

# UNFCCC COP27: Key asks for nature, climate and people

## *A BirdLife International Partnership briefing*

- The science is clear: if we don't conserve and restore biodiversity and we reduce ecosystem integrity, climate action will fail and vice versa.
- BirdLife International is working to ensure nature is incorporated into negotiated COP decisions leading to meaningful policies, decisive action and real investment commitments for the massive transformations that are necessary in the short, medium and long terms.
- At COP27, we are calling on Parties to:
  - Send a strong political signal to drive ambitious outcomes for CBD COP15 and the Global Biodiversity Framework through a COP27 cover decision text and in the informal agenda, embracing the role of nature-based solutions.
  - The UNFCCC must progress ambitious outcomes for biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and climate integration across the Global Stocktake (GST) and other key work programmes of the UN climate convention, including the Mitigation Work Programme and the Glasgow Sharm-el Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal for Adaptation, recognising the role of nature in enhancing ambition, increasing resilience and reducing the impacts of climate change on ecosystems and human activity.
  - COP27 must hold Parties accountable to deliver on existing nature initiatives agreed at COP26 and elsewhere in terms of both action and integrity. Rapid fossil fuel phase-out must occur alongside protecting, restoring and improving the management of carbon and species rich ecosystems through a rights-based approach, supported by the necessary financial resources.

**This year will mark 30 years since the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted and seven years since the Paris Agreement was agreed at COP21. With a focus on implementation, COP27 is billed as an 'African COP' in reference to its location as well as the expectation that African countries' exposure to some of the most severe impacts of climate change will be front and centre of the discussions.**

**Integrated approaches to tackling the biodiversity and climate crises through a rights-based approach has never been more critical. A strong Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP15 in December is integral to achieving the Paris Agreement objectives and more sustainable, resilient and inclusive development, and recognition of this at COP27 will be key.**

### **1. IMPORTANCE OF NATURE FOR CLIMATE AND PEOPLE**

The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) has made it clear that we are at a tipping point. To have a chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C, global emissions must halve by 2030 and reach 'net-zero' by 2050. Decades of overconsumption means nature is being destroyed faster than it can regenerate. Forests, the ocean and other natural ecosystems are losing their ability to sustain themselves, support human needs and wellbeing, buffer climate shocks and absorb excess carbon emissions. As a result, we are fast approaching irreversible climate tipping points with many communities already in crisis. Reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 will not be enough to limit rapidly rising temperatures or improve people's quality of life. Immediate action must also be taken to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, while ensuring fair access to natural resources for all. Investing in an equitable, carbon-neutral and nature-positive world now will reduce loss and damage from the climate crisis.

Protecting and restoring nature is crucial to addressing the climate, biodiversity, poverty, and health crises and is central to achieving the SDGs. Without these actions, through integrated and coherent policies, the

Paris goals cannot be met. BirdLife welcomes Parties' recognition of nature's importance in achieving 1.5°C at COP26. We need governments to be held accountable for delivery on the nature commitments they made in Glasgow and to deliver on high ambition commitments to keep 1.5°C alive.

**Principles for incorporating nature into climate action:** at no point should tackling the nature and climate crises together amount to greenwashing climate action. Ambition from nature must be additional to, not instead of, phasing out fossil fuels. In addition, practices described as "nature-based solutions" must be equitable and rights-based, particularly where they involve Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and players from the Global South. They must focus on first protecting and then restoring the biodiversity and function of all ecosystems, avoiding monoculture tree plantations, and adhere to strict standards such as the [IUCN Global Standard on Nature-based Solutions](#).

## **2. BIRDLIFE'S KEY ASKS FOR COP27**

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BirdLife International is working to ensure that this recognition of nature translates into negotiated COP decisions, meaningful policy action and long-term investment. Governments must build on the nature language in the Glasgow Climate Pact and the nature commitments in the Glasgow Package at COP26 and fully recognise nature's role as a key climate solution in the negotiated outcomes and key agreements at COP27.

Parties at COP27 can deliver biodiversity and climate integration by:

### **1. Sending a strong political signal in the UNFCCC for ambitious CBD COP15 outcomes**

- During COP27, governments, leaders and non-state actors publicly and vocally champion the importance of landing an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and commit to mobilising the financial resources needed to scale up action for biodiversity.
- Parties send a strong political signal through a COP27 cover decision text (1/CP.27) to ensure that the 1.5°C goal is reached through emissions reduction pathways that incorporate NbS which support biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and human rights.

### **2. Delivering climate and biodiversity integration at COP27**

- The UNFCCC must progress ambitious outcomes for biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and climate integration across the Global Stocktake (GST) and other key work programmes including the Mitigation Work Programme and the Glasgow Sharm-el Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal for Adaptation, recognising the role of nature in enhancing ambition, increasing resilience and reducing the impacts of climate change.
- Parties must ensure the scale of ambition on NbS within the Global Stocktake (GST) is in line with the latest science and developed with full participation and inclusion of IPLCs and respects their rights. Countries (with the full support of the private sector, civil society and IPLCs) should deliver ambitious GST outcomes to accelerate the implementation of NbS to protect, sustainably manage and restore ecosystems, and deliver transformative action in our food systems, ensuring dignified livelihoods and food security.
- Parties must call for a more systems-based approach to science and recommend that IPCC & IPBES conduct a joint report on climate change and biodiversity in AR7.

### **3. Upholding accountability and delivering additional finance for nature in climate action**

- Encourage governments to deliver and enhance their commitments to nature within national climate plans (NDCs, LTS, NAPs) that reflect the ambition of pledges such as the Glasgow Declaration on Forests and Land Use and the latest science, including commitments to halt and reverse loss and land degradation by 2030.
- Commit to providing direct and additional finance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, ensuring recognition of legitimate ownership, self-determination and control over their lands.

- Agree a roadmap (delivery plan) on at least doubling Adaptation Finance by 2025 and for a time-bound, separate tracking on adaptation finance, ensuring inclusion of the role of ecosystems in resilience and adaptation.
- Agree to establish new, additional finance for loss and damage, including for ecosystems and biodiversity resilience and restoration.
- International public finance from donor Parties and international financial institutions should rapidly deliver and demonstrate ambitious action on existing financial pledges, including those made at the 2021 One Planet Summit, the UN General Assembly, CBD COP15.1 and UNFCCC COP26. Donor countries must also ensure their official development assistance is nature-positive or at the very least does no harm to biodiversity and delivers outcomes that support ecosystem integrity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

#### 4. Ocean-Climate dialogue

- Recognise the outcomes of the Ocean & Climate Change Dialogue 2022 in the overarching decision, and support mainstreaming ocean-climate action within the UNFCCC and UN bodies.
- Increase knowledge, capacity and funding for ocean-climate action, including broadening the blue carbon accounting system.
- Ensure that the annual Ocean & Climate Change Dialogue develops concrete, action-oriented goals that will support countries to deliver ocean-climate action such as protecting blue carbon ecosystems and managing fisheries sustainably.
- Recognise and incorporate ocean-based climate action as reflected in the 2022 UN Ocean Conference and Political Declaration.

### 3. OTHER SECTORS

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Alongside efforts to rapidly accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reductions:

- Investors must stop investing in the conversion of intact ecosystems, especially deforestation and forest degradation, and businesses that deplete nature, and start funding high integrity NbS.
- Companies must commit to science-based targets for climate and nature, and to disclosing their impacts and dependencies on nature throughout their value chains.
- Investors, companies, governments and civil society must work together with great urgency to reduce and reverse the socio-economic drivers and pressures causing nature's decline and rising greenhouse gas emissions, while recognising common but differentiated responsibilities.
- Renewable energy providers must recognise their biodiversity impacts and work collaboratively with governments and civil society to adhere to the mitigation hierarchy to ensure a nature-safe energy transition, using a rights-based approach.

### 4. BIODIVERSITY ON THE COP27 AGENDA

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Reflecting the synergies across the nature and climate crises, the COP27 Egyptian Presidency is running a 'Biodiversity Day' along with other initiatives. This builds on the momentum achieved for nature at COP27. The [Egyptian Presidency's Biodiversity Day](#) focuses on these key themes:

- Connecting climate and biodiversity
- Hope: Providing solutions and benefits for biodiversity, climate and people
- Vision: Scaling up urgent action to address the biodiversity and climate crises.

BirdLife will continue to promote the role of nature in climate action at COP27 for the benefit of biodiversity, climate and people around the world. **We call for the outgoing UK and incoming Egyptian Presidency to work closely with the COP15 Chinese Presidency and the host country of COP15 Canada to host a Ministerial**

**roundtable to identify areas of consensus and enhance political leadership and ambition towards agreeing an ambitious and transformational post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at the CBD summit, recognising the linkages between the Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD).**

## **5. FURTHER READING**

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BirdLife Coalition briefings:

- [CAN Ecosystems Working Group detailed COP27 briefing](#)
- [CAN Ecosystems briefing: The role of ecosystems and biodiversity for climate change mitigation ambition and adaptation & resilience, June 2021](#)
- [Nature Positive Strategic Advocacy Asks for COP27](#)
- [Change is in our nature: COP27 Nature Zone + Partners COP27 messaging toolkit](#)
- [Nature-based solutions: What you need to know. A BirdLife International Partnership briefing](#)

Role of the BirdLife Partnership in delivering for nature, climate and people:

- [Nature-based solutions for an equitable, carbon-neutral, nature-positive world: Insights into the BirdLife International Partnership's impact on the ground](#)

On the science:

- [IPBES-IPCC Co-sponsored workshop report on biodiversity and climate change](#)
- [IPCC special report on global warming of 1.5°C](#)