's land areas could become degraded by 2050. Similarly, despite ongoing efforts, biodiversity is deteriorating at a global scale, and this decline is projected to continue or worsen.²¹ Further, climate change puts the well-being of billions of Commonwealth citizens at risk, especially those residing in small island developing states (SIDS) and other vulnerable states. Collectively, these challenges will impede the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) throughout the Commonwealth.

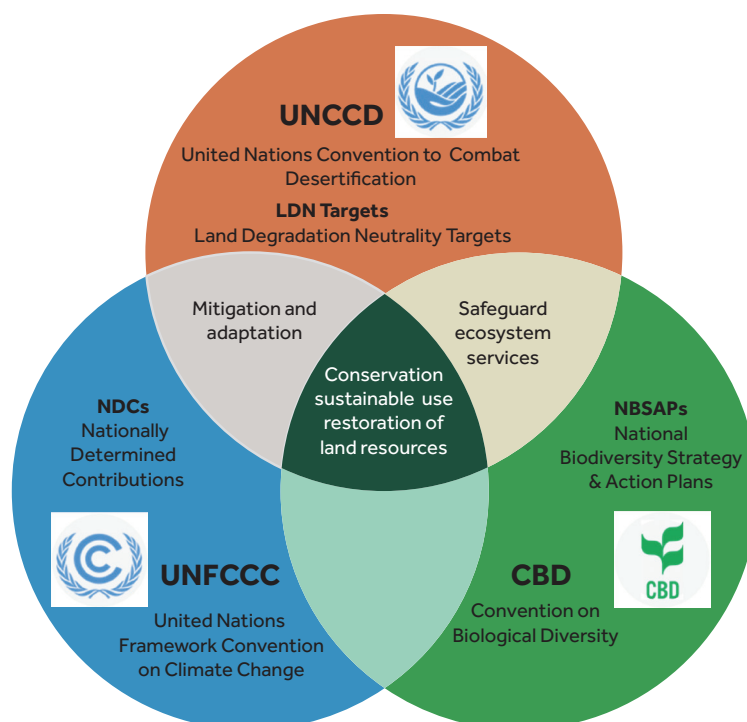
The opportunity: an integrated response

The world has committed to addressing these challenges through the Rio Conventions (the Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD]; the

UN Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD]; and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC]), but there is an urgent need to scale implementation and work collaboratively. Further, these crises are interlinked and the solutions are complementary. To date, a holistic response has proved elusive.²² Yet scientific evidence and consensus across the Rio Conventions have highlighted the need for integrated action.

Integrated approaches will help support countries towards their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), land degradation neutrality targets and contributions to the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Integrated action also enhances resource efficiency, including economic and duplication of efforts, delivers co-benefits and contributes to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This underscores the mutuality of the 16 Principles contained within the Commonwealth Charter²³ and the 17 SDGs²⁴ to meeting land-related commitments.

Figure 1. Living Lands Charter works at the intersection of the three Rio (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD) conventions.



Specifically, integrated action contributes directly to the following SDGs:

	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
	Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
	Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
	Goal 5: Gender equality
	Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
	Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
	Goal 11: Sustainable communities
	Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
	Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
	Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
	Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

To date, parties to the three Rio Conventions have faced challenges in their efforts to implement their targets due to a variety of factors. These include inadequate financing. Estimates for meeting climate change, biodiversity and land degradation targets stand at close to a US\$4.1 trillion financing gap by 2050, which requires quadrupling of current investments.²⁵ Further, there is lack of integrated development planning as a result of sectoral

structures in governments, proliferation and/or fragmentation of policies, often with weak, unco-ordinated implementation, capacity constraints, perverse incentives, conflicting decision-making across different levels and scales, and lack of access to appropriate technologies, practices and equipment.²⁶ Challenges surrounding land tenure may exacerbate these issues. Conversely, land tenure security is a catalytic asset for sustainable and inclusive rural transformation.²⁷ Land rights can act as an incentive to invest in long-term improvements in land, while land can provide collateral for loans (unlocking credit). Efforts to overcome these challenges must be ratcheted up considering the interlinked impacts of climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss challenges.

The Commonwealth, covering nearly a quarter of the planet's terrestrial area, including 11 million km²²⁸ of land, has a long history of commitment to addressing such environmental and climate change challenges. Collective political will to protect the planet has been explicit and robust, dating back to the 1989 Langkawi Declaration on the Environment.²⁹ Commonwealth leaders have repeatedly reiterated their call for urgent action to mitigate climate change, reduce vulnerability and increase resilience.

The Living Lands Charter – A Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands

In Kigali, Rwanda, at the June 2022 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the Commonwealth leaders adopted the Living Lands Charter – A Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands (CALL), in recognition of the challenges associated with biodiversity loss, land degradation and climate change. The Charter engenders the 56 member countries to **synergise implementation of the commitments and targets agreed under the three Rio Conventions, harnessing co-benefits in pursuit of a shared vision of living in harmony with nature.** The Living Lands Charter has the potential to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as has been recognised by member countries.³⁰

This Implementation Framework responds to the mandate given by the leaders to the Secretariat for CALL. This framework has been developed through a

review of literature; as well as through consultations with member countries, Commonwealth accredited Institutions and other partners, including the three Rio Conventions. These consultations were informed by available scientific evidence, needs and proposals for an overall strategy and approach to implementation, as well as actions on the identified themes. A longer document containing the literature review has also been produced and is available for member countries and partners if required.

The Strategic Approach: the 5X5 Approach section describes the approach being proposed, which focuses on key thematic areas and implementation mechanisms across these areas. The five key themes are: climate resilient agriculture for food security; soil and water conservation and

management; sustainable green cover and biodiversity; carbon neutral and climate resilient livestock rearing and animal husbandry; and indigenous and local people and climate resilient development. Across the five themes, the Living Lands Charter will focus on five aspects critical for implementation: evidence-based analysis and policy Influence; financing for implementation; technical assistance and capacity building; institutional structure and governance; and knowledge sharing and management.

This section is followed by a mapping of the thematic areas aligning to the priorities of the Rio Conventions, after which the Implementation Framework highlights some of the actions that will be taken using the operational framework.

1. Strategic Approach: the 5x5 Approach

The Commonwealth Living Lands Charter (henceforth ‘the Charter’) will serve as the framework for the synergistic and coherent pan-Commonwealth implementation of the Rio Convention commitments. The Charter will be implemented around five thematic areas and will be facilitated through the constitution of thematic working groups led by ‘thematic lead’ countries, supported through time-bound technical working groups, which will be mandated to address specific issues.

To support the delivery of the Implementation Plan, champion the Living Lands Charter, provide technical and operational advice as needed, among other things, an advisory group shall be convened by and co-chaired by the Commonwealth Secretariat. It will be composed of an agreed number of select member countries and partners to ensure balance across geography, donor member countries, thematic working group leads and partners.

1.1 Thematic areas

The **five thematic areas** are:

		
Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security	Soil and Water Conservation and Management	Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity
		
Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry	Indigenous and Local People and Climate Resilient Development	

These five thematic areas are further expanded and are representative of science-based priorities, while providing the potential to strategically address land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change.

The Living Lands Charter:

Defines: **Soil and Water Conservation and Management** as a strategy rooted in the principles of sustainable natural resource management. It should encompass a range of practices aimed at reducing soil erosion and water runoff, ultimately leading to the preservation of soil quality. This approach will play a pivotal role in safeguarding water resources and food security, ensuring their enduring accessibility to present communities and generations yet to come, especially in our water-scarce, small and vulnerable member states.

Progress in this thematic area can be accomplished through the harmonised governance of land, water and other interconnected natural assets within specific watersheds, with the overarching goal of upholding or reinstating ecological, social and economic benefits for productive lands.

Acknowledges: **Indigenous People and Local Communities** as populations that are disproportionately exposed to environmental changes and are frequently categorised as ‘at-risk’ communities.³¹ The Charter also recognises that the profound connections many indigenous groups maintain with their ancestral lands offer distinctive insights into comprehending and addressing environmental and climate change. Approximately one-third of the world’s indigenous peoples live within the Commonwealth,³² across Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, Africa, the Pacific and Europe. This sizeable population presents a valuable repository of ancestral knowledge related to climate resilience and opportunity to enhance protection of indigenous culture and practice.

We envision success as contingent upon the integration of indigenous people and local community wisdom. This involves empowering indigenous people and local communities by increasing their involvement and leadership in sustainable land management while safeguarding their native lands, which serve as foundational pillars for the development of climate-resilient societies.

Recognises: **Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity** as a mechanism to incorporate diverse and nature-based solutions into the realm of

sustainable land management. This approach can aid in safeguarding against soil erosion, maintaining temperature regulation, fighting against climate change, and preserving rich flora and fauna. This is particularly important for The Commonwealth, as it contains five (5) out of the seventeen (17) megadiverse nations and encompasses 23 per cent of the Earth's total land area. Therefore, the Commonwealth's biological resources have a critical role in the protection and enhancement of the ecosystem services they bestow upon us.

Understands: **Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry**

as a comprehensive climate-smart livestock approach that works towards sustainable livestock production systems that support climate change adaptation and mitigation activities, food security, sustainable incomes, animal welfare, and minimal environmental impact.

Emphasises: **Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security** as an approach which employs

agricultural practices, technologies and innovations that enhance productivity in a sustainable manner, increase resilience and food security, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ensure higher incomes for small-scale producers.

Following a 5x5 approach, the **five implementation strategies**, aimed at enhanced action across the thematic areas, are: evidence-based analysis and policy influence; financing for implementation; technical assistance and capacity building; institutional structure and governance; and knowledge sharing and management.

1.2 Implementation strategies

Under each of the themes, the Charter will seek to address gaps in policy and finance, provide much-needed technical expertise and capacity building, support the development of strong collaborative institutions and governance frameworks, while sharing knowledge and learning. These aspects are described below.

Evidence-Based Analysis and Policy influence 	Promote evidence-based analysis and policy influence for sustainable land and water management, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation that build the resilience of countries, economies, communities and individuals to promote economic growth and development.
Financing for Implementation 	Promote access to finance through responsible public and private sector investments that advance nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, and innovations that promote land-based value chains for growth and development, increase food security, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience, and reduce fragility.
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building 	Prioritise the enhancement of technical assistance and capacity building for Commonwealth member countries through co-operation, exchange and partnerships to promote the climate resilient and sustainable management of land and biodiversity resources, with particular attention to least developed countries and small island developing states, as a key element of intra-Commonwealth co-operation.
Institutional Structure and Governance 	Strengthen institutional and systemic capacity for climate resilient sustainable land management, and co-ordination mechanisms at the landscape, national and regional levels to respond to land degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss and food security challenges.
Knowledge Sharing and Management 	Promote the generation, storage and exchange of information knowledge, tools, techniques and policies on the best practices in climate resilient sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation and that optimise livelihoods, jobs and food security, including community-based and indigenous climate resilient soil and sustainable land management practices, as applicable, including the Commonwealth Virtual Centre for Small States (VCSS).

1.3 Mapping of the five core themes, five core strategies (5x5), gender and youth mainstreaming against the Rio Conventions' targets

Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security 	Target 7: Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: (a) by reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; (b) by reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and (c) by preventing, reducing and working towards eliminating plastic pollution. Target 10: Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable	Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality: Expected impact 1.1: Land productivity and related ecosystems services are maintained or enhanced. Expected impact 1.2: The vulnerability of affected ecosystems is reduced, and the resilience of ecosystems is increased. Expected impact 1.4: Measures for sustainable land management and the combating of desertification/land degradation are shared, promoted and implemented. Strategic objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations: Expected impact 2.1: Food security and adequate access to water for people in affected areas is improved.	- Decision 3/CP.27 of the 'Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security' recognises the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change. This work builds on the Koronovia joint work on agriculture under the UNFCCC,³⁴ which recognises that agriculture and food systems are key in addressing climate change. - Over 80% of NDCs identify food production and nutrition security as a priority area, with many highlighting the need to focus on activities that have positive effects on mitigation and adaptation, while ensuring food security.³⁵ Agri-food systems contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Regarding NDCs, 67% refer to agricultural mitigation measures, and 49% mention mitigation measures in cropland and crop production specifically: 18%

(Continued)

	intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity, and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services. • Target 16: Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices, including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, including through halving global food waste, significantly reducing overconsumption and substantially reducing waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.	• Expected impact 2.2: The livelihoods of people in affected areas are improved and diversified.	mention improved cropland management, and 17% note improved agricultural productivity.
Soil and Water Conservation and Management 	• Target 2: Ensure that by 2030, at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity. • Target 11: Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil	• Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality: • Expected impact 1.1: Land productivity and related ecosystem services are maintained or enhanced. • Expected impact 1.2: The vulnerability of affected ecosystems is reduced, and the resilience of ecosystems is increased.	• The Sharm el-Sheikh, Decision /CP.23 and Koronovia joint work on agriculture identified areas of work including improved soil carbon, soil health and soil fertility under grassland and cropland, as well as integrated systems, including water management, improved nutrient use and manure management towards sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. • Over 80% of NDC adaptation components prioritise freshwater resources, highlighting

(Continued)

Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
	 health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.	 • Strategic objective 3: To mitigate, adapt to and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems: • Expected impact 3.1: Ecosystems' vulnerability to drought is reduced, including through sustainable land and water management practices. • Expected impact 3.2: Communities' resilience to drought is increased.	 measures for enhancing the availability, efficiency and quality of water supplies. Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), combined with the protection and restoration of water-related ecosystems like forests, wetlands and rivers, were common themes, alongside diversified supply, efficiency of use and irrigation. The need for transboundary water management and co-operation was also included.
Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity 	• Target 2: Ensure that by 2030, at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity. • Target 3: Ensure and enable that by 2030, at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and	• Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality: • Expected impact 1.1: Land productivity and related ecosystem services are maintained or enhanced. • Expected impact 1.2: The vulnerability of affected ecosystems is reduced, and the resilience of ecosystems is increased. • Strategic objective 4: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD:	• Article 5 of the Paris Agreement: Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1(d), of the Convention, including forests. Parties are encouraged to take action to implement and support, including through results-based payments, the existing framework as set out in related guidance and decisions already agreed under the Convention for: policy approaches and positive incentives for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable

(Continued)

	equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognising indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognising and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories. • Target 4: Ensure urgent management actions to halt human-induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human–wildlife interactions to minimise human–wildlife conflict for coexistence. • Target 6: Eliminate, minimise, reduce and/or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and	• Expected impact 4.1: Sustainable land management and the combating of desertification/land degradation contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and addressing climate change. • Expected impact 4.2: Synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and processes are enhanced.	management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries; and alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, while reaffirming the importance of incentivising, as appropriate, non-carbon benefits associated with such approaches. • Fifty-five (55)% of NDCs highlight forestry mitigation measures, including afforestation, reforestation and revegetation, sustainable forest management, reduced deforestation and forest degradation, and forest conservation. These are aligned to work towards reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+).³⁶ • Many NDCs highlight adaptation efforts to protect terrestrial ecosystems and forests, particularly through increased protected areas and connectivity, conservation of vulnerable or threatened species, restoration, and sustainable forest management and reforestation.³⁷ Sixty (60)% of NDC adaptation components highlight biodiversity and ecosystems as a priority, and nearly 50% prioritise forests.
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
 establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50% by 2030, and eradicating or controlling invasive alien species, especially in priority sites, such as islands. • Target 7: Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: (a) by reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; (b) by reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and (c) by preventing, reducing and working towards eliminating plastics pollution.		

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	• Target 8: Minimise the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solution and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimising negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity. • Target 11: Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature. • Target 12: Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.	
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
	 Target 14: Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, and fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework. Target 18: Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective, and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least US\$500 billion per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.		

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Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry		• Target 4: Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimise human-wildlife conflict for coexistence • Target 5: Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimising impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities. • Target 8: Minimise the impact of climate change on biodiversity, contribute to mitigation and adaptation through ecosystem-based approaches, contributing at least 10 GtCO₂e per year to global mitigation efforts, and ensure that all mitigation and adaptation efforts avoid negative impacts on biodiversity.	• Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality: • Expected impact 1.1: Land productivity and related ecosystem services are maintained or enhanced. • Expected impact 1.2: The vulnerability of affected ecosystems is reduced, and the resilience of ecosystems is increased. • Strategic objective 4: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD: • Expected impact 4.1: Sustainable land management and the combating of desertification/land degradation contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and addressing climate change. • Expected impact 4.2: Synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and processes are enhanced.	• The Koronovia joint work on agriculture includes a workstream focused on improved livestock management systems. • Livestock are a growing source of emissions. Many countries indicate their willingness to implement measures for reducing livestock sector emissions. About a third (30%) of NDCs identify mitigation measures in grazing land and livestock production, with the focus on improved management of manure and herds.³⁸
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
	 • Target 10: Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.		
Indigenous and Local People and Climate Resilient Development 	• Target 1: Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land-use and sea-use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.	• Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality: • Expected impact 1.3: National voluntary land degradation neutrality targets are set and adopted by countries wishing to do so, related measures are identified and implemented, and necessary monitoring systems are established.	• Article 7 of the Paris Agreement: recognised the need for actions to make 'contribution to the long-term global response to climate change to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems, taking into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing country parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change'

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• Target 5: Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimising impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities. • Target 9: Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities. • Target 12: Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.	• Strategic objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations: • Expected impact 2.2: The livelihoods of people in affected areas are improved and diversified. • Expected impact 2.3: Local people, especially women and youth, are empowered and participate in decision-making processes in combating land desertification, land degradation and drought. • Strategic objective 3: To mitigate, adapt to and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems: • Expected impact 3.2: Communities' resilience to drought is increased.	• ...taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate. • NDCs further reveal that more parties are considering the specific vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples that are particular to their circumstances, the importance of drawing on indigenous and local knowledge to strengthen climate efforts, and arrangements to enable greater participation in and contributions to climate action by indigenous peoples, including through the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform.³⁹
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework 	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³ 	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 
	• Target 13: Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilisation of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments. • Target 21: Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision-makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations,		

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Institutional Structure and Governance 	practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation. • Target 22: Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities, and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.		
Institutional Structure and Governance 	• Target 13: Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilisation of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.	• Decision 7/COP.13: Calls for parties with respect to policy and planning to: ◦ (e) establish policies and enabling environments for promoting and implementing solutions to combat desertification/ land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including prevention, relief and recovery; ◦ (f) leverage synergies and integrate land desertification, land degradation and drought, while optimising efficacy and eliminating duplication of efforts, into (i) national plans related to the other	• Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, Decision 3/CP.27 of the UNFCCC: Recognised the vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change. Re-emphasising the need for innovative policy and social approaches to scaling up, such as institutional arrangements, partnerships and farmers' empowerment which can incentivise implementation and support an enabling environment for scaling up best practices.

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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework 	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³ 	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 
• Target 15: Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions: (a) regularly monitor, assess and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions along their operations, supply and value chains, and portfolios; (b) provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns; (c) report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable; in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity; increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production. • CBD/COP/DEC/15/4: Considerations for Implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, noted:		multilateral environmental agreements, in particular the other Rio Conventions; and (ii) other international commitments as appropriate, within their respective mandates; and • (h) establish national policies, measures and governance for drought preparedness and management, inclusive of drought contingency plans in line with the mandate of the Convention.	

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Evidence-Based Analysis and Policy influence 	Enhanced collaboration, co-operation and synergies between the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols, other biodiversity-related conventions, other relevant multilateral agreements and international organisations and processes, in line with their respective mandates, including at the global, regional, subregional and national levels, would contribute to and promote the implementation of the Framework in a more efficient and effective manner.		
The Global Biodiversity Framework states that: - The implementation of the Framework should be based on scientific evidence and traditional knowledge and practices, recognizing the role of science, technology and innovation - Implementation of the Framework requires transformative, innovative and transdisciplinary education, formal and informal, at all levels, including science-policy interface studies and lifelong learning processes, recognizing diverse world views, values and knowledge systems of indigenous peoples and local communities Target 14: Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments	The Global Biodiversity Framework states that: - The implementation of the Framework should be based on scientific evidence and traditional knowledge and practices, recognizing the role of science, technology and innovation - Implementation of the Framework requires transformative, innovative and transdisciplinary education, formal and informal, at all levels, including science-policy interface studies and lifelong learning processes, recognizing diverse world views, values and knowledge systems of indigenous peoples and local communities Target 14: Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments	With respect to policy and planning, Parties are to: - Develop, implement, revise and regularly monitor, as appropriate, national, subregional and regional action programmes and/or plans as effective tools for UNCCD implementation; - Establish policies and enabling environments for promoting and implementing solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including prevention, relief and recovery; - Leverage synergies and integrate DGLDD, while optimizing efficacy and eliminating duplication of efforts, into (i) national plans related to the other multilateral environmental agreements, in particular the other Rio conventions; and (ii) other international commitments as appropriate, within their respective mandates;	The Convention requests Parties to: - Take climate change considerations into account, to the extent feasible, in their relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, and employ appropriate methods, for example impact assessments, formulated and determined nationally, with a view to minimizing adverse effects on the economy, on public health and on the quality of the environment, of projects or measures undertaken by them to mitigate or adapt to climate change - Promote and cooperate in the full, open and prompt exchange of relevant scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and legal information related to the climate system and climate change, and to the economic and social consequences of various response strategies;

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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
 and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, and fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework. • Target 21: Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.		 • Developed country Parties shall adopt national policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and protecting and enhancing its greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs

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Technical Assistance and Capacity Building 	• Article 13(a) and (b) of the CBD: Highlighted the need to foster awareness about the significance of conserving biological diversity and the necessary preservation measures through media channels and the integration of these subjects into educational curricula. Collaborate, when relevant, with other countries and international organisations to create educational and public outreach initiatives concerning the conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological diversity. • CBD/COP/Decision 15/8:⁴⁰ Capacity-building and development and technical and scientific co-operation: adopted a comprehensive long-term strategic framework aimed at capacity building and development to assist in the realisation of nationally determined priorities for the effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. • Target 17: Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention. • Target 20: Strengthen capacity building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical	• Promotion of capacity building to further the implementation of the Convention, Decision -1/COP.15, 1. (f):⁴¹ Underscores the need for the continuation of the provision of training and further strengthening of capacity-building activities to better address desertification and land degradation. • Strategic objective 5: To mobilise substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at the global and national levels. • Expected impact 5.2: International support is provided for implementing effective and targeted capacity building and 'on-the-ground interventions' in affected country parties to support the implementation of the Convention, including through North-South, South-South and triangular co-operation. • Expected impact 5.3: Extensive efforts are implemented to promote technology transfer, especially on favourable terms and including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, and to mobilise other non-financial resources.	• Article 11 (1) of the Paris Agreement: Recognised the need to enhance the capacity and ability of developing country parties, in particular countries with the least capacity, such as the least developed countries, and those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, such as small island developing states, to take effective climate change action, including, inter alia, to implement adaptation and mitigation actions, and should facilitate technology development, dissemination and deployment, access to climate finance, relevant aspects of education, training and public awareness, and the transparent, timely and accurate communication of information. • Article 9 (2) of the UNFCCC: Recognised the need for guidance on scientific initiatives, international collaboration in research and development pertaining to climate change, and methods for enhancing indigenous capacity building in developing nations. • Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, Decision -1/CP.27 of the UNFCCC: Acknowledges the existing capacity gaps and requirements in developing countries, urging developed country parties to enhance support for long-term, country-driven capacity-building efforts. This will improve the effectiveness, success and sustainability of such interventions.
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
	 and scientific co-operation, including through South–South, North–South and triangular co-operation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the Framework.		
Financing for Implementation 	• Article 20 of the CBD: Recognised that each party commits to supporting national activities aligned with this Convention's goals based on its capabilities, offering financial aid and incentives as per its own plans and priorities. Developed nations will provide extra financial resources to assist developing nations in covering the additional costs incurred while fulfilling Convention obligations. Special attention will be paid to the unique challenges faced by developing countries (SIDS), especially those most environmentally at risk, like those in arid regions or vulnerable coastal and mountainous areas.	• Strategic objective 5: To mobilise substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at the global and national levels: • Expected impact 5.1: Adequate and timely public and private financial resources are further mobilised and made available to affected country parties, including through domestic resource mobilisation. • Article 20 of the UNCCD: Highlighted the central importance of financing to the achievement of the objective of the	• Article 9 of the UNFCCC: Recognised the need for developed country parties to provide financial resources to support developing country parties in addressing both mitigation and adaptation, consistent with their existing commitments under the Convention. Emphasising their lead in the global mobilisation of climate finance from a wide array of sources, financial instruments and channels, with a recognition of the pivotal role of public funds. This mobilisation should involve diverse actions, including the endorsement of country-driven strategies, all while considering the specific needs and

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	• Target 19: Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, mobilising at least US\$200 billion per year by 2030, including by: (a) increasing total biodiversity-related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing states, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least US\$20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least US\$30 billion per year by 2030; (b) significantly increasing domestic resource mobilisation, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances; (c) leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other	Convention. Noted efforts should focus on mobilising substantial financial resources, including grants and loans, for programmes combating desertification and drought mitigation. This includes promoting the timely and predictable funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) while adhering to its provisions. International co-operation should facilitate technology and knowledge transfer. Collaboration with affected developing country parties can explore innovative methods, including debt swaps, to increase financing efficiently. • The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, Article 21: Understood the need to facilitate the mobilisation of financial resources to implement the Convention and address desertification, land degradation and drought, together with developing countries, the private sector, and donors to mobilise substantial resources within and outside a country, in order to implement land degradation neutrality targets at the national level.	priorities of developing country parties. The allocation of augmented financial resources should aim for a harmonious distribution between adaptation and mitigation, guided by country-led strategies, and tailored to the priorities and requirements of developing country parties. This focus is particularly crucial for those highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and facing notable capacity constraints, such as the least developed countries and small island developing states, highlighting the necessity for public and grant-based resources to support adaptation.
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework 	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³ 	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 
	instruments; (d) stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards; (e) optimising co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises; and (f) enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth-centric actions and non-market-based approaches, including community-based natural resource management and civil society co-operation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity. • Target 18: Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least US\$500 billion per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.		

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Knowledge Sharing and Management 	• Target 17: Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention. • Target 20: Strengthen capacity building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific co-operation, including through South–South, North–South and triangular co-operation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the Framework. • Target 21: Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision-makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this	• Strategic objective 5: To mobilise substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at the global and national levels. • Expected impact 5.2 International support is provided for implementing effective and targeted capacity building and 'on-the-ground interventions' in affected country parties to support the implementation of the Convention, including through North–South, South–South and triangular co-operation.	• Article 4 of the UNFCCC commits parties to: Promote and co-operate in the development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in all relevant sectors, including the energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management sectors; promote and co-operate in the full, open and prompt exchange of relevant scientific, technological, technical, socioeconomic and legal information related to the climate system and climate change, and to the economic and social consequences of various response strategies; and promote and co-operate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organisations.
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Table 1.1 The 5x5 approach alignment with the three Rio Conventions

	Alignment with Convention on Biological Diversity 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework	Alignment with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Expected Impacts ³³	Alignment with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
	 context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.		
Mapping of Youth and Gender Against the Rio targets	Gender Action Plan, Decision/15/11 of the UNCBD:⁴² Promotes gender responsive implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to promote the intersecting ways in which gender inequalities may be addressed for all women, girls, men, and boys around the world experiencing marginalisation in different, multiple, and intersecting ways, depending on their ethnicity, social status, caste, age, and environment, among other factors.	Abidjan Declaration on Achieving Gender Equality for Successful Land Restoration, Decision 25/COP.15:⁴³ Acknowledges that ensuring women's land access and control, along with financial access for land-related economic activities, are key factors for women's economic empowerment and rights. These contribute to economic independence and autonomy. Also, recognise that fair land governance and secure land tenure are vital for achieving land degradation neutrality and land restoration goals.	Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan, Decision 3/CP.25 of the UNFCCC:⁴⁴ Recognised the concern that climate change impacts on women and men can often differ due to historical and current gender inequalities and multidimensional factors, which can be further exacerbated in developing countries, local communities and indigenous peoples.

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	• Target 23: Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognising their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful, and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.		
Youth Engagement	• Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN): Recognised and supported by the CBD Secretariat, serves as the advocate for global youth in CBD negotiations. GYBN's focus includes raising awareness among young individuals about biodiversity's importance and fostering connections among youth and organisations worldwide. Its overarching aim is to construct a united global front aimed at stopping biodiversity loss.	• The Global Youth Caucus on Desertification and Land, Decision 31/ COP.14 of the UNCCD:⁴⁵ Promotes the meaningful engagement of children and youth in UNCCD activities and processes related to desertification, land degradation, drought, sustainable development and climate change.	• Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, Decision 1/CP.27 of the UNFCCC:⁴⁶ Recognised the importance of non-party stakeholders such as children and youth as catalysts for climate action, urging parties to engage them in shaping and executing climate policies. Encouraged the inclusion of young representatives and negotiators in national delegations, upholding intergenerational equity and climate system stability for future generations.

1.4 Implementation Framework 5x5 matrix

Table 1.2 Matrix of the key strategic actions under the 5x5 approach

Evidence-Based Analysis and Policy influence	Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security	Soil and Water Conservation and Management	Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity	Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry	Indigenous and Local People and Climate Resilient Development
	- Integrate regenerative agricultural practices, including indigenous and traditional knowledge and practice into national agricultural policies and plans - Support the development of national food systems strategies that incorporate climate resilience - Climate-proof national agricultural policies and plans	- Develop relevant laws and guidelines to promote soil and water management - Develop/update Integrated Water Resource Management strategies/plans, including for wetlands - Embed nature-based solutions into the existing policy mix of solutions - Advance and apply the science and technology of soil microbiomes and biocrusts	- Integrate biodiverse, nature-based solutions into the existing policy mix, including indigenous and traditional practices - Improve natural resource monitoring and accounting for results-based finance - Advance and apply the evidence-base on biodiversity offsets - Promote and scale renewable energies - Explore and support the strategic role of green and blue spaces in urban environments	- Advance the evidence base on climate-smart livestock systems - Integrate a 'food footprint' approach into decision-making - Develop climate-smart livestock policy instruments	- Recognise indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights in research and policy - Support integration of indigenous knowledge and solutions into policy instruments and innovations, particularly in member countries with substantial indigenous communities - Foster a culture of support for 'grassroots' community-led interventions - Promote indigenous research leadership, including through research grants

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	Integrated land-use planning, especially in small states that have limited land space		- Explore and develop exemplar cases for seed and genetic banks at national and regional levels - Support the revision of NBSAPs in line with the new Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)		
Financing for Implementation 	- Develop national, long-term investment strategies and pipeline for selected agri-food subsectors - Strengthen financial services for climate-resilient agricultural practices and livelihoods diversification	Institutionalise payments for ecosystem services	- Develop bankable proposals and business cases for climate-resilient conservation and restoration projects - Leverage investment into priority forestry products - Explore leveraging mechanisms, such as carbon tax and REDD+ - Promote sustainable protected areas and biodiversity tourism - Explore renewable energy investment opportunities - Strengthen the enabling environment for blended finance	- Develop a pipeline of bankable climate-smart livestock investments - Improve access to credit, including for smallholders - Develop financial incentives for low-carbon livestock production	- Institutionalise payments for ecosystem services (PES) - Promote access and benefits sharing mechanisms - Strengthen markets and market access to sustainable community natural resource products - Promote sustainable protected areas and biodiversity tourism

(Continued)

Table 1.2 Matrix of the key strategic actions under the 5x5 approach

	Climate Resilient Agriculture for Food Security	Soil and Water Conservation and Management	Sustainable Green Cover and Biodiversity	Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Livestock Rearing and Animal Husbandry	Indigenous and Local People and Climate Resilient Development
			Develop a toolkit on innovative financing mechanisms, including grants, zero-interest loans, guarantees, and working capital facilities for a pipeline of climate finance projects		
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building	- Capacity building for climate-resilient agriculture, with focus on training for government officials - Develop priority areas highlighted in NDCs, national adaptation plans (NAPs) and NBSAPs into bankable projects	- Capacity building for integrated soil and water conservation and management approaches - Develop priority areas highlighted in NDCs, NAPs and NBSAPs into bankable projects	- Capacity building for restoration and conservation, including managerial skills - Capacity building for biodiversity-based tourism, - Capacity building for developing integrated nature-based solutions	Capacity building for low-carbon and climate-resilient livestock keeping	- Support grassroots project proposal development - Capacity building for indigenous and community leaders on negotiation skills

(Continued)

Institutional Structure and Governance 	• Develop priority national and regional sustainable agriculture value chains • Systematically monitor public agriculture expenditures to optimise public spending • Strengthen land tenure security	• Provide multistakeholder platforms to enhance participatory governance • Strengthen land tenure security	• Provide multistakeholder platforms to enhance participatory governance • Improve protected area efficacy	• Develop appropriate livestock monitoring Reporting and verification (MRV) systems • Strengthen land tenure security • Improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of livestock production and consumption data, including through digitalisation	• Provide multistakeholder platforms to enhance participatory governance • Recognise legitimate land rights, including customary land rights • Institutionalise social and environmental safeguards
Knowledge Sharing and Management 	• Strengthen data collection and management capacities and systems, particularly for small and vulnerable states, which are often data poor • Promote access to climate-resilient technologies • Share learnings from existing interventions	• Create an international pan-Commonwealth network of restorative action sites • Share learnings from existing interventions	• Create an international pan-Commonwealth network of restorative action sites • Commit to equitable and fair benefit sharing • Share learnings from existing interventions • Set up an internship programme to support knowledge generation and exchange	• Strengthen data collection and management capacities and systems • Create an international pan-Commonwealth network of restorative action sites • Adopt the use of appropriate machine learning applications for climate-smart livestock management	• Elevate and institutionalise indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, with the aim of promoting a hybrid approach comprising traditional/indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge • Set up an internship programme to support knowledge generation and exchange

2. Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting themes

- Justice and equity
- Sustainable entrepreneurship and business development
- Gender mainstreaming
- Youth engagement
- Climate–health nexus and resilient development
- Earth observation data and AI
- Monitoring and evaluation

While the Implementation Framework has adopted a 5x5 approach for the main thematic areas, several critical cross-cutting issues will be integrated into all the actions that will be undertaken. These issues include a justice and equity lens, job creation, youth and gender mainstreaming, climate, health and resilient development, earth observation and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as monitoring and evaluation. These cross-cutting elements are described below.

2.1 Justice and equity

We recognise that sustainable development can help to eradicate poverty by pursuing inclusive growth while preserving and conserving natural ecosystems and promoting social equity.

Commonwealth Charter

The Implementation Framework adopts a rights-based approach and draws on the definition of sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.⁴⁷ It seeks to promote justice for all, including recognition justice, procedural justice, distributive justice and intergenerational justice.

Commonwealth countries are committed to: 'Dedicate "Living Lands" to future generations of every Commonwealth country with assured prosperity, sustenance, and security, to be in line with the Strategy set for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.'⁴⁸

2.2 Sustainable entrepreneurship and business development

Land must work for people. Nature-based solutions and bioeconomy present a largely untapped business opportunity.⁴⁹ Moreover, sustainability transitions must engage the business community.⁵⁰

The Implementation Framework highlights private sector involvement and business development, both to promote upscaling as well as to harness the socioeconomic co-benefits of holistic approaches.

The Implementation Framework identifies and promotes examples of potential opportunities for sustainable entrepreneurship and business development under the various thematic areas. The Commonwealth Secretariat is committed to supporting countries to explore and unlock these opportunities.

2.3 Gender mainstreaming

The Rio Conventions envisage gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting priority and promote a paradigm shift to ensure that gender-related issues are taken into account in the implementation of activities that lead to the achievement of the long-term objectives of these conventions.⁵¹

We recognise that gender equality and women's empowerment are basic human rights essential for Inclusive human development. The advancement of women's rights and the education of girls are critical preconditions for effective and sustainable development.

Commonwealth Charter

The Implementation Framework promotes appropriate recognition of gender equality, women's empowerment and gender-transformative approaches, including through:

- recognition of the critical role women play in safeguarding natural environments and associated knowledge systems;
- support for women's access to decision-making, including through support and capacity building for women in leadership, for example, through the Commonwealth Women's Forum at CHOGM;

- support for and recognition of the critical role of women in policy design and implementation, involving training for women and gender experts;
- women's economic empowerment through low-carbon, climate-resilient development;
- support for the purposeful registration of men and women and joint landowners, as prescribed, for example, by the African Union protocol on the rights of women;
- support for gender analyses or assessments, gender-disaggregated data, gender indicators and gender-responsive budgeting; and
- equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms.

2.4 Youth engagement

We recognise the positive and active role and contributions of young people in promoting development, peace, democracy and in protecting and promoting other Commonwealth values, such as tolerance and understanding, including respect for other cultures. The future success of the Commonwealth rests with the continued commitment and contributions of young people in promoting and sustaining the Commonwealth and its values and principles, and we commit to investing in and promoting their development, particularly through the creation of opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship.

Commonwealth Charter

More than 60 per cent of the Commonwealth combined population of 2.5 billion is aged 29 or under, and one-third of the global population aged between 15 and 29 live in Commonwealth countries. The Commonwealth sees young people as assets who should be empowered as future leaders. Existing Commonwealth networks and platforms, like the Queen's Commonwealth Trust,⁵² can be leveraged to engage and empower youth. The Implementation Framework contributes to youth engagement through:

- support for youth-led initiatives, including through youth networks like the Commonwealth Youth Council and the Commonwealth Students Association, as well as global networks such as the Climate-Smart Agriculture Youth Network and Global Biodiversity Youth Network;
- effective participation of young women and men in relevant processes, at all levels

of decision-making, including at (but not limited to) the Youth Leaders Forum at the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meetings;

- youth work education and training in sustainable land management practices and nature-based solutions; celebration of youth achievements, including through the Commonwealth Youth Awards for Excellence in Development Work.

2.5 Climate–health nexus and resilient development

We recognise the necessity of access to affordable health care, education, clean drinking water, sanitation and housing for all citizens and emphasise the importance of promoting health and well-being in combating communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Commonwealth Charter

Climate change is expected to adversely impact on human health, including through increased under-nutrition from diminished food production; injury, disease and death from more intense extreme events; and higher risks from food-, water- and vector-borne diseases.⁵³ These factors may interact with and are exacerbated by land degradation and biodiversity loss. The NDC Synthesis Report reveals that 65 per cent of parties identify health as an adaptation priority (UNFCCC, 2023).⁵⁴

Action under the thematic areas contributes to a healthier environment that can provide sufficient food, safe water, quality air and other ecosystem goods and services that are fundamental to human health and well-being. Many of these are well known determinants of health.

It is also vital that the health systems in the Commonwealth are assessed, and adaptation plans developed and financed to become truly climate-resilient health systems. The Implementation Framework propagates such an approach, which will include recognition of traditional knowledge and the importance of the One Health approach (see Glossary).

The Implementation Framework recognises the need for integrated climate information systems, open-source data, data pooling and sharing platforms for accessing information, and forecasting tools and scenarios. Drawing on the experience of CommonSensing (a previous spatial information project carried out with other partners), the Commonwealth promotes integrated solutions

that harness data to improve decision-making, access to finance, and implementation including the use of satellites and innovative emerging technology like blockchain.

A functional M&E system is key to support the integrated implementation of the Rio Conventions, to monitor the causal flow from outputs to outcomes and assess the contributions of CALL interventions to the achievement of Rio Convention objectives. This requires time-bound quantitative performance targets to ensure that actors across sectors within the intervention area are striving towards the same goals. The timely achievement of such targets can be incentivised through performance-based financing strategies.

There is a need for iterative monitoring of investments to assess resource utilisation vis-à-vis planned activities and offer advice to implementing partners (countries, communities etc.) on whether outputs and outcomes are realised. It is therefore envisioned that individual interventions will establish timebound targets to allow for an evidence-based assessment of impact, about the welfare and livelihoods of communities involved, as well as of the status of natural resources and climate change outcomes. It is further envisaged that a baseline is established for comparison.

The importance of gathering, reviewing and reporting data cannot be overemphasised. This is vital to assess what is working and inform adaptive management approaches. Data-driven approaches are particularly important for nature-based approaches, as there is a need to verify and iteratively adjust novel interventions to optimise outcomes for local contexts. Data are needed to identify hotspots and develop priority interventions for maximum impact with limited funds. This is particularly important as it is necessary to evidence impact to scale up results-based financing. Monitoring and evaluation are also key to institutionalising systems for payments for ecosystem services, including carbon credits. Sustainable land management also imposes trade-offs between different land uses, for example. As such, there is a need for multisectoral data to support evidence-based decision-making on trade-offs.

It is envisioned that monitoring and reporting under the Living Lands Implementation Framework will draw, build on and contribute to the following initiatives:

- InforMEA,⁵⁵ which is facilitated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and supported by the European Union, is the United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). This online portal provides information about the MEAs to the public.
- UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC),⁵⁶ which is a global centre of excellence on biodiversity and nature's contribution to society and the economy.
- UNEP-WCMC has just launched the Land Use Finance Impact Hub⁵⁷ and its Positive Impact Indicators Directory⁵⁸ has been developed with and for impact funds and sustainably focused financial institutions. It aims to support the roll out of effective industry frameworks to track the environmental and social impacts of land-use investments.
- The Positive Impact Indicators Directory is a harmonised shortlist of key performance indicators, designed to encompass fundamental aspects of sustainable land-use investment, such as the natural habitat area that is effectively protected through time. It aims to help end-users, including impact funds, asset managers and debt managers, to identify and measure how land-use investments generate positive environmental and social impacts.
- The directory also allows users to see how the proposed indicators link to global goals, including the Rio Conventions, enabling financial institutions to track their positive environmental and social impacts.
- UNEP has developed a Data Reporting Tool for MEAs (DaRT),⁵⁹ which is designed to support parties to multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to effectively use synergies in the field of knowledge and information management for national reporting to biodiversity-related conventions. Countries can establish a national workspace on the DaRT platform, and there is also scope to establish a pan-Commonwealth reporting framework on this platform.
- The Science Based Targets Network is in the process of developing targets that address cross-cutting pressures – like land use and

land-use change – that influence state-level objectives under the three Rio Conventions. At present, these targets are designed for companies. As such, they can be used to

support private sector engagement under the Implementation Framework. In addition, there may be scope to translate the target-setting process to address national targets.

3. Operational Framework

Implementation of the Living Lands Charter will be supported by established platforms, mechanisms and initiatives of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Commonwealth accredited organisations, as well as regional and international partner organisations, will also be consulted to provide support and technical expertise. Furthermore, implementation will be premised on a **partnerships approach**, seeking to support and strengthen existing initiatives, convene actors and catalyse action.

3.1 Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth Secretariat will play a leading role to support member countries in synergising the implementation of the commitments agreed under the three Rio Conventions. It will work closely with the Focal Points at the respective Secretariats of the Rio Conventions, the Joint Liaison Group⁶⁰ between the three Rio Conventions, Rio Convention Regional Centres, and with the National Focal Points for the Rio Conventions.

The Secretariat shall:

- provide planning and co-ordinating services within the Commonwealth, in close collaboration with the Joint Liaison Group and Rio Conventions Focal Points;
- provide co-ordination support to the running of the time-bound thematic area working groups;
- support enhanced governance, including policy development, institution building and international advocacy;
- leverage technical expertise and finance, including through partnership development; and
- facilitate communications, capacity building and knowledge sharing, including through the Rio Conventions Pavilion.⁶¹

It is envisaged that the Commonwealth Secretariat will provide support through three inter-connected mechanisms:

1. Enabling Environment
2. Concrete Projects: The Nature Incubator

3. Knowledge Sharing and Management

3.2 The Living Lands Charter Advisory Group

The Commonwealth Secretariat will co-chair and convene a Living Lands Charter Advisory Group. It will be composed of an agreed number of select member countries and partners to ensure balance across geography, donor countries, working group leads and partners. The Living Lands Advisory Group shall:

- provide advice for the implementation of the Living Lands Charter through the thematic area working groups and other activities;
- champion and advocate for the Living lands Charter by raising the profile of the work;
- support efforts and improve co-ordination of resource mobilisation; and
- review progress towards targets and milestones agreed in the thematic area working groups and Implementation Plan.

Meetings of the Advisory Group shall be convened virtually or on the side-lines of the Commonwealth Climate and Environment Ministers Meeting (CCEMM) or other key meetings.

3.3 Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub ('the nature incubator')

In recognition of the Importance of closing the financing gap for actions across the three Rio Conventions, the Charter will use the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) as an anchor for supporting development of climate-resilient, nature-based projects, creating an enabling environment (policy, institutional and individual capacity building) across the five thematic areas in collaboration with member countries. Created in 2016, CCFAH is a proven platform based on several years of experience with collaborating and working directly with member countries. To date, it has delivered over USD327.55 million across 16 countries. Projects developed to date have included

cross-cutting initiatives that integrate the identified themes in the Implementation Framework. Thus, CCFAH advisers will continue to develop this further through shared expertise in climate finance and relevant fields such as biodiversity, agriculture, land restoration, forestry and social development. This will be supplemented by including new advisers with experience on areas such as climate and health.

Consequently, in time we envisage a strong network of knowledgeable professionals who can support access to finance, while also integrating technical, policy and capacity-building elements from these other fields.

3.4 Thematic area working groups

The Secretariat will establish five time-bound thematic area working groups comprising a voluntary consortium of interested **member countries, expert organisations and implementing partners** to contribute a range of experience and expertise. The duration of the Thematic Area Working Groups would be for a minimum of three years, with a review at the end of the first year. The Working Groups will:

- agree on terms of reference for operationalising the group;
- mutually agree strategic action plans (SAPs) for the implementation of priority interventions outlined in the Implementation Framework for each thematic group, including specific bespoke national, multi-country and/or regional projects for targeted support;
- establish an agreed set of practical criteria/indicators to measure progress, drawing on the initiatives outlined under 'monitoring and evaluation'; and
- iteratively identify and further develop opportunities for programmatic integration at the Commonwealth, regional and national levels, and integrate these into policy and planning processes.

3.5 Commonwealth member countries

Commonwealth member countries shall be encouraged and welcomed to take a leading role in collaborating with partners and stakeholders to facilitate the co-ordinated implementation actions within each thematic area. Commonwealth

member countries can opt to 'champion' thematic area working group. Member countries would work closely with their GEF Focal Point to co-ordinate efforts. **By doing so, member states commit to undertaking co-ordinated action towards the achievement of the Rio Conventions, through integrated strategies presented in the Implementation Framework.** By championing a time-bound working group, member countries are given privileged access to:

- profile as a leader in the thematic group and to setting the agenda;
- expert advisory services and technical assistance – including Living Lands Fellows;
- support with project implementation in collaboration with partners; and
- technical assistance and capacity support to unlock finance.

3.6 Living Lands fellowship and internship programme

In order to encourage technical input and capacity development within the Commonwealth family, the Secretariat will work to develop a Living Lands fellowship and internship scheme that will work on specific topics and issues arising from the five thematic area working groups. Relevant Commonwealth accredited organisations and partners would be able to contribute to and support the Living Lands fellowship and internship programme.

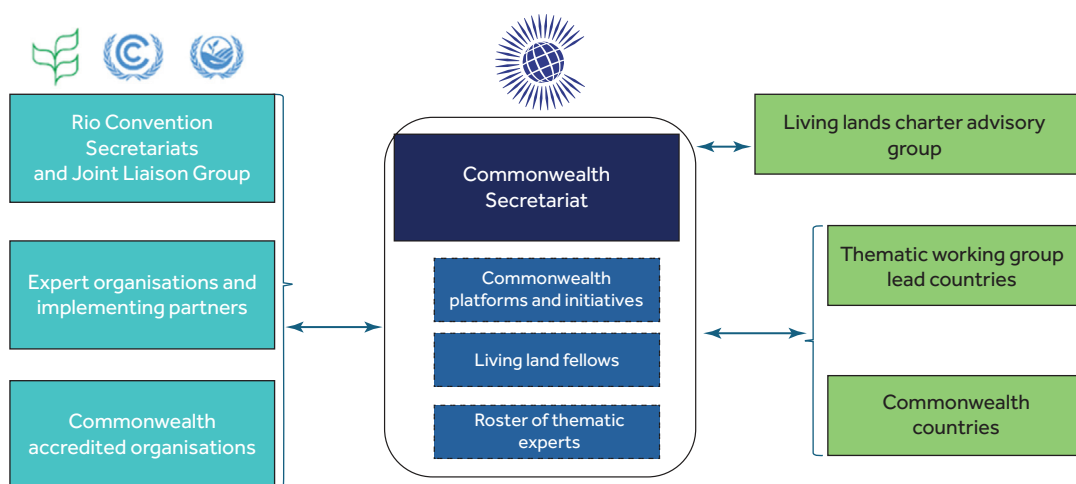
We envisage the following.

- **Areas of work:** To guarantee a high-quality programmatic experience, the operationalised thematic area working groups will have the responsibility of identifying key areas of work where a well-qualified fellow or intern can be strategically embedded. These selected candidates will be tasked with contributing to the development of knowledge products, including policy briefs, issue/white papers and other relevant research materials, all aimed at bolstering the success of the working group. Furthermore, they will provide essential support to meet various operational needs, which may encompass in-country engagements, forums, webinars and other related tasks.

- Duration:** The programme will be structured to offer varying durations of fellowship and internship opportunities in alignment with the respective/timely requirements and responsibilities of the operationalised thematic area working group. These durations encompass 3 months or 6 months, for the internship, and 12 months for the fellowship, and can be extended as suggested/ recommended by country leads.
- Talent pool:** The programme will be designed to engage Bachelor of Science (BSc), Master of Science (MSc) or doctorate/PhD graduates between the ages of 21 and 35, and from any of the 56 Commonwealth nations. We place a strong emphasis on fostering diversity, equity and inclusion throughout our selection process. Our goal is to ensure that as we develop the fellowship and internship scheme, we maintain a gender-balanced and representative cohort of participants from the five Commonwealth regions.
- Funding for youth:** The programme will be dedicated to establishing meaningful partnerships with like-minded conventions/ secretariats, such as UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC. Additionally, we intend to leverage both new and existing bilateral memoranda of understanding (MoUs) to secure funding and develop co-financing mechanisms. In cases where it is both applicable and feasible, fellows and interns may receive monthly honorariums to support their participation. Furthermore, these funds can also assist in covering travel and accommodation expenses for any on-site visits or in-country station duties, ensuring that their participation is supported adequately.

Figure 3.1 shows a high-level overview of the proposed organisational structure.

Figure 3.1 Organisational structure of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter



4. Financing Strategy

The financing strategy underpinning the implementation of the Living Lands Charter builds on the Commonwealth's existing finance platforms, including the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, Commonwealth Disaster Risk Finance Portal and the Climate Action Enhancement Package. It also draws on the Commonwealth Guidance Toolkit on Enhancing Access to Climate Finance.⁶² It is envisaged that CALL will:

4.1 Support access to global climate, biodiversity and land restoration funds via the Commonwealth Climate Finance Hub (CCFAH)

Facilitating access to finance and widening the pool of donors, development finance institutions (DFIs) and other financing entities is vital for the nature-based market to grow.⁶³ CCFAH already supports countries to unlock access to climate finance. This will be widened to include integrated projects relevant to the Living lands Charter. Commonwealth national climate finance advisers, deployed and embedded in relevant government ministry departments,⁶⁴ are optimally positioned to help unlock finance to support such integrated action. In addition, the Commonwealth Secretariat intends to work closely with the Rio Convention Focal Points, Green Climate Fund (GCF) National Designated Authorities (NDAs)/ Focal Points,⁶⁵ National GEF Focal Points,⁶⁶ Adaptation Fund Designated Authorities⁶⁷ and other mechanisms such as the loss and damage fund in member countries to co-ordinate efforts through formal channels. The CCFAH can channel investment for:

- funds dedicated for a specific thematic area, to be invested based on country or regional needs and with the guidance of Commonwealth climate finance advisers; and
- funds directed to specific projects.

4.2 Unlock the value of land

Land itself is a key to unlocking finance. Land tenure security is a catalytic asset for sustainable and inclusive rural transformation.⁶⁸ Land rights

can act as an incentive to invest in long-term improvements in the land, and land can provide collateral for loans (unlocking credit). Moreover, land rights make the transfer of land possible, which can favour a more efficient allocation of land. In this way, land resources can be leveraged to create wealth.⁶⁹ This is particularly critical for women, indigenous peoples and local communities, including through the formalisation of customary land rights. The Living Lands Charter will seek to provide impetus to this through shared learning and technical support to countries for a viable and sustainable land economy.

4.3 Strengthen investment in integrated and sustainable land management, particularly nature-based solutions

Current investments in NbS amount to US\$133 billion, most of which comes from public sources (86 per cent), with private sources providing the remainder.⁷⁰ By 2050, the total investment needs in nature will amount to US\$8.1 trillion, equivalent to more than \$536 billion per annum, approximately four times current investments.⁷¹ Strategies to overcome the investment gap may include:

- Support to countries to **identify and establish a pipeline of investment opportunities** (including multi-country and regional) and **scale pre-investment services**, particularly (but not exclusively) in the forest sector, which accounts for half of the estimated financing needs.
- Support to countries to put in place policy and regulatory frameworks that support revenue streams for natural assets, including by promoting the inclusion of NbS in NDC revisions, NAPs, NBSAPs, national policies and domestic sectoral legislation.
- Support to develop, implement and scale risk-management tools to reduce the risk on bank credit and investments.
- Support to **innovate credit mechanisms** that provide the lender with improved collateral guarantees, particularly for financing agricultural value chains.

- Support to elaborate systems to institutionalise **payments for ecosystem services (PES)**, including **carbon credits/Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs)**.
- Support to countries to establish and/or operationalise **revenue retention schemes** for national funds earmarked for sustainable land management and nature-based solutions. This might include **ecological fiscal transfers (EFTs)**, which distribute public revenues between governments in a country based on ecological indicators, such as protected areas.⁷²
- Support to identify fiscal instruments to motivate private sector institutions to improve their impact on nature (such as subsidies, tax incentives, **repurposed harmful subsidies**, trade-related tariffs).
- Support to leverage regulated **carbon markets**, with clear guidance on which actions can qualify as offsets, and monitoring to ensure such offsets are, in fact, achieved. However, for this potential to be realised, it is extremely important that carbon markets only support ecologically and socially responsible nature-based interventions and are not used as a replacement for decarbonisation.
- Matching potential private investors, including commercial financial institutions, investors, corporations and philanthropies, with opportunities. The Economic, Youth and Sustainable Development Directorate at the Commonwealth Secretariat is well placed to undertake relevant **technical** work. Pension funds and insurance companies are uniquely placed to embrace nature-based deals, since the longer timeframe of these opportunities is better aligned with their capital.⁷³

4.4 Establish and leverage partnerships to explore and develop innovative financial mechanisms, with a focus on blended finance mechanisms⁷⁴

Mobilise capital flows, including private, through:

- **Design and preparation funds:** That is, grant funding for the design or preparation of a transaction, to improve the viability and

bankability of a project or enterprise to reach financial goals. This might include support to provide proof of concept, establish a baseline and monitoring and verification system, develop a pipeline, or to read

- And/or provide pre-commercial funding.
- **Technical assistance funds:** That is, grants used to build the technical capacity of investees and key stakeholders to ensure the commercial viability of projects.
- **Guarantees and risk insurance:** That is, financial de-risking products such as grants, guarantees and insurance, to protect investors against risks and capital losses, and create attractive risk-return profiles for large, mainstream investors (particularly in the context of high-risk/high-impact investments, including in low-income countries or for entrepreneurs seeking early-stage funding).
- **Concessional finance:** Concessional finance, such as green, resilience or climate bonds, is provided by public entities on more favourable terms in order to mobilise commercial capital. Debt or equity at below-market rates helps to lower the overall cost of capital and mobilise finance from more risk-averse investors.

4.5 Improve financial accountability

Support results-based, impact-oriented financing for nature, including through:

- Support to institute systems for labelling, tracking, reporting and verifying the state of finance for nature, including through participatory budget tagging exercises.
- Support to implement ecosystem goods and services valuations (for example, the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Wealth Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services), including augmented systems of national accounts, drawing on existing methodologies.⁷⁵ This point also contributes to the economic valuation exercise that countries undertake as part of the NBSAP development and revision process.⁷⁶

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