Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature

National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan Netherlands 2025-2030

The Netherlands' contribution to the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

25 March 2025

Disclaimer

The Dutch version of this text is the original and should be considered the official version. If there's any confusion or difference between the English translation and the Dutch text, the Dutch version takes precedence.

Table of Contents

Foreword

Since the dawn of humanity, people have formed an inseparable part of the nature that surrounds them. They have built their livelihoods and communities around nature. They have celebrated rivers, forests and dunes in song, paintings and photographs. They have sailed the seas and oceans, measured and calculated their vastness, and felt their pulse. They have benefited from nature for leisure and inspiration, for their cultures, as a source of raw materials and medicines, and for food and progress. They have discovered the natural world in all its various forms, and experienced its metamorphoses and fickleness.

The Dutch government wants to see fishermen continue to fish, farmers to continue working their fields, and that we can continue to work in, around, and on the coastal areas, while people are still able to enjoy nature in all its beauty and diversity. Mangroves will still provide shelter to fish, and riparian willow forests will still be home to a variety of species. The sea will continue to provide the coastal zones with the tides. And the production of food will continue to be inseparable from nature, as it always has been.

These dynamics and interdependencies with nature are a given in the Netherlands. The government remains committed to delivering timely, well-integrated responses to the emerging challenges, consistently striving for optimal responsiveness and flexibility, guided by the ambitions agreed at the UN biodiversity conferences in Montreal and Colombia. During these conferences, 196 countries agreed to protect nature on at least 30% of the land and 30% of the sea. The Global Biodiversity Framework furthermore outlines 23 global targets for biodiversity restoration to be achieved by 2030, forming a roadmap for the restoration and protection of ecosystems by 2050. This requires countries to manage biodiversity such that ecosystem functions that are also essential to people and society are conserved simultaneously. Benefits from the use of genetic resources must be shared fairly and money must be available to continue to invest in biodiversity. Not unimportantly, the 196 signatories must strive to achieve these 23 targets as one, and so ensure a level playing field as much as possible.

This plan reveals how the Netherlands is contributing to the agreements. It is not intended as a grand design, but aims to reinforce projects that are successfully underway, and divert extra efforts to those places where they are needed most. It brings together hundreds of collaborative projects and the most promising programmes around biodiversity or sustainable innovations.

Some programmes are co-financed by business and investors, many deploy knowledge and new technologies, and all have as their starting point the current needs of nature. The projects involve combating microplastics in the sea, increasing the use of natural crop protection and agri-environment and climate measures (AECM), amongst other things.

In keeping with the 23 global targets, it involves a broad and cohesive approach. For example, the report also describes programmes to provide young children and adolescents with physical and sensory nature experiences, because these experiences stimulate their appetite for entrepreneurship and adventure. They arouse wonder and a desire to understand nature in all its unfathomable complexity. While at play, children do not only learn to trust nature, they are also inspired to become tomorrow's entrepreneurs and researchers. Subsequent generations also deserve this opportunity to become nature savvy, so that they can find their own answers to the hugely complex questions that nature continues to raise.

To allow the people and the nature of the Netherlands to continue to develop, the country regularly initiates partnerships between researchers, pioneers, inventors, and civil servants from all levels of government. Young people are actively invited to participate, as are local entrepreneurs, communities and other stakeholders. It is these local people who are engaged with nature on a daily basis who often come up with the most surprising and useful solutions, as they are generally the first to notice changes in the state of nature.

This approach is in keeping with a long Dutch tradition of down-to-earthness and inventiveness. The Netherlands has a long history of developing tried and tested ways to meet challenges together. Whether it concerns spatial planning or agriculture, ecological knowledge and homegrown know-how have always gone hand in hand.

The current plan is aligned as far as possible with plans developed under European laws and regulations, such as the Nature Restoration Regulation, the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Water Framework Directive, the Invasive Alien Species Regulation and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius are jointly implementing the Nature and Environment Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands until 2030. This is also the deadline by which the Netherlands must have reduced its

greenhouse gas emissions by 60% (compared to 1990), and halved nitrogen deposition in nitrogen-sensitive nature reserves compared to 2019. Aligning with these programmes and establishing as few additional rules as possible enables the Netherlands to ensure its strategy remains agile and adaptable.

Where possible, businesses will be given room and instruments to adapt to the changes in nature. The goal is for people and nature to be able to strengthen each other. After all, it is not only nature that will thrive from this interaction; it also forms the foundation of our prosperity, safety and security, and wellbeing. Until well beyond 2030.

Finally, I owe a debt of thanks to the agricultural businesses, various financial and knowledge institutions, interest groups and regional authorities. They also fulfilled a key contributory role in formulating the plan, in conformity with what was agreed. The UN youth representatives of the Dutch National Youth Council even participated in the negotiations in Montreal. All these parties have enriched this plan with their valuable insights. It is my wish to continue this cooperation in the future.

Jean Rummenie
State Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature

Introduction

People's wellbeing and the economy benefit from biodiversity. These benefits include healthy soils, clean water, clean air, pollinators for food crops, and natural resistance to pests and diseases. Biodiversity also plays an important role in the availability of medicines, building materials and industrial raw materials. The valuable and unique character of the Dutch landscape also benefits from biodiversity, ensuring an environment that is pleasant to live, work and recreate in.

The Netherlands wants to preserve all these essential functions. This requires hard work, and sometimes active biodiversity restoration, both in the Netherlands, together with stakeholders, and globally, in cooperation with other countries. The world and the Netherlands face major biodiversity challenges, but there also opportunities to preserve and restore our biodiversity, for example through agri-environment and climate measures.

Global Biodiversity Framework

In December 2022, 196 countries came together to deal with the global biodiversity challenges at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP-15) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Montreal. The agreements they reached have been incorporated into the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) which has been endorsed by the Netherlands.[1]

Under the GBF, the Parties agreed on 23 targets for 2030 that contribute to achieving biodiversity restoration by 2050.[2] The GBF targets cover a broad spectrum and show that biodiversity restoration is not just about nature conservation. As the 196 countries simultaneously work towards these 23 targets, a level playing field is increasingly emerging.

In Montreal, the Parties also agreed that each Party would prepare a National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP, hereafter 'the biodiversity plan'). The Parties have agreed to align these biodiversity plans with the GBF targets and to include how their plans will contribute to the global targets. Thus, the international agreements are also implemented at the national level. The sum of these national biodiversity plans is intended to ensure that the international ambitions are achieved. In the GBF, the Parties also agreed to prepare their biodiversity plans in collaboration with various government agencies, businesses and civil society organisations. Finally, the Parties agreed to submit national reports in 2026 and 2029, based, amongst other things, on the agreed indicators,[3] showing the extent to which the targets have been met, and thus providing an indication of global progress.

The Dutch plan

This is the biodiversity plan of the European and Caribbean Netherlands. The biodiversity plan describes how the European and Caribbean Netherlands contribute to the 23 global targets agreed in Montreal. Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten have each drawn up their own biodiversity plan with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature.

In line with the agreements in the GBF, businesses, financial and knowledge institutions, interest groups, and youth organisations were involved in the development of the biodiversity plan. These businesses and organisations wrote a contribution to each GBF target. These contributions are included in Annex 1.I. Regional authorities were also involved in preparing the plan.

[1] Convention on Biological Diversity (2022) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
[2] Convention on Biological Diversity (n.d.) 2030 Targets (with Guidance Notes).
[3] UN-WCMC (n.d.) Indicators for the Kunming – Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Guide for readers

1

Part 1 describes how the central government in the European Netherlands contributes to the 23 GBF targets through current policies. Annex 1.I also includes a section on non-state actors per target.

2

Part 2 describes how the Caribbean Netherlands contributes to the 23 GBF targets.

© Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Ivo Vrancken

PART 1

Biodiversity Plan European Netherlands

Executive summary

People's wellbeing and the economy benefit from biodiversity. For example, biodiversity contributes to basic needs such as air, water and food. Additionally, pollinators are needed for food crops, and biodiversity strengthens natural resistance to diseases and pests.[4]

To address worldwide biodiversity challenges, 196 countries adopted the Global Diversity Framework (GBF) with 23 global targets for 2030 during the 15th Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal.[5] These targets focus on the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The GBF targets cover many topics and reveal that biodiversity restoration is about more than only nature conservation. This biodiversity plan describes how the Netherlands contributes to achieving the 23 global targets.

In addition to the national government, various regional authorities, businesses, financial and knowledge institutions, interest groups, and youth organisations were also involved in the development of this plan. These businesses and organisations wrote a contribution to each GBF target (Annex 1.I).

Dutch contribution to the 23 targets

Restoration and conservation of nature areas and species

To ensure sustainable economic development, it is important to prevent the degradation of nature, and restore it where necessary. The Netherlands is working to restore its natural areas and species in various ways. Amongst other things, by implementing European laws and regulations, such as the Nature Restoration Regulation, the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Water Framework Directive, the Invasive Alien Species Regulation and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. At the national level, important pillars of the nature restoration policy are the Nature Programme, the Basic Quality of Nature , agri-environment and climate measures (AECM), the Forest Strategy, the Programmatic Approach to Great Waters and the North Sea Programme.

The National Restoration Plan, which must be drawn up by 1 September 2027 under the European Nature Restoration Regulation, will provide more concrete plans for nature restoration. To be able to respond to the actual state of nature, nature monitoring activities will be strengthened and intensified under the Nature Restoration Regulation. The National Restoration Plan serves as the primary mechanism for implementing GBF targets 1 to 12.

Figure 1. According to research by Statistics Netherlands and the Dutch Mammal Society, we are seeing a sharp increase in the number of otters in the Netherlands following their reintroduction in the 1980s. © Economic Affairs

4 PBL (n.d.) Ecosysteemdiensten.
5 Convention on Biological Diversity (2022) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

With the implementation of existing policies, such as the expansion of the National Ecological Network (NEN), approximately 26% of Dutch land and inland waters will be protected by 2030. This percentage rises to over 27% if nature areas outside the Natura 2000 and National Ecological Network (NEN) zones are included. Protected marine areas have been designated under the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, as a result of which around 30% of the Dutch marine surface area will have protected status by 2030. The aim is to strengthen local biodiversity, with robust natural areas on land and water, and a solid basic quality of nature for a healthy living environment and thriving agriculture.

We are working together with relevant parties to integrate the nature objectives in the energy transition, housing construction, defence, mobility, and solutions to water and climate issues. This is important to keep the Netherlands healthy, safe and liveable. The government is developing its spatial plans as part of the National Spatial Strategy and through the NOVEX programme.

The Netherlands is committed to the conservation and recovery of plant and animal species through the establishment of Red Lists, the protection of species' habitats, taking measures for endangered species, and encouraging sustainable use of and trade in wild species. The government is particularly alert to the decline of bee, butterfly and hoverfly populations because of their crucial role for food security, the economy and biodiversity. The NL Pollinator Strategy aims to effectively counter the decline of pollinators in the Netherlands. In addition, measures to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive alien species are underway.

In a densely populated country like the Netherlands, conflicts between humans and wildlife may also arise. Examples include the increasing numbers of incidents involving wolves, humans and livestock. The government is now working with the provinces to develop a National Wolf Strategy to deal with this issue.

Nature restoration can be further supported by reducing pressure actors such as water depletion, habitat fragmentation and excessive nitrogen deposition. Reducing the use of nutrients, plant protection products, chemicals (such as PFAS), marine litter and plastic pollution (including microplastics) is also being addressed. The government wants to achieve these goals wherever possible while minimising the regulatory burden.

The government is acting to ensure that the combined commitment of the provinces, municipalities and other land managers contributes to achieving national, EU and international goals. It is also important to ensure international coordination to come to an effective ecosystem approach, particularly for the marine ecosystem.

Ecosystem services

Biodiversity contributes to the preservation of ecosystem services that are essential for both human wellbeing and the economy. These services include healthy soils, clean water, clean air, pollinators for food crops, and natural resistance to pests and diseases. Biodiversity also plays an important role in the availability of medicines, building materials and industrial raw materials, and contributes to recreation, tourism and a more attractive living environment (Figure 2). The Netherlands supports the preservation of these ecosystem services through policies aimed at nature restoration and at the sustainable use of natural resources. Knowledge development in the areas of natural capital and ecosystem services also contributes to this.

Figure 2. Examples of production, regulatory and cultural ecosystem services in the Netherlands. Source: PBL, WUR & CICES (2014).

Figure 3. Peatlands, such as in the Weerribben-Wieden National Park, are an important nature-based solution to climate change.
© Rob Poelenjee

Biodiversity contributes to a healthy living environment, recreational opportunities and climate mitigation in urban areas in particular. In addition to building more homes, we are also stiving to preserve these ecosystem services, for example by developing green spaces in and around cities, constructing heat-resistant buildings, and designing the urban environment to meet the challenges of climate change. Other initiatives, such as the Nature Restoration Regulation, the Healthy Living Environment Programme, and the Benchmark for Green Climate Adaptive Built Environment, also help to strengthen biodiversity and wellbeing in urban contexts.

On top of this, biodiversity helps mitigate the causes of climate change. The government is therefore implementing other measures such as afforestation, climate buffers, more room for the rivers, and the promotion of heat-resistant building construction. Efforts are also being made to reduce emissions and stimulate carbon capture, for example by rewetting peatlands, sustainable management of agricultural soils, implementing the Forest Strategy, and creating new wetlands. The Climate Plan 2025-2035 involves further preparations for achieving the long-term climate goals under the Climate Act.

Sustainable use of nature

Biodiversity challenges are inseparable from the challenges for the agriculture sector. In fact, integrating nature and agriculture creates more room for both. This government supports agricultural and horticultural businesses in their efforts to further develop and innovate their operations, focusing on reducing emissions to achieve the goals for climate, nature, water (including the Water Framework Directive), nitrogen, odour nuisance and particulates. We reward agricultural and horticultural businesses for the valuable services they provide to society, for example in the field of *agri-environment and climate measures* and biodiversity. The Netherlands primary agricultural commitments are enshrined in the Common Agricultural Policy (National Strategic Plan) and the accompanying agri-environment and climate measures.

Fisheries must be able to responsibly harvest sufficient and high-quality food in harmony with an ecological system of healthy waters, seas and oceans. We are committed to supporting innovations in fisheries, with a focus on sustainability and strengthening nature. Sustainable fisheries are also part of the European Common Fisheries Policy. The Vision on Food from the sea and large freshwater areas provides frameworks for sustainable and innovative fisheries and aquaculture to be able to harvest food from the sea within the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. Finally, the Fisheries Innovation Network (VIN) has been established to pool innovative strengths.

There are several guidelines for timber production in the Netherlands. Dutch government policy aims to achieve sustainable forest management with the right balance between economic interests and biodiversity. Another goal of the current government is to strengthen carbon sequestration in forests, including by implementing the Forest Strategy.

In addition to agriculture, fisheries and forestry, regulations also apply to hunting, with hunting being currently limited to five species during the hunting season, and safeguards in place to ensure sustainable populations. The current system and its potential further development are currently being reviewed in consultation with the provinces and other stakeholders, including hunters, farmers, land

managers and animal welfare organisations. The government is a proponent of a balanced approach that serves both ecological and societal interests.

In addition, the Netherlands makes use of genetic material from organisms. This is done within the framework of the Nagoya Protocol, which ensures the fair sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources. The European ABS Regulation governs compliance with this protocol, and the Netherlands has implemented the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act and the policy document 'Sources of Existence'. The regulations for biotechnology, including for genetically modified organisms, ensure that human, animal and environmental safety is safeguarded. The Netherlands has fully implemented the Cartagena Protocol in collaboration with the EU.

Implementation and mainstreaming

The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe, which puts a lot of pressure on the available space. Challenges such as housing construction, the energy transition, mobility, agriculture, water management, nature conservation, the economy and defence all require a carefully considered and integrated approach. The current government integrates nature into our living and working environments wherever possible. This is a complicated puzzle, but it offers opportunities to distribute the objectives as fairly as possible between the various areas and sectors. This creates room for social and economic activities. By working together within the national government and with other public authorities, we are connecting the nature restoration objectives to the challenges of the energy transition, housing construction, accessibility, water and climate issues, and the earning potential of farmers. We encourage the active involvement of all relevant sectors, including private funding, for example through the Agenda Nature Inclusive.

Public financial flows and incentives have both positive and negative effects on biodiversity. Some subsidies encourage the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, while other financial flows and incentives can (unintentionally) harm it. The government is aware that discarding or redirecting certain financial flows and incentives can reduce ecological pressures, but it must explicitly consider whether the biodiversity benefits outweigh the potential social or economic disadvantages for society.

Businesses can also influence biodiversity both positively and negatively. The government will support the private sector as much as possible in nature-inclusive initiatives through policy instruments and partnerships. It is important that there is room for the economy.
The government therefore allows room for businesses to flourish and makes adjustments where necessary.
A National Biodiversity Finance Plan is being drafted in accordance with the CBD agreements with the aim of achieving a greater understanding of, and sufficient funding for, biodiversity.

Figure 4. Zeeland landscapes & countryside stewardship. Farmers contribute to restoring and strengthening biodiversity by combining agriculture and nature. © Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Change – Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Rural Area Service. Photo by Phil Nijhuis.

Innovation is an indispensable instrument for achieving societal goals. For example, innovative green-blue networks contribute to sustainable soil and water management, which are crucial elements of climate robustness, animal and plant health, and food security. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature stimulates innovation by strengthening existing structures and policies in cooperation with young entrepreneurs and other innovative parties.

Besides its commitment to innovation policy, the government is also actively investing in research and development. The Netherlands stimulates the development of general knowledge of biodiversity, for example through various policy instruments, research funding through the Dutch Research Council (NWO), Knowledge and Innovation Agendas (KIAs) and applied research through the TO2 system. The Netherlands also works on making natural and agricultural areas more accessible to all, for example through the Ministry of Education, Culture & Science's Climate & Energy Programme.

Consumers who wish to make sustainable choices must have the opportunity to do so. The government does not see a major role for itself in this regard, and the same applies to reducing our footprint. The previous goal of halving the Dutch ecological footprint by 2050 is not endorsed by the current government. However, many activities in existing policy areas contribute to reducing the footprint, such as policies for agriculture, food, climate and a circular economy.

Table 1. Dutch contribution to the 23 GBF targets (not exhaustive)

Dutch contribution		GBF targets
Amongst others: • Water Framework Directive • Birds and Habitats Directives • Marine Strategy Framework Directive • Nature Restoration Regulation • Invasive Alien Species Regulation • Agri-environment and climate measures (AECM) • Programmatic Approach to Great Waters • National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment • Nature Programme • Basic Quality of Nature • National Environmental Programme • National Climate Adaptation Strategy	→	Restoration of natural areas and species (GBF targets 1-8)
Amongst others: • Hunting policy and wildlife management • Common Agricultural Policy - National Strategic Plan • Common Fisheries Policy • Vision on Food from the sea and large freshwater areas • National Forest Strategy • Interdepartmental programmatic approach to urban green spaces • Healthy Living Environment Programme • Nagoya Protoco	→	Sustainable use of nature (GBF targets 9- 13)
Amongst others: • Agenda Nature Inclusive • Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) • National Circular Economy Programme • Cartagena Protocol • Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) • Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) • Climate & Energy Programme (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)	→	Implementation and mainstreaming (GBF targets 14-23)

The road to 2030

Current policies are already helping to restore biodiversity. For example, there have been positive developments in some species populations in recent years.[6] The Dutch Living Planet Index has increased by 13% since the 1990s, due to a significant average increase in freshwater and wetland species.[7] However, challenges remain in various areas when it comes to improving biodiversity. This is evident, for example, from the report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)[8], the Interministerial Policy Review (IBO) Biodiversity,[9] the OSPAR Quality Status Report[10] on the environmental and ecological state of the North Sea (amongst other things), and a reflection document written by the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) on the significance of the GBF for Dutch policy.[11]

Therefore, further biodiversity efforts will be made in the coming years where necessary. This will be achieved, amongst other things, by continuing to implement the policies already in place. In addition, the National Restoration Plan (part of the Nature Restoration Regulation), the Integrated Agriculture and Nature Programme,[12] and the efforts towards sustainable fisheries and the integration of offshore wind farms will also contribute. This government also encourages innovations that can help make the agriculture sector more sustainable and strengthen nature. When working on biodiversity, the various interests within society and the other societal challenges, such as agriculture, defence and housing construction, will be taken into account. Only by working together can we restore biodiversity, which is essential for the health, wellbeing and prosperity of future generations.

---

6 Trends in species are closely monitored through the Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring. For further information, see: Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring | The NEM (Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring) continuously monitors the state of nature in the Netherlands.

7 Environmental Data Compendium (2024) CLO Indicator 156910 Living Planet Index Netherlands 1990-2023.

8 IPBES (2019) Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

9 Government of the Netherlands (2023) Snel aan de slag! (The Time to Act is Now!) Interministerial Policy Review (IBO) Biodiversity.

10 OSPAR (2023) Quality Status Report.

11 PBL (2024) De betekenis van het VN 'Kunming-Montreal Raamwerk voor biodiversiteit' voor het Nederlandse beleid (The significance of the UN 'Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework' for Dutch national policy.

12 Parliamentary Paper 36600-XIV, no. 66. (29 November 2024) Ruimte voor Landbouw en Natuur (Land for Agriculture and Nature).

GBF targets

Target 1.
Plan and Manage all Areas To Reduce Biodiversity Loss

Figure 5: Living wall in Leidschendam © Tineke Dijkstra

This target focuses on the impact that land and marine spatial planning have on biodiversity. The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe, which puts a lot of pressure on the available space. Challenges such as housing construction, the energy transition, mobility, agriculture, water management, nature conservation, the economy and defence all require a carefully considered and integrated approach. To keep the Netherlands healthy, safe and liveable, it is essential to approach these challenges as an integrated whole. We are working together to integrate the nature objectives in the energy transition, housing construction, defence, mobility, and water and climate issues.

The government takes on the responsibility for spatial planning through the development and implementation of the National Spatial Strategy. As spatial planning issues differ from one area to another, an area-based approach that integrates local challenges and opportunities is crucial. To this end, the national government is cooperating with the provinces and regions as part of the NOVEX programme to integrate and achieve national and local spatial planning objectives.

The National Spatial Strategy and the National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment

The new National Spatial Strategy will provide a long-term vision of spatial planning in the Netherlands. A preliminary draft of the National Spatial Strategy was published in 2024. The preliminary draft is now being developed into a definitive National Spatial Strategy. Once adopted, the National Spatial Strategy will replace the National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment (NOVI) from 2020 as an overarching framework for national policy on the living environment. The National Spatial Strategy will also involve structural choices, based amongst other things on the agreements in the spatial planning proposals and national programmes with a spatial planning component.

The Strategy outlines the framework for biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and the integration of biodiversity in spatial planning. It also describes the three key pillars of Dutch spatial planning: 1) towards a balance between agriculture and nature throughout the Netherlands; 2) towards a climate-neutral and circular society; and 3) towards strong regions, cities and villages in the Netherlands.

These pillars are strongly interconnected. The three pillars define how a future-proof balance between the various spatial planning developments, including nature development, can be achieved. The three key pillars therefore contribute to strengthening biodiversity.
The new National Spatial Strategy, in terms of content, elaborates on the NOVI. In the NOVI, the government provides a long-term vision for the future and for the development of the living environment in the Netherlands. Improving nature and biodiversity is one of the 21 national interests central to this Strategy. The protection of biodiversity is also connected to other interests, such as ensuring flood protection and climate resilience and developing a sustainable food sector and other agricultural production.

NOVEX programme

The NOVEX programme describes the necessary acceleration, strengthening and renewal of spatial planning policy in two tracks. It involves cooperating with the provinces to reach twelve spatial plans with agreements for meeting the spatial challenges in which the tasks and goals in the national programmes are linked to the provincial tasks to maintain or strengthen spatial quality. The NOVEX programme also involves an area-based approach in sixteen NOVEX areas: where the objectives transcend the provincial boundaries, multiple solutions are needed and/or the active involvement of the national government is required in spatial planning. Development perspectives are being drawn up for three NOVEX areas because of the complexity of the water, climate and nature objectives there: the Groene Hart ('Green Heart') region, the Peel, and the Arnhem-Nijmegen FoodValley. The elaboration of these development perspectives contributes to an area-based and integrated approach to these objectives, which will have a positive effect on biodiversity in these areas.

Figure 6. Sustainable landscape management at the Van Ghent Barracks in Rotterdam © National government, photo by Herman Zonderland Photography Delft

Beautiful Netherlands programme

The Beautiful Netherlands programme is committed to ensuring that spatial planning in the Netherlands results in an attractive and high-quality living environment. The programme provides a boost to spatial quality in the broad sense: experience value (attractive), utility value (functional) and future value (robust and sustainable). The Beautiful Netherlands programme provides and develops perspectives, both for the future and for immediate action, which harness the strength of the spatial design. These perspectives for action can be used to find high-quality solutions to the societal challenges, within the predefined enabling conditions, and provide input for the national programmes, provinces and regions, as well as the National Spatial Strategy. This will enable the national programmes focusing on nature, nitrogen emissions, water quality, biodiversity, employment and housing to achieve their goals.
At the same time, it will allow the available space in the Netherlands to be used as effectively and attractively as possible. The programme will seek coherent solutions to provide more insight into nature and biodiversity-inclusive solutions. The Beautiful Netherlands programme comprises three perspectives that follow the format of the National Spatial Strategy. Perspective A (for agriculture and nature) forms the basis for the development of spatial design concepts and inspiring guidance documents that support the development of the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features, the sustainable design of buffer zones, and the development of a bio-based supply chain in which the agriculture sector produces sustainable products for the construction sector.

North Sea Programme

The North Sea Programme 2022-2027 stems from the Environment and Planning Act and the North Sea Agreement (see target 10) and implements the Marine Spatial Planning Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, target 2) by providing frameworks for the use of space in the North Sea, including the designation of offshore wind areas and protected areas under the MSFD (MSFD sites). The key objective of the North Sea Programme 2022-2027 is the sustainable and safe use of the North Sea in a way that contributes to the social, economic and ecological goals of the Netherlands. This involves achieving an equilibrium between the energy transition, the food transition and the nature transition at sea. The spatial development must be efficient, safe and meet the conditions of a healthy ecosystem, whereby a good environmental status as described in the MSFD is an enabling condition.

Since 2015, the policy calls for the nature-based design and construction of new wind farms. Research also increases our understanding of the positive and negative impacts of wind farms on habitats and birds. The Framework for Assessing Ecological and Cumulative Effects (*Kader Ecologie en Cumulatie*, KEC) is used to assess the various, potentially cumulative impacts of wind farm construction and operation. This instrument provides an indication of the acceptable ecological footprint of offshore wind energy. Nature-based design and construction of new wind farms offer opportunities to strengthen naturally occurring species populations and habitats in the North Sea. The same applies to nature restoration projects in existing wind farms. This policy targets species and habitat types described in the EU Habitats Directive that do not have favourable conservation status in the Netherlands, national Red List species, and species or habitats on the OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats for which recommendations have been adopted.

In 2024, the Dutch government joined forces with various stakeholders such as businesses, nature and environmental organisations, and science and knowledge institutions to establish a Nature Regeneration North Sea programme. The aim of this programme is to facilitate sustainable use of the sea by jointly enhancing its natural capital, and so create room for both natural processes and forms of sustainable use. A budget of €150 million is available for this purpose.

Accounting for Water and Soil

The Netherlands is a densely populated country. Using the scarce space effectively necessitates making choices. To ensure a future-proof Netherlands with a high quality of life, we need to account for water and soil. The Water and Soil Guiding Policy[13] describes opportunities to include the water and soil system early in the planning process.

Besides a number of mandatory requirements to meet European targets (such as the Water Framework Directive, see target 7), 33 structuring choices have been identified that can set out a course for the coming decades. Water and soil systems cover everything from the physical state and dynamism of the water and soil to its chemical and biological quality. These structuring choices for soil and water can thus also contribute positively to nature conservation and improvement. One example is the ecological status of water quality, which is part of the WFD objectives. Here, increasing the surface water levels can make an important contribution to the conservation and improvement of plant and animal habitats, and thus contribute to the national Natura 2000 targets. In addition to improving the quality and use of soil and water, structuring choice 12 of the WBS also specifically focuses on improving biodiversity on dykes and creating room for natural floodplains. This cleverly combines the goals for nature and flood safety.

Defence areas

Due to the need to strengthen Defence operations in response to current geopolitical developments, the Ministry of Defence is looking for additional space. The Defence objectives are inseparable from the nature challenge. In fact, integrating Ministry of Defence areas and nature creates more room for both. This involves a focus on improving and enhancing natural values in and around Defence areas. For example, shepherded sheep flocks are used to create biodiverse and ecologically valuable heathland in areas where an open landscape is required for military purposes. Due to their size and the type of use, these areas play an important role in conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the Netherlands.

The Ministry of Defence stresses the importance of applying nature-enhancing and climate-adaptive measures as part of both site management and the development, renovation and revitalisation of real estate. These measures contribute directly to strengthening the country's operational preparedness required to implement Core Task 1.

[13] Government of the Netherlands (2022) Kabinet maakt water en bodem sturend sturen bij ruimtelijke keuzes (Government prioritises water and soil policy in relation to spatial planning choices); Parliamentary Paper 27625, no. 688.
(22 October 2024) Toezegging gedaan tijdens het commissiedebat Water van 8 oktober 2024 over de visie van het Kabinet op water en bodem (Commitment made during Water committee debate of 8 October 2024 concerning the Government's vision regarding water and soil).

The Ministry of Defence's ambitions include a focus on circular construction, the energy transition, and restoring green infrastructure during the construction and use of its accommodations. This includes investing in strengthening the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features in Ministry of Defence areas to further integrate the training areas and the barracks.

National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy

Changes in biodiversity, land use and climate can increase the risk of zoonoses: infectious diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans. The Ministries of Health, Welfare and Sport and Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature have long been cooperating on a zoonoses strategy, and since July 2022 as part of the National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy. The aim of this action plan is to reduce the risks of the emergence and spread of zoonoses and to ensure preparedness in case of an outbreak.

Climate change and habitat and biodiversity loss increase the zoonotic risk. The action plan therefore also describes measures aimed at preventing biodiversity loss in line with the Global Biodiversity Framework. More information about the action plan can be found under targets 5, 8 and 12.

Other nature programmes

A number of other Dutch and European policies also contribute to biodiversity conservation in the Netherlands, including (the relevant policy is described under other targets):

- Nitrogen Reduction and Nature Improvement Programme
- Birds and Habitats Directives
- Water Framework Directive
- Programmatic Approach to Great Waters
- Green Blue Network of Landscape Features
- Nature conservation analyses
- Transition zones
- Nature Programme
- Basic Quality of Nature
- Forest Strategy
- National Ecological Network
- Wadden Sea Implementation Programme
- Nature Restoration Regulation

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[14]

Energy domain

Several relevant lines of action have been drawn up for this domain:

- Specific focus on collating existing or commissioning new research into measures to strengthen nature.
- Determine and commission the most effective measures to mitigate biodiversity loss caused by the construction of infrastructure such as transformers, energy hubs and other necessary structures.
- Learning across all domains and sharing and connecting knowledge.

These actions largely focus on preventing biodiversity loss in energy projects. At the same time, the domain is aware that energy projects can also be combined with the improvement and restoration of biodiversity, and so also contribute to target 2.

[14] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 2.
Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems

Figure 7. Large sand flat on Ameland in the Wadden Sea © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Martijn Harleman

To ensure sustainable economic development, it is important to prevent the degradation of nature, and restore it where necessary. This requires measures to reduce negative impacts on nature, such as water depletion, habitat fragmentation and excessive nitrogen deposition. We are striving to achieve these goals wherever possible while minimising the regulatory burden.

The Netherlands is also working on nature restoration by implementing European and international agreements, including the Nature Restoration Regulation, the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The National Restoration Plan, which in accordance with the Nature Restoration Regulation must be drawn up before 1 September 2027, will provide more concrete plans for this nature restoration and effectively implements Global Biodiversity Framework targets 1 to 12. To be able to respond to the actual state of nature, nature monitoring activities will be strengthened and intensified, also in the context of the Nature Restoration Regulation.

De Vogel- en Habitatrichtlijn

The EU's Birds and Habitats Directives (BHD) are instruments for protecting and restoring European nature. In accordance with the BHD, the Netherlands has established a network of protected areas (Natura 2000), where nature restoration measures are taken based on management plans. EU countries contribute to the overview of the state of biodiversity in Europe with six-yearly BHD reports.

Achieving the goals of the BHD will involve robust nature restoration measures and addressing multiple threats to nature where necessary. Where nature is doing well, we appreciate it, where its condition is stable, we maintain it, and where it is in decline we will work to restore it. Nature conservation analyses play an important role in identifying, by area, where nature is doing well and where challenges remain.

Figure 8. Nutrient-rich meadows and watercourses in the countryside attract Egrets. © Rob Poelenjee

The development of the National Ecological Network (NEN, see target 3) by the provinces also contributes to achieving the goals of the BHD. Where restoration measures are required to achieve these goals, they will be considered in the light of the various societal challenges the Netherlands faces. The government is committed to implementing measures that are feasible and with an eye for other cross-border European interests.

Nature restoration involves both developing more nature in nature areas and creating habitat outside these areas through countryside stewardship (see target 10). For example, this is achieved by combining agricultural use with a nature objective for certain farmland species and habitat types. The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features (see target 12) is an example of how farm management practices can support nature restoration.

To date, monitoring for the BHD has mainly focused on assessing the national conservation status of species and habitats. Currently, the Improvement programme for Birds and Habitats Directive monitoring (Verbeterprogramma VHR natuurmonitoring) is working to expand the monitoring system to provide better insight into target achievement at the area level. The aim of the Improvement Programme is to shape the monitoring system in such a way that it provides insight into the impact of nature restoration measures on the recovery of natural systems in and around nature areas.

Nitrogen policy

The government is considering how to approach the percentages of nitrogen-sensitive nature in Natura 2000 sites laid down in current legislation. In keeping with the coalition programme, the government continues to work on reducing nitrogen emissions, but in a different way.Part of the new direction set outby the government is that the nitrogen policy will be based on emissions rather than deposition. The government will ensure further structural reduction of nitrogen emissions.

The Nitrogen Reduction and Nature Improvement Programme (PSN) is intended to fulfil the obligation under the Environment and Planning Act to establish a programme for improving nature and reducing nitrogen deposition. This programme focuses on achieving the required conditions to meet the conservation objectives of nitrogen-sensitive habitats and habitat types for each nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 site. This includes taking both source measures (addressing nitrogen emissions at the source) and nature restoration measures. The Nature Implementation Programme describes the nature restoration measures and is part of the PSN. Both types of measures are part of the nature conservation analyses. These analyses describe how protected nature is doing in a specific area, what the expected effects of the adopted measures are, and where additional measures are needed to restore the health of the nature in that area. The nature conservation analyses are explained below.

Nature conservation analyses and areas around sensitive Natura 2000 sites

Carrying out nature conservation analyses is required under the Nitrogen Reduction and Nature Improvement Act. The provinces, Rijkswaterstaat and the Ministry of Defence, acting as lead authorities, delivered the first nature conservation analyses of nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites in April 2023. The analyses examine whether the currently established measures can achieve the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites, whether they prevent deterioration of nature, or whether deterioration has already been identified. Based on the results of the nature conservation analyses, it can be determined whether additional measures are needed to achieve the conservation objectives. If the nature conservation analysis shows that the target for the site in question will not be achieved, it must be made clear what additional measures are necessary and what measures are already being taken to prevent and halt this deterioration. This does not only concern measures to ensure the mere survival of nature, but also measures for the recovery of natural systems that address the source of the threat to the area. These government measures must be feasible and in line with other cross-border European interests.

Areas around sensitive Natura 2000 sites are important for implementing measures to recover natural systems and, amongst other things, to reduce nitrogen impacts in sensitive Natura 2000 sites. Local ecological processes and pressure factors affecting nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites are taken into account when determining the location and extent of areas around sensitive Natura 2000 sites, the buffer zones, and the required restoration and nitrogen-reducing measures. The Ecological Authority decides whether a Landscape Ecological System Analysis (LESA) of the sensitive Natura 2000 site is required. This analysis determines the local ecological processes, pressure factors and their scope based on the pooled knowledge of various disciplines. The LESA is an important part of the nature conservation analysis, based on which additional restoration measures are implemented.

At the end of 2024, agreements were made with provinces and relevant ministries within the Intergovernmental Consultation on Nature on the continuation of the nature conservation analyses. It was agreed that these analyses will be expanded to include all pressure factors and will focus on both nitrogen-sensitive and non-nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites. To implement the subsequent cycles of nature conservation analyses, the guideline for preparing these analyses will be supplemented, updated and improved. The lead authorities can prepare subsequent versions of the nature conservation analyses using the new guideline.

Supply chain cooperation for Natura 2000 milk

I want fair dairy (*Ik wil eerlijke zuivel*) aims to find a sustainable balance between dairy farmers and nature in and around Natura 2000 sites, combined with a financially sound revenue model for sustainable farming. Thanks to cooperation throughout the supply chain, farmers get fair prices for their milk while at the same time contributing to the surrounding nature through sustainability projects. Various stakeholders are involved, including dairy farmers, provinces, and customers (retailers and consumers), with *Ik wil eerlijke zuivel* functioning both as supply chain manager and producer.

Nature Programme

With the Nature Programme, the national and provincial governments are working together to restore natural systems in and around nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites and to conserve protected nitrogen-sensitive nature outside these sites. The programme aims to enhance the conservation status of protected species and habitats. The measures also contribute to achieving goals of the Water Framework Directive (see target 7).

The national government has agreed to invest €2.8 billion in nature restoration through the Nature Programme over the period 2021-2030.[15] The focus of the investments is the implementation of high-priority measures in and around nitrogen-sensitive nature, with the highest priority given to halting or preventing deterioration. We are also improving the knowledge on nature restoration, monitoring, learning collaborations and supporting programmes. In addition, the government plans to occasionally earmark €500 million from 2026 onwards to prevent the deterioration of nature in and around Natura 2000 sites through various nature restoration measures.

An amount of about €415 million per year was previously agreed in the 2013 Nature Pact (85% contributed by the national government, 15% by the provinces), mainly for implementing the BHD and the Water Framework Directive. Some provinces are currently deploying additional budgets from their own funds. The Nature Programme provides an additional financial boost to this.

[15] Government of the Netherlands (2024) Rijk en provincies aan de slag met maatregelen om de natuur te verbeteren (Central government and provinces implement nature-improvement measures).

Integration in the working and living environment

The letter to the House of Representatives on the nature policy agenda states that the government is committed, in cooperation with other public authorities and departments, to combining the nature restoration objectives with other objectives. This is intended to create synergy and avoid delays and extra costs due to rules and procedures.
The Basic Quality of Nature is intended to facilitate the integration of nature objectives in residential, working and living environments. This is not achieved by imposing spatial claims for nature or other additional demands, but rather by combining the primary functional use of an area with its use by common species (e.g. house sparrow, hedgehog, bumblebee, daisy). This leads to opportunities for multifunctional use. Examples are alternative management of green spaces, making use of infrastructure verges, deploying measures taken for climate adaptation, and taking biodiversity into account in an early stage of spatial planning. This commitment also contributes to achieving the objectives of the Nature Restoration Regulation in regard to pollinators, grassland butterflies, farmland birds and the urban ecosystem, amongst other things.

Forest Strategy

Revitalisation (restoring degraded forests) is one of the two overarching objectives of the Dutch Forest Strategy. To achieve this, forest management will have to focus on biodiversity, climate adaptation and climate mitigation in the coming decades. To this end, we are working to reduce our nitrogen depositions, restore our water system, rejuvenate and diversify our forests and improve forest connectivity. One of the goals of the Forest Strategy is to provide a quality boost to existing forested areas by 2030. Almost all forests in the Netherlands would benefit from this. The necessary measures are described in the 'Revitalising Dutch Forests' report.[16] This improvement of quality is not only important for achieving the nature goals, but also for maintaining forests for timber production, recreation, drinking water extraction and climate mitigation and adaptation. The required measures depend on the local conditions and need to be tailored accordingly. The national Forest Strategy does not quantify the revitalisation target in hectares, but rather calls on the provinces to draw up revitalisation plans and identify where restoration is needed and what measures are required.

Wildfire management

The Netherlands is experiencing an increasing number of days of high fire danger, with conditions that could lead to uncontrollable wildfires. Because Dutch nature is strongly interwoven with the physical living environment, wildfires can cause considerable damage to property and have a major impact on society. It is important to improve wildfire management capacity to avoid this happening. Between 2024 and 2029, €70 million will be invested in nature management measures and the development and sharing of knowledge and expertise to limit the intensity, size and frequency of wildfires. The investments will cover, amongst other things, risk communication, escape and emergency routes, firefighting water supplies, and coordination and collaboration on wildfire management. To this end, the government works closely with the provinces, municipalities, security regions and land management organisations.[17]

Draft Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience

A healthy, resilient soil contributes to ecological, social and economic needs. It contributes to climate mitigation and adaptation, increases food security and prevents or limits biodiversity loss. More than a quarter of all biodiversity is located in the soil, and it is inextricably linked with the biodiversity above ground, and hence with the sectors that depend on the soil for their operations, such as the agricultural sector. The Draft Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience contains descriptors and criteria for healthy soil, including some aimed at monitoring biodiversity. This is a first step towards improving our understanding of soil biodiversity and protecting and, where necessary, restoring it.

The European Commission presented a proposal for a Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience in July 2023. The Soil Monitoring Directive aims to establish a soil monitoring framework for all soils in the EU and to progressively improve soil health. The draft directive does not contain binding objectives and intermediate goals, but involves an obligation to use best efforts to achieve the long-term ambition of healthy soils by 2050. Negotiations on this draft directive are currently ongoing.

[16] Stichting Probos, Unie van Bosgroepen, Staatsbosbeheer (2020), Revitalisering Nederlandse Bossen (Revitalising Dutch Forests).
[17] Parliamentary Paper 30821, no. 240 (14 October 2024) Investeren in de preventie en mitigatie van natuurbranden (Investing in the prevention and mitigation of wildfires).

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Based on the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), member states draw up a marine strategy to achieve and/or maintain a 'good environmental status'. This strategy is reviewed every six years.
The strategy consists of three parts: an assessment of the marine environment, describing the good environmental status and setting environmental targets (Part 1, 2018-2024), a monitoring programme (Part 2, 2020-2026) and a programme of measures (Part 3, 2022-2028). It describes the marine environment based on 11 descriptors: marine biodiversity (seabirds, marine mammals, fish, squid), non-indigenous species, commercial fish and shellfish, food webs, eutrophication, seabed integrity, hydrographical conditions, contaminants, contaminants in seafood, marine litter and underwater noise. When the current status is not a good environmental status then, where necessary, knowledge and/or policy is developed based on this status for all the named descriptors. To date, good environmental status has only been achieved for the descriptor 'contaminants in seafood'. A general good environmental status is not within reach for any of the countries around the North Sea at present.
The Netherlands is currently finalising a draft update of the Marine Strategy Part 1.

The MSFD functions as an umbrella directive, bringing together all relevant policies that contribute to an ecologically resilient North Sea, such as the BHD (see targets 2 and 3), agreements made with the International Maritime Organisation (see targets 6 and 7), and the Common Fisheries Policy (see target 10). The strategy also involves designating protected areas (MSFD sites, see target 3), minimising the introduction of non-indigenous species (see target 6) and action to reduce marine pollution in relation to eutrophication, contaminants and marine litter (see target 7).

Programmatic Approach to Great Waters

The goal of the Programmatic Approach to Great Waters (PAGW)[18] is a future-proof system of great waters in 2050 in which high-quality nature goes together with a strong economy. The large waters are the Netherlands' major aquatic ecosystems and comprise the Dutch part of the waters of the IJsselmeer region, the Southwestern Delta region, the Wadden Sea (including the Eems-Dollard estuary), the delta of the major rivers, and relevant adjacent areas enclosed by dykes. The PAGW implements the objective of protecting inland waters in conjunction with the Natura 2000 management plans, the Water Framework Directive and the NEN.

The goal of the PAGW is to restore and enhance the large waters, including by improving the ecological water quality.

Spatial planning projects will provide more space for natural processes, improve connectivity (within the system of large waters as well as with the surrounding areas), and create areas where missing habitats can be replaced. Transitions to responsible use and management of these areas are also being initiated. This will create favourable initial conditions within the system of large waters to enable ecologically healthy functioning, the development of high-quality nature and space for integrating economic use. These projects and transitions will increase the potential of ecosystem services and socio-economic values of the large waters.

The programme is currently working on feasibility studies for 23 spatial planning projects to be developed by 2033. The Netherlands plans to select projects and activities for the implementation of the next phase of the programme before 2030.

Wadden Sea

More will be done to strengthen the nature of the Wadden Sea at the system level. This includes a focus on the core values (and exceptional universal value) of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, and on the unique characteristics of this region (being the open and expansive landscape, the tranquillity, and the dark skies). In addition to more sustainable use, nature in the Wadden Sea will be restored and strengthened in the following ways:

1. With the PAGW, the national government and the regional authorities are cooperating to improve the natural dynamism of the system through system interventions and large-scale spatial planning measures, such as restoring freshwater-saltwater transitions and underwater nature.
2. The Wadden Sea Management Authority works with the Wadden Sea Managers Collective (*Beheerderscollectief Waddenzee*) to improve nature, fisheries and water management. Amongst other things, they are cooperating more effectively and adopting a more integrated and systematic approach to management responsibilities, such as physical management (e.g. tidal marsh management), monitoring and supervision, and enforcement. The Management Authority is also jointly investing in Wadden Sea nature through funds available to meet the remaining objectives of Wadden Sea nature development and the Wadden Sea Ecological Stimulus Package (*Ecologisch Impulspakket Waddenzee*).

[18] Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature and Infrastructure and Water Management (n.d.) Programmatische Aanpak Grote Wateren (PAGW).

3. The Natura 2000 Wadden Sea management plan covers the use and management of this area and is specifically aimed at achieving the conservation objectives of the specifically designated species and habitats under the Birds and Habitats Directives. This simultaneously implements the Action Plan for Wadden Sea Breeding Birds. As the lead authority, Rijkswaterstaat is working with relevant parties to develop a new Natura 2000 management plan for the Wadden Sea.
4. Steps are also being taken to implement the De Groot-Bevers motion[19] to "draw up a policy framework focussed on the overarching objective of nature and with an eye for liveability, and thereby seek the support of the stakeholders". To enable the economic use of the Wadden Sea, including adequate space and a viable future for fisheries (including in the longer term), a coherent framework is needed. The forthcoming Wadden Sea Nature Policy Framework (BNW) will provide clarity to businesses and other users of the Wadden Sea as to which activities are permitted and under which conditions. This will be based on the current, measured state of Wadden Sea nature, while also taking socio-economic impacts into consideration.
5. There is ongoing international cooperation with Germany and Denmark across multiple areas, including monitoring, knowledge development, education, hospitality and sustainable tourism.
   The individual activities carried out on the Wadden Sea themselves have a relatively limited impact on the ecosystem, but there are strong indications that the cumulative effect of these activities is threatening the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. This is why it is important to develop an integrated approach to reduce the total pressure on the nature in this region. The BNW is intended to reduce the cumulative impact of use of the Wadden Sea on its nature, and so achieve a balance between ecology and economy.

The starting point for the BNW is the Natura 2000 nature objectives, but the BNW also focuses more broadly on achieving the overarching objective for the Wadden Sea. This objective is the sustainable protection and development of the Wadden Sea as a protected area and the preservation of the unique open landscape, as also established in the PKB (key planning decision) for the Wadden Sea (later replaced by the Structural Vision for the Wadden Sea).

The BNW is currently in the assessment phase (ends in Q3 2025), which will result in a policy memorandum with a clear ecological objective. To meet the overarching objective for the Wadden Sea, and improve the protection and restoration of nature in the Wadden Sea, we will formulate concrete targets to reduce pressure factors. This will serve as the starting point for the scenario development phase (from Q4 2024 to Q4 2025), in which we will develop scenarios with stakeholders, other public authorities and government representatives to achieve the ecological objectives and thus reduce pressure factors, based on a similar concept to the Climate Panels (*Klimaattafels*). To this end, we will use a framework to assess scenarios aimed at reducing pressure factors and based on both ecological and socio-economic impacts. The BNW also has the ambition to develop supporting policies (funding mechanisms) to further develop these scenarios.

Measures on Defence areas

The Ministry of Defence's nature policy focuses on restoring and maintaining the quality of ecosystems, in conjunction with the activities carried out in these areas. The Ministry of Defence implements national policy aimed at facilitating thriving and robust nature by actively contributing to the conservation and strengthening of nature and biodiversity. The Witterveld restoration plan is a good example of where the Ministry is committed to restoring a valuable raised bog that is unique in the Netherlands.

Nature Restoration Regulation

The Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR) is a key new EU legislative instrument for advancing nature restoration. The goal of the NRR is threefold:

1. Facilitate the ongoing, long-term and permanent recovery of diverse and resilient nature in the EU, both on land and at sea, by restoring ecosystems, habitat types and species.
2. Contribute to achieving EU climate mitigation and adaptation targets.
3. Facilitate the EU's contribution to international nature conservation efforts, including under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

The NRR contains additional obligations to protect and restore ecosystems currently protected under the BHD, the WFD and the MSFD. The nature restoration goals in the NRR cover a wide range of ecosystems, namely terrestrial, coastal and freshwater ecosystems, marine ecosystems, urban ecosystems, rivers and floodplains, pollinators, agricultural ecosystems and forest ecosystems. The NRR, and in particular its implementation in a National Restoration Plan, therefore also contributes to a significant degree to targets 1 and 3 to 12.

[19] Motion by Members of the House of Representatives De Groot and Bevers on developing a policy framework based on the overarching objective of nature (29684-224), 14 March 2022.

Member States must submit a National Restoration Plan to the Commission by 1 September 2027, outlining concrete measures for the period up to 2030 and with a strategic outlook to 2050. The National Restoration Plan provides the Netherlands with an opportunity to tailor its own nature restoration efforts as closely as possible to the current state of nature, taking into account the situation in this country. This will allow the Netherlands to shape its spatial planning according to its specific needs, within the objectives and enabling conditions set out in the Regulation.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[20]

Infrastructure Domain

The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 contributes to the restoration of degraded landscapes in the Netherlands through actions in the Infrastructure domain. This domain also contributes to achieving targets 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 19, with particular emphasis on targets 8 and 12. A number of these actions are briefly described below.

- In implementing Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 (2024-2026), this domain will contribute to biodiversity restoration in the Netherlands until 2030, and make a positive impact on biodiversity in infrastructure projects from 2030 onwards. The domain aims to translate the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework into concrete ambitions for the infrastructure sector by 2024-2026.
- The focus of the domain is more effective use of the vast area (8% of the Netherlands) available next to railways, roads, dykes, waterways and utility infrastructure that could be used for biodiversity restoration.
- The domain is committed to making ecological management the standard practice in the sector. The potential areas include road and railway verges, dykes and high-voltage substations. This also includes completely phasing out pesticide use. To achieve this goal, infrastructure managers who apply ecological management will be further encouraged, for example by drawing up a covenant between municipalities, provinces, water authorities, contractors and infrastructure operators.
- In the coming years, efforts will also be aimed at making nature-inclusive construction and design the new standard in all infrastructure projects, and on making nature-inclusive implementation a requirement of all tenders and projects.
- Amongst other things, we will collaborate with the Water Domain to develop concrete projects aimed at creating a Green Blue Network of Landscape Features. Knowledge is also being developed on the interaction between infrastructure and nature as well as the deployment of nature-based solutions in the context of fire management, amongst other things, which will also improve climate adaptation (both of nature and through nature).

[20] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 3.
Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas

Figure 9. De Biesbosch National Park © Rob Poelenjee

Dutch nature is represented in distinctive landscapes and waters that make our country unique and form an important part of our identity. Nature and landscape are intertwined with everyday life, from urban parks and farmland to national parks. The government therefore considers nature in a broader sense than our nature areas alone. The aim is to strengthen local biodiversity, with robust natural areas on land and water, and a solid basic quality of nature for a healthy living environment and thriving agriculture. Reassessing Natura 2000 sites is part of this approach.

Nature areas in the Netherlands

Nature areas in the Netherlands are protected both by law (Natura 2000) and in spatial planning policy (National Ecological Network). See Figure 10. With the implementation of existing policies, including the planned expansion of the NEN, 26% of land and inland waters will be protected by 2030.[21] Nature areas outside Natura 2000 and NEN sites that fall under a nature management contract, and receive a management subsidy through the Subsidy Framework for Nature and Landscape Management, can also be classified as protected areas.

[21] Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO Indicator 142505. Aandeel beschermde natuurgebieden in Nederland, 2022 (Proportion of protected nature reserves in the Netherlands).

When these areas are included, the percentage of protected nature areas in the Netherlands rises to over 27%.[22] These calculations were based on the Progress Report Nature in which provinces report their progress on, amongst other things, the goals for the expansion of the NEN. The percentages may vary slightly based on the provinces' actual progress. With the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, more than 30% of the Dutch coastal and marine surface area (the saltwaters) will have protected status by 2030. Under the European Biodiversity Strategy, it was agreed that the target of protecting 30% of land, water and marine areas would be shared among the 27 EU Member States. Each Member state is required to do its fair share of the effort, but the amount of this fair share has not yet been established.

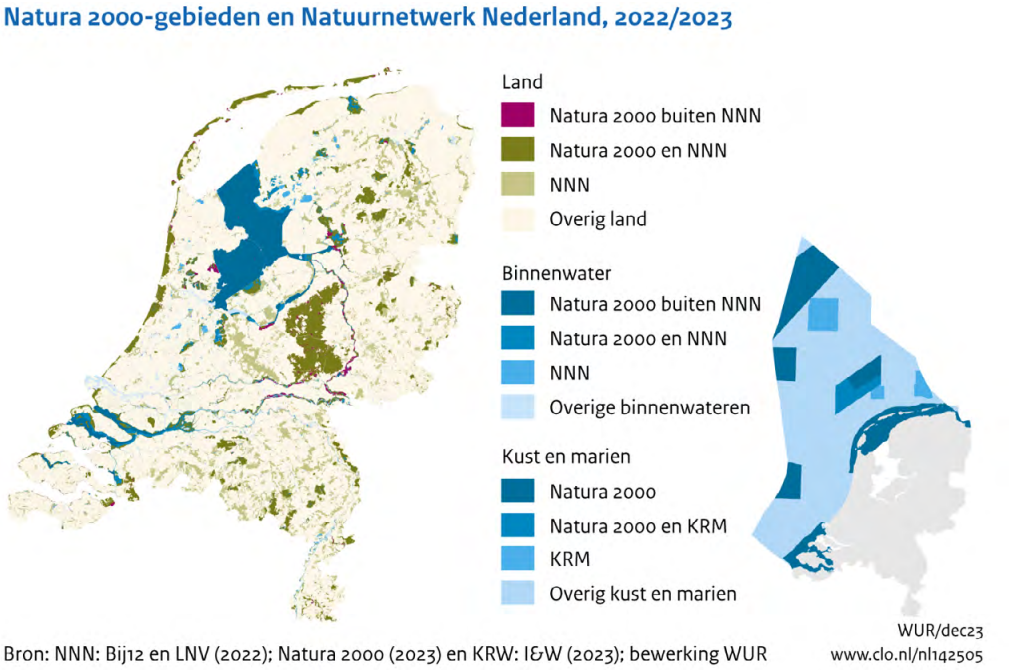


Figure 10. Map showing all protected Natura 2000, National Ecological Network (NEN, 'NNN' in the figure and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 'KRM' in the figure) sites in the Netherlands (CLO Indicator 142505).

Birds and Habitats Directives

Under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (BHD) 162 Natura 2000 sites are protected in the Netherlands. Natura 2000 sites cover 15% of land and inland waters and 27% of coastal and marine areas (including the Wadden Sea). Natura 2000 sites are protected by law, with a ban on degradation, obligations for governments to implement conservation measures, and a permit requirement for projects with potentially harmful effects. The BHD thus contribute to target 3 for Dutch land, inland waters and the sea. The government is committed to reassessing Natura 2000 sites as part of the development of a national network of robust nature areas.

National Ecological Network

Agreements on the management, expansion and development of the NEN were reached in the Nature Pact that was agreed in 2013 between the national government and the provinces. The Nature Pact largely assigned nature policy objectives and powers to the provinces. The three main ambitions that the national government and provinces agreed to in the Nature Pact were: 1) improving biodiversity, 2) strengthening social engagement with nature, and 3) improving the relationships between nature and the economy. To pursue the first ambition, the national and provincial governments agreed, amongst other things, to complete a network of nature areas by 2027: the NEN (formerly known as the Ecological Main Network (*Ecologische Hoofdstructuur*)). An administrative agreement was reached with the provinces to expand the existing nature network by establishing 80,000 hectares of new nature and

[22] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, Wageningen University & Research (2022) Quickscan EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie. Een eerste reflectie op de implementatieopgave van nieuw voorgestelde doelen voor opervlakte beschermde natuur en herstel VHR-natuur (EU biodiversity strategy quick scan: Initial analysis of the challenge of implementing new proposed targets for surface protected nature and restoration of BHD nature).

implementing measures to conserve and improve the quality of nature in this network. Since 1 January 2011, roughly 48,511 hectares of nature have been added to the network.[23] The goal is to create a robust nature network. The provinces also aim to bring the European nature objectives "a significant extra step" closer. With the completion of the NEN, some 26% of land and inland water will be protected under spatial planning policy.[24]

Defence areas

More than 26,000 hectares of the Netherlands are used as military training areas, shooting ranges or air bases. Of these, more than 15,000 hectares are part of Natura 2000 sites. The Ministry of Defence implements national policy by contributing to the conservation and strengthening of biodiversity, both on land and in water. This is achieved through active management aimed at enhancing the natural value and implementing targeted measures to prevent soil and water pollution. Each year, the site managers of the military sites draw up a work plan, based on a management plan, to maintain, and where possible enhance, nature.

Forest Strategy

In the Netherlands, more than 90% of the forests have nature quality goals and fall under the NEN. All forests in the Netherlands, including those that do not fall under the NNN, are protected under the Environment and Planning Act, and 46% of Dutch forests are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.[25] The Forest Strategy has also set a target to realise 37,400 hectares of additional forest by 2030, of which 15,000 hectares are to become part of the NEN. Another goal of the Forest Strategy is to transform 14,000 hectares of additional forest into natural forest by 2030.

Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Natura 2000 sites (coastal and marine)

North Sea sites are protected under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, see target 2) and the BHD. The spatial planning agreements have been formalised in the North Sea Programme 2022-2027 (see target 1).

A partial review of the North Sea Programme 2022-2027 is expected in late 2025. This review will include, amongst other things, the Borkumse Stenen boundary corrections and MSFD designation of the Southern Dogger Bank, in line with the North Sea Agreement. This will lead to at least 30% protected areas in the North Sea by 2030. This percentage may increase due to the potential designation of additional marine Birds Directive sites.

As a consequence of the North Sea Agreement, it has been further agreed that no bottom fishing may take place in 15% of the Dutch North Sea in 2030. This will be implemented through a Common Fisheries Policy procedure (see target 10). The first step was the submission in late 2024 of a joint recommendation (nationally and internationally agreed) to the European Commission for conservation measures in nature areas. This would increase the percentage of marine nature reserves under protection from bottom fishing from the current 5% to 13.8%. All forms of fishing are banned in 2.8% of protected areas in the North Sea. Other activities are also restricted in Natura 2000 sites, including drilling for oil and gas, shipping and recreation. This is set out in the management plan and will also be subject to licensing under the Environment and Planning Act, in addition to other regulatory measures, primarily under the EU's Common Fisheries Policy. All other marine development programmes (such as the roll-out of offshore wind energy) must meet the conditions of a healthy ecosystem.
The Natura 2000 management plans are reviewed every six years by Rijkswaterstaat.

Wadden Sea Implementation Programme

The '2050 Agenda for the Wadden Region' describes the joint ambitions for the Wadden Sea – with nature as one of the overarching objective – and the Wadden Region. The ambitions set by public authorities and stakeholders in late 2020 are not yet reflected in the current state of the Wadden Sea and Wadden Region. The discrepancy between the ambitions and the current state constitutes a challenge for the parties involved in the Wadden Region. Thirty different initiatives and four transitions are among the pathways being followed to achieve the objectives. A number of initiatives in the Wadden Sea Implementation Programme 2021-2026 aim to strengthen nature – in conjunction with use – and achieve the goal of 'World Class Nature'. Amongst other things, this is made concrete in the following initiatives:

- Nature conservation, restoration and development (programmes such as Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive, and the Programmatic Approach to Great Waters).
- Elaboration of the Wadden Sea core values (tranquillity, space and silence).
- Ecosystem-based dredging in the Wadden Sea.
- The Eems-Dollard 2050 programme.
- Strengthening the Lauwersmeer region.
- Wadden Sea Nature Policy Framework: assessing the individual and cumulative impact of the types of use and establishing frameworks to this end.

[23] Bij12 (2022), Negende voortgangsrapportage Natuur (2024).
[24] Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO Indicator 142505. Aandeel beschermde natuurgebieden in Nederland, 2022 (Proportion of protected nature reserves in the Netherlands).
[25] Wageningen University & Research (2019) Sixth National Report of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 2019.

European nature protection legislation

The European Biodiversity Strategy

The European Biodiversity Strategy (EBS) has set a goal to effectively and legally protect 30% of European territory by 2030, of which 10% must be strictly protected (EBS T1, T2 and T3). All EU Member States are required to make a fair contribution to this goal. The process is facilitated by the 'pledge-and-review' process. Target 3 will be met at the EU level if all Member States make a fair contribution to the 30% protection target. The Netherlands will also contribute to this goal. The EBS identifies various measures that contribute to the goal, including the effective management of protected areas, clear conservation objectives and the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features (EBS actions A1-9). The BHD and the MSFD are also very important for achieving target 3 (these are described above).

Nature Restoration Regulation

The Nature Restoration Regulation (see target 2 for a more detailed explanation) sets out conservation objectives that touch on target 3. The National Restoration Plan, which under the Nature Restoration Regulation must be drawn up before 1 September 2027, will provide more concrete plans for nature restoration and contribute to the Dutch commitment to target 3.

Other programmes

A number of other existing nature programmes also contribute to achieving target 3, such as the Water Framework Directive (see target 7).

Target 4.
Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Figure 12. Red deer in De Hoge Veluwe National Park. © Rob Poelenjee

The Netherlands is committed to conserving and restoring plant and animal species. The government is particularly concerned about the decline of bee, butterfly and hoverfly populations, both in the Netherlands and globally, because of the crucial role they play in food security, the economy and biodiversity. Many fruit and vegetable crops depend on pollination. The NL Pollinator Strategy aims to effectively counter the decline of pollinators in the Netherlands.

In a densely populated country like the Netherlands, conflicts between humans and wildlife may also arise. Examples include the increasing numbers of incidents involving wolves, humans and livestock. The government is now working with the provinces to develop a National Wolf Strategy to deal with this issue.

Red Lists

To improve the knowledge of the state of plant and animal species in the Netherlands, national and international Red Lists are established based, amongst other things, on the criteria of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). These lists currently include information on 20 different groups of species. The national Red Lists are embedded in the Environment and Planning Act and are published in the Dutch Government Gazette (*Staatscourant*). The criteria used for the national Red Lists are tailored to the unique situation in the Netherlands. As in the surrounding countries, 1950 has been chosen as the baseline year to avoid the 'shifting baseline' effect and to reveal long-term trends. This also makes it possible to compare the Red Lists with each other. As the Red Lists also function as a warning signal, the aim is to update all Red Lists once every ten years. Provinces are required to actively take measures to conserve Red List species.

Cooperation between farmers to protect farmland birds and biodiversity

Boeren van Amstel is a group of 18 farmers who have collectively established a milk production system. Members of Boeren van Amstel are rewarded and paid to protect farmland birds on their farms. A special cheese was also developed to celebrate the 750th anniversary of the City of Amsterdam. For every kilo of cheese sold, the farmers sow one square metre of a biodiverse seed mix.

Birds and Habitats Directives and National Ecological Network

The commitment to the restoration and protection of nature areas is described under targets 2 and 3. Internationally important nature areas in the Netherlands are designated as Natura 2000 sites. The protection of these areas focuses on species and habitat types protected under the European Birds and Habitats Directives. In addition, provinces also designate National Ecological Network sites for the protection of European and nationally protected species and Red List species. The government is committed to reassessing Natura 2000 sites as part of the development of a national network of robust nature areas.

NL Pollinator Strategy

The Netherlands launched the NL Pollinator Strategy[26] (NBS, 2018-2030) in 2018 in response to the decline in pollinator populations. This strategy involves cooperating with more than 100 partners to create sufficient feeding and nesting opportunities, for example.

The goal of the NBS is to achieve a stable and/or positive trend in populations of wild bees and other pollinator species by 2030. An essential part of the NBS is the 'theory of change', where partners are encouraged to take action based on nine themes. The partners published a report with joint recommendations based on the five-year review. These recommendations were included in the 'consolidated letter' on Nature to the House of Representatives.[27] The main conclusion of the NBS review is that there have been many successful local and regional initiatives in recent years, but more efforts are needed to reverse the negative trend. Because it is important to improve our understanding of trends in bee populations (and because this is an obligation under the Nature Restoration Regulation), bee and hoverfly monitoring commenced in 2025. In addition, the recommendations of the NBS partners can serve as inspiration for restoration measures to strengthen pollinator populations under the National Restoration Plan.

Figure 13. Bee hives at a recreation park contribute to the bee strategy © Government of the Netherlands, photo by Bart van Vliet

Specific measures for endangered species

Active measures are being taken to reintroduce extinct species or provide additional protection for species that are at risk of extinction. For example:

- **Reintroduction programmes:** The otter (*Lutra lutra*) and beaver (*Castor fiber*) have both been successfully reintroduced in the Netherlands. The Red List status of both species today is 'Not currently endangered'.[28]

The Netherlands is currently facilitating (with both funds and time) a feasibility study into the reintroduction of the European sturgeon (*Acipenser sturio*) in the Rhine.

[26] Government of the Netherlands (2018) Nationale Bijenstratgie: Bed & Breakfast for Bees.
[27] Parliamentary Paper 33575, no. 389 (28 November 2024) Verzamelbrief natuur.
[28] Dutch Mammal Society (2020) Basisrapport Rode Lijst Zoogdieren.

- **Research:** In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) has commissioned national research into the European hamster (*Cricetus cricetus*) with the aim of achieving a sustainable independent population in Limburg, and the Province of Limburg is applying hamster-friendly management to fields.
- **Policy on species protection of the provincial authorities:** Provinces pursue active species policies to protect and conserve endangered species important to the province, such as the garden dormouse (*Eliomys quercinus*) and Geoffroy's bat (*Myotis emarginatus*) in Limburg, and the parti-coloured bat (*Verspertillio murinus*) in Utrecht.
- **Project Godwit Action Plan:** The national government and the provinces are making extra efforts to protect farmland birds through the Project Godwit Action Plan. The Project Godwit Action Plan is part of the National Strategic Plan for the 2023-2027 Common Agricultural Policy. It was agreed with the provinces to earmark €69.5 million for the implementation of the Project Godwit Action Plan during the coming Common Agricultural Policy period (from 2023 to 2027). Additional measures for protecting the black-tailed godwit are currently being explored, including godwit egg hatcheries ('headstarting').
- **National Fish Roadmap:** As part of the Water Framework Directive (see target 7), measures are being taken to remove barriers for migratory fish. An overview of the current national status including results and goals can be found in the National Fish Roadmap.[29]

North Sea Agreement and new protection plans

The North Sea Agreement stipulates that protection plans will be developed for species that are not yet covered by a species protection plan, based on EU directives (Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive), international agreements (OSPAR, ASCOBANS, CMS, MoU Sharks), and the Framework for Assessing Ecological and Cumulative Effects for offshore wind farm deployment. A species selection list has been drawn up which includes all species for which a plan will be developed in the period 2023-2025. A total of 12 plans will be developed during this period. The species selection list is based on: 1) the species and habitats most vulnerable to offshore wind development; 2) species and habitats that need protection in a general sense, as reflected in international agreements (Birds and Habitats Directives, OSPAR, Red List); and 3) key species and habitats for nature restoration and reinforcement. A review will be conducted in 2025 to determine if additional species require a species protection plan. Currently, three new protection plans are in preparation. Two are for birds: 1) gannet (*Morus bassanus*) and black-legged kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), and 2) great black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*) and European herring gull (*Larus argentatus*). The third plan focuses on benthos: 3) the shellfish species *Ostrea edulis*, *Modiolus modiolus* and *Mytilus edulis*), and the tubeworm species *Sabellaria spinulosa* and *Lanice conchilega*.

In addition, plans are already in place to protect sharks and rays, porpoises and seals:

- **Sharks and Rays Action Plan:** A Sharks and Rays Action Plan 2022-2027 has been prepared based on a quick scan of the previous action plan and a programme of requirements drawn up in cooperation with the fishing industry, civil society organisations and scientists.
- **Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the Netherlands:** The Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the Netherlands was revised and further refined in 2020. In addition, a review of the Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the Netherlands was carried out in 2024. It now also focuses, amongst other things, on intensifying international cooperation, improving data on beaching events, and reducing pressure factors such as bycatch and underwater noise caused by piling and seismic surveys. The Conservation Plan for the Harbour Porpoise in the Netherlands aims to maintain a favourable conservation status for the species in Dutch waters.
- **Seal Management Plan:** This management plan for the protection of common and grey seals stems from the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation agreement between the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. The management plan includes a large number of activities such as monitoring, responding to beaching events, and protection measures, and has been adopted for the period 2023-2027.

Environment and Planning Act

European and nationally designated species also enjoy protection outside nature areas. Under the Environment and Planning Act, it is prohibited to kill or disturb wild animals and plants with a European or national protection status. The provinces and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency grant exemptions from these prohibitions under certain conditions, if the exemption is necessary, there are no alternative solutions and the favourable conservation status is not jeopardised. The sustainable use, harvesting and trading of wild species is further explained in target 5.

[29] National Fish Roadmap (n.d.) Nationale Visroutekaart.

Coexistence

In 2021, the Ministry of LVVN commissioned the Netherlands Enterprise Agency to better embed and apply the knowledge of protected animal and plant species in licensing processes and in the spatial planning domain. Together with the Ministry and the provinces, and with the help of scientific research, gaps in the knowledge necessary for adequate species protection have been identified, as well as opportunities for improving management practices and spatial planning interventions. The focus of the research is the conservation status of species and the effectiveness of both planned and implemented measures. The outcomes will be used to review existing policy and implementation instruments, to ensure that spatial planning interventions and management measures can be implemented as efficiently as possible in relation to the protected nature. Insulating buildings and other sustainability improvements as part of the renovation of the built environment are currently receiving lot of attention within this research commission.

- A nature-inclusive approach is being developed for onshore wind and onshore high voltage infrastructure. The aim is to make the licensing process faster and more predictable, while at the same time conserving species (and in particular bats and birds).
- The insulation of older buildings (including those that are privately owned) is a pillar of the Climate Agreement. However, insulating older buildings also has major impacts on protected and endangered species that depend on these habitats (and particularly several species of bat). The aim of the 'Environmentally friendly insulation taskforce' is for every municipality in the Netherlands to have established and implemented a species management plan which protects and strengthens the effected species while allowing the insulation of older buildings to continue. The effectiveness of the measures and the species populations will be monitored in both approaches.

Human-nature conflicts

The wolf established permanently in the Netherlands in 2019. There has since been an increase in the number of incidents involving livestock and people and their pets, and there are concerns about safety. The Netherlands has therefore established a National Wolf Strategy. The national strategy aims to prevent attacks of wolves on people, pets and livestock as much as possible, and enable an effective response where attacks occur. In a country as densely populated as the Netherlands, there is only limited space available for large predators such as wolves. The strategy also aims to manage the increasing social unrest and develop appropriate frameworks in the light of the Netherlands' small size and high population density. The National Wolf Strategy includes measures aimed at livestock protection, information provision and European cooperation.

EU species protection legislation

The European Biodiversity Strategy

Besides implementing the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to achieve target 4, the European Biodiversity Strategy aims to reverse the negative trends in pollinator populations by 2030, by implementing the EU Pollinators Initiative by 2030. This initiative aims to 1) identify the available knowledge on pollinator decline, its causes and consequences; 2) improve pollinator conservation; and 3) mobilise society and encourage strategic planning and cooperation at all levels. Objective 1 of the EU Mission 'Restore our Oceans and Waters' also contributes to achieving this target, as do the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Nature Restoration Regulation

The Nature Restoration Regulation (see target 2 for a more detailed explanation) sets out goals for restoring pollinator populations and species habitats. The other goals of the regulation also contribute indirectly to target 4, as they contribute to improving ecosystems and habitats thereby giving endangered species a better chance of survival. The National Restoration Plan, which under the European Nature Restoration Regulation must be drawn up before 1 September 2027, will provide more concrete plans for nature restoration.

Target 5.
Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species

Figure 14. A kingfisher seized at Schiphol Airport. © Britta Jaschinski / IUCN NL

By signing and implementing the CITES convention, the Netherlands has committed to regulating the international trade in endangered plant and animal species. New rules additionally came into force as of 1 July 2024, stipulating that only mammals on the Pets and Hobby Animals List may be purchased, kept or sold. This contributes to improving animal welfare and stopping the trade in unsuitable pets.

Use of wild species

Prohibition on keeping felids and primates

The current system under the Environment and Planning Act (based on earlier legislation) prohibits the keeping of all species of primates, all felids listed in Annex A of the Basic Regulation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), a number of large and medium-sized felids listed in Annex B of the CITES Basic Regulation, and the fossa.[30] Exceptions are only possible, and subject to conditions, for purposes that serve the public interest, such as education, nature conservation and science, and are in practice granted to zoos, animal shelters and research institutions, amongst others.

Pets and hobby animals list (mammals)

The Pets and Hobby Animals List[31] came into force in July 2024. This list includes 30 mammals that may be kept by private individuals; it is prohibited to keep, trade or breed all other mammals. This list is based on an assessment of over 300 mammalian species by an advisory board using an assessment framework that considered, amongst other things, domestication, the risk of zoonotic diseases and human and animal safety.

Harvesting wild species

Sustainable hunting

Fauna management is required to effectively manage nature and prevent damage. Only five species may be sustainably harvested (hunted) in the Netherlands (mallard, common wood pigeon, pheasant, rabbit and European hare), provided the species' conservation status is not at risk.[32] Two species, rabbit and hare, may not be hunted at present for this reason (applies nationwide for rabbits and in three provinces for hares).

[30] Living Environment (Activities) Decree (2025) section 11.99 wetten.nl - Regeling - Besluit activiteiten leefomgeving - BWBR0041330.
[31] Netherlands Enterprise Agency (2024) Dieren op de huis- en hobbydierenlijst.
[32] Environment and Planning Act (2024), section 8.5(4) wetten.nl - Regeling - Omgevingswet - BWBR0037885.

For all other protected species, the Environment and Planning Act prescribes that they may only be killed when necessary, when there are no alternative solutions, and when the favourable conservation status of the species is not jeopardised. A system change of hunting policy and wildlife management is currently in preparation.[33]
The Minister for Nature and Nitrogen Policy has announced that the entire system governing hunting policy and wildlife management will be reviewed. The goal of the review is a future-proof system that ensures that the damage caused by fauna remains manageable, and that species are sustainably protected. The changes to the system will be implemented in cooperation with the provinces and the involved stakeholders, such as hunters and farmers' organisations. The new system will be evaluated in the light of European laws and regulations, in particular the Birds and Habitats Directives. A pathway for a change in the law is expected to be initiated in 2025.

Sustainable fisheries
Sustainable fisheries, including the maximum sustainable yield, European Eel Regulation and the Coordinated Development and Implementation of Best Practice in Bycatch Reduction in the North Atlantic, Baltic, and Mediterranean regions, are described in detail under target 10.

Trade in wild species

National and international protection of native plants and animals
The Netherlands has entered into several international agreements to protect native plants and animals in their natural habitats. To protect migratory species, the Netherlands has implemented the Convention on Migratory Species (the Bonn Convention). To protect plant and animal species in the European region, the Netherlands has implemented the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). To specifically protect bird species and other plant and animal species within the European Union, the Netherlands has implemented the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive, respectively.

The obligations imposed by these agreements have been integrated into the Environment and Planning Act. This Act includes rules on whether, in specific cases, these species may be hunted, captured, collected, picked, harvested, used or traded.

Regulation of the international trade in endangered animal and plant species
The Netherlands has implemented CITES. The agreement is enshrined in European regulations[34] and immediately effective. The CITES Convention regulates the international trade in endangered plant and animal species through licensing and, where necessary, by prohibiting trade in them. The central objective is to prevent listed species from significant decline or extinction in the wild due to international trade.

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature is responsible for the implementation of the CITES Convention and is the responsible Management Authority. The Netherlands has an important responsibility to implement and enforce the CITES Convention due to the country's access to the European internal market through the port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport. Sustainable trade is facilitated as much as possible and illegal trade prevented. This requires national, European and international cooperation. A large number of government agencies are involved in enforcement of the Convention in the Netherlands. These agencies have short lines of communication and jointly establish priorities.

Restricting the transmission of disease from animals to humans
Laws and regulations, and the restrictions and conditions under them, govern the import of wild-caught animals and their products within the European Union.[35] Amongst other things, the animal or product must be accompanied by a health certificate, must be sourced from an approved country, and must undergo mandatory import controls upon entry. The EU's phytosanitary policy aims to prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of organisms that pose a high risk to plants and plant products. The regulations are laid down in the European regulation on protective measures against pests of plants.[36]

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) carries out official controls of animals and animal products imported from third countries. These controls on imports and transit through the European Union are based on EU regulations. The controls are carried out at designated border checkpoints. Controls are carried out on animal products in passenger baggage and on incoming pets travelling with

[33] Letter to House of Representatives 36200-XIV, no. 120 (4 April 2023) Kamerbrief stand van zaken soortenbeleid | Kamerstuk | Rijksoverheid.nl.
[34] Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.
[35] Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law'); Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products.
[36] Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 March 2016 on protective measures against pests of plants.

their owners at the points of entry, in cooperation with the customs authorities.

The NVWA aims to allow only healthy animals, safe food and safe products to enter the European Union market. This also covers preventing the introduction and spread of animal diseases and diseases dangerous to humans. As such, the controls contribute to protecting the public interests of food safety, public health, animal health and animal welfare. The National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy focuses on prevention, detection and responding to zoonoses. Under this plan, the NVWA has intensified the detection and enforcement of illegal wildlife and bushmeat trade, amongst other things. The Netherlands supports the work of the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health and the UN Environment Programme to manage the risks of 'traditional markets for food', for example by advising on hygiene measures and funding these organisations.

Hunting trophies

It is also policy not to grant import licences for hunting trophies for species listed in Annex A of the 'Regulation on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein'[37] and species listed in Annex XIII of the implementing regulation[38] due to doubts about the sustainability of hunting of these species.

European legislation on the sustainable, safe and legal harvesting and trade of wild species

At the European level, several regulations, actions and directives contribute to the sustainable trade, harvesting and use of wild species. These include CITES and the CITES Strategic Vision for 2030, the EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking, the EU Wildlife Trade Regulation (WTR), European legislation on protected species and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement. There are also reporting obligations for member states regarding CITES and the WTR. European legislation on sustainable fisheries is addressed in target 10.

[37] Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.

[38] Council Regulation (EC) no. 865/2006 of 4 May 2006 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.

Target 6.
Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimise Their Impact

Figure 15. The spiny-cheek crayfish is an invasive species. © PxHere

Plants, animals or other organisms that are not native to the Netherlands can be harmful to biodiversity, public health, the economy and infrastructure. The Netherlands is therefore carrying out its legal obligations in relation to invasive species under the European Invasive Alien Species Regulation and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. A National Action Plan on invasive alien species is also under development.

National policy on invasive alien species

Climate change and globalisation mean the Netherlands is increasingly threatened by invasive alien species. Invasive alien species (e.g. non-indigenous crayfish, raccoon and Japanese knotweed) are a serious pressure factor in relation to biodiversity and cause damage to native flora and fauna, amongst other things.[39]

The Netherlands is carrying out its legal obligations under the European Invasive Alien Species Regulation.
The Invasive Alien Species Regulation establishes rules to prevent, minimise and mitigate the adverse impacts of the introduction and spread, both intentional and unintentional, of invasive alien species on biodiversity in the European Union.

The Invasive Alien Species Regulation includes rules for prevention, control and restoration measures that apply to the List of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern (hereafter the 'List of Union Concern'). The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) has responsibility for the policy in general, and works with other public authorities and organisations to this end.
The provinces are responsible for taking control and management measures against most species on the List of Union Concern and for taking restoration measures in nature areas. Water boards are also responsible for controlling some species on the List of Union Concern.
In addition, a national trade ban on three Asian species of knotweed has been imposed in the Netherlands.

A National Action Plan on invasive alien species is under development.[40] The Netherlands attaches importance to an effective approach that limits, and where possible prevents, harmful impacts. The National Action Plan will therefore include proposals to further develop and strengthen policy on invasive alien species, with a focus on prevention and including measures to control and manage invasive alien species.

[39] Amongst other things, Parliamentary Paper 26407, no. 150 (27 November 2023) Biodiversiteit | Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal; Environmental Data Compendium (2022) Exoten in Nederland 1900-2020; NVWA (2024) Advies van BuRO over de update horizonscan invasieve exoten 2022.

[40] Letter to House of Representatives 26407, no. 154 (18 December 2024) Aanbieding Contouren van Landelijk Aanvalsplan Invasieve Exoten.

The Netherlands is working with stakeholders on a programme to control non-indigenous crayfish. These crayfish dig holes in water bottoms and banks and damage aquatic plants and fauna, threatening water quality and biodiversity, amongst other things. The programme is seeking a cost-effective approach. The main goals are to prevent further spreading, develop control measures and achieve ecosystem enhancement.

The Ministry of LVVN is responsible for the implementation of the system of Invasive Alien Species Regulation. Various parties such as Rijkswaterstaat and the provinces are responsible for taking measures.

The Ministry of Defence's nature policy also defines how the Invasive Alien Species Regulation is implemented on its own sites. Where possible, proactive measures are taken to limit the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, and remove them if already established, in order to help maintain healthy ecosystems. Defence area managers take the latest insights on alien species control into account in their management plans. Rijkswaterstaat is also responsible for controlling some species on the List of Union Concern.

Invasive alien species not only pose a threat to biodiversity, but also to public health, the economy and infrastructure (e.g. certain species of mosquitoes and termites). The departments concerned are therefore working to develop a suitable coordination structure for applying an integrated approach to the control of pests and invasive alien species, taking into account the roles and responsibilities at both the central and local levels.[41]

Marine alien species policy

Alien species are included in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, see target 2). The Netherlands has set out how it implements the Directive in the Marine Strategy policy document, parts 1 to 3. This document prescribes that the increase of new non-indigenous species must be controlled mainly through the various introduction routes, because there are few options to control them once they have become established in Dutch waters. The MSFD establishes frameworks for sustainable use within the conditions of a healthy ecosystem, taking into account international and European regulations.

Dutch policy focuses mainly on preventive measures in relation to marine alien species. Several measures have been implemented in recent years, including additional conditions for shellfish transport licences. In addition, the Netherlands implemented the International Maritime Organisation's Ballast Water Convention in national laws and regulations in 2017.

The Convention establishes requirements for international shipping to minimise the spread of alien species through ballast water, for example by using filters or cleaning agents. The Netherlands is also pursuing international agreements on hull fouling in line with the Convention. A growing point of concern is the introduction of non-local hard substrate into the North Sea (for example for erosion-proof wind farm foundations) with the risk of primary or secondary introduction of non-indigenous species into the North Sea.

The participants in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark) have committed to further elaborate and implement the trilateral Management and Action Plan for Alien Species (MAPAS).

[41] Parliamentary Paper 27858, no. 638 (19 October 2023), Strategisch Kader Biociden en stand van zaken programma IPM-knaagdierbeheersing.

Target 7.
Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity

Figure 16. Litter along the rivers © Rijkswaterstaat, photo by Tineke Dijkstra

Nature is a lot more than only nitrogen sensitive areas. Dutch environmental policy focuses on reducing pollution in water, soil and air, addressing not only nitrogen but also other pressure factors. Several overarching programmes are in place to combat pollution, including the National Environmental Programme, the Clean Air Accord, the Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Circular Economy Implementation Programme.

Reducing the release of nutrients

Nutrient and manure policy

Water pollution is partly caused by the leaching of nutrients into groundwater and surface water. Active policies are in place to improve water quality, including through nutrient and manure management.

Nitrates Directive

Dutch manure policy aims to improve water quality by reducing the emissions from agriculture that adversely affect it. This concerns both nutrient leaching (mainly nitrogen) and runoff (mainly phosphate). Through this approach, the Netherlands implements the European Nitrates Directive, while also contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (see target 2). Under the Nitrates Directive, nitrate leaching must be limited (to below 50 mg/l nitrate), good agricultural practices must be encouraged, water quality must not deteriorate and eutrophication of surface waters must be prevented.[42]

The measures from the 7th Action Programme of the EU Nitrates Directive (7th AP) and the 2022-2025 derogation decision have been implemented. These include regulations on the mandatory application of buffer strips, the designation of nutrient-polluted areas (so-called 'NV areas', where the derogation will be phased out faster and the nitrogen application standard will be reduced by 20%), the designation of derogation-free zones around Natura 2000 sites, a strengthened approach in groundwater protection areas, the reduction of manure production ceilings, and regulations to encourage the sowing of catch crops.

The 7th AP ends on 31 December 2025. The 8th Action Programme (8th AP) is scheduled to take effect as of 2026. Preparations have started for this 8th AP, which aims to implement effective (mandatory and incentive) measures to improve water quality from 2026 to 2029 in terms of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) released by agricultural activities into groundwater and surface water.

[42] Eutrophication occurs when there is too much nitrogen and phosphorus in surface water, causing some species (algae, duckweed) to dominate and biodiversity to decline.

Good water and soil quality depends on the balanced and responsible use of fertilisers. It is therefore also important, amongst other things, to reuse manure in the production of new products. For some years now, the Netherlands has been striving to be able to use 'Renure' (animal manure that has been converted into mineral concentrate) as a circular fertiliser alongside animal manure. This will contribute to the circular use of animal manure.

Landscape features

The WFD focuses primarily on the ecological quality of surface water, and nutrients are an important aspect of this. Nutrient leaching by the agricultural sector leads to pollution of the soil and the surrounding landscapes. The development, management and restoration of landscape features is an important measure to counteract this pollution. For example, nature-friendly banks along watercourses and buffer zones around streams have a filtering and purifying function. As such, these features contribute greatly to improving the water quality in watercourses and are important for achieving the goals of the WFD. Landscape features can also capture atmospheric nitrogen, thereby reducing local deposition of substances, including ammonia. The same applies to reducing the spray drift of plant protection products.

Marine eutrophication

The MSFD also addresses the reduction of marine eutrophication[43] Eutrophication affects marine productivity, community composition, and thus the structure of the food web and the carrying capacity of ecosystems. Moreover, large algal blooms due to eutrophication can threaten both biodiversity and human health.

One of the strategic goals of the OSPAR North East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030 is to counter eutrophication. Within OSPAR, work is underway to harmonise monitoring techniques and analyses, and develop threshold values and joint measures. Dutch and European policies aimed at reducing nitrogen and phosphate/phosphorus on land and in surface waters contribute significantly to meeting the marine targets.

Nitrogen

Efforts are underway to reduce nitrogen emissions through various pathways. In the Nitrogen Reduction and Nature Improvement Programme, various source measures have been implemented to reduce emissions by agriculture, mobility, construction and industry. For several fast-track and frontrunner projects under this programme, the Dutch government allocated funding in November 2022 and again in June and December 2024. Based on the peak load approach ("piekbelasting"), efforts are also being made to reduce nitrogen deposition in the short term via, amongst other things, the 'National cessation scheme for livestock farms plus' (("Landelijke beëindigings-regeling veehouderijlocaties plus", Lbv-plus). Additional funding has been made available to accommodate all applications under the Lbv-plus scheme.[44]The current government has continued all the measures adopted by the previous government and is also developing new nitrogen policy to shift the focus from deposition-based to emission-based regulation. This approach consists of a combination of area-based measures, generic measures (such as a broad buy-out scheme), and targeted management at the farm level via a system of farm-specific standards for nitrogen and climate emissions.[45]

Reducing the use of plant protection products, biocides and other chemicals

The second pillar for reducing pollution concerns reducing the risks arising from the use of plant protection products, biocides and chemicals, including 'substances of very high concern', such as PFAS.

Plant protection products

National plant protection policy, including the use of plant protection products, is set out in the Implementation Programme for the Vision for the Future of Plant Protection 2030[46] and the updated National Action Plan on the sustainable use of plant protection products 2022-2025. The policy on approval and authorisation of plant protection products has been extensively harmonised through the EU Plant Protection Products Regulation,[47] which prohibits the use of substances and products until such use has been confirmed as safe for humans, animals and the environment through independent scientific risk assessments.

---

43 A Good Environmental Status for eutrophication in marine waters is achieved where: "Human-induced eutrophication is minimised, especially adverse effects thereof, such as losses in biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, harmful algae blooms and oxygen deficiency in bottom waters".

44 Parliamentary Paper 30252, no. 149 (23 January 2024), Voortgang aanpak piekbelasting.

45 Parliamentary Paper 35334, no. 323 (29 November 2024) Inzet op Stikstofemissiereductie.

46 Ministry of LVVN (2020) Uitvoeringsprogramma Toekomstvisie gewasbescherming 2030.

47 Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market.

The policy on sustainable use of plant protection products is largely based on the European Directive on sustainable use of pesticides,[48] supplemented by national policies from the 2030 Implementation Programme. The ambitions include promoting innovation and precision agriculture, encouraging green alternatives, and intensifying the transition towards integrated pest management that avoids the use of chemical plant protection products as much as possible. The government will continue to implement the policies under the 2030 Implementation Programme and respect the independent scientific advice provided by the designated competent authorities when making decisions about European approval and national authorisation of plant protection products.

Figure 17. Strip cropping at Farm of the Future in Wageningen. One of the benefits of strip cropping is that it increases biodiversity on the farm and reduces crop diseases. © Netherlands Enterprise Agency, photo by Martijn Beekman

Plant protection policy aims to reduce the dependence on chemical plant protection products, especially the products with the highest risk. Furthermore, the policy is aimed at reducing environmental impact, monitoring health effects on local residents and ensuring that the application of plant protection products is safe for humans, animals and the environment. The 2030 Implementation Programme and 2022-2025 National Action Plan focus on three strategic goals for 2030: resilient plants and cropping systems, connecting agriculture and nature, and virtually zero emissions and residues on products. Specifically to comply with the WFD, the ambition is to have virtually no exceedances of environmental standards in surface water by 2027. In November 2024, the monitoring report for the Implementation Programme was delivered, describing the progress on all strategic goals.[49] The report describes 16 indicators. Amongst other findings, there is a downward trend in the amount of active substances sold since 2020, and accompanied by a strong upward trend in the sale of low-risk substances (so-called 'green substances').
An annual plan and monitoring report are prepared and shared with the House of Representatives each year.

[48] Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides.

[49] Parliamentary Paper 27858, no. 683. (26 November 2024) Gewasbeschermingsbeleid | Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal.

Biocides

The policy on approval and authorisation of biocides is based on the European Biocidal Products Regulation.[50] Specifically for the national biocides policy, the Netherlands adopted a strategic framework in October 2023 outlining three pathways for biocides policy:[51] 1) preventing unwanted organisms and reducing avoidable use of biocides; 2) ensuring an adequate package of products (such as biocides) and measures; and 3) promoting a harmonised European market with an efficient assessment system. These pathways are central to the continued national and European implementation and further development of the European Biocidal Products Regulation. An important part of the strategic framework is the principle of integrated pest management, where preventive or non-chemical measures are prioritised over the use of (hazardous) chemicals.

Chemical substances

The Netherlands works to prevent and reduce individual and combined human and environmental exposure to harmful chemicals and materials under international and national strategic chemicals policy. The Dutch policy on chemicals is guided by the European Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability.[52] The Netherlands is actively contributing to ensuring the complete and balanced implementation of this strategy and is committed to faster identification of environmental and health risks of both existing and newly developed chemicals and materials, for example by actively contributing to the application of the European Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH). In European forums, for example, the Netherlands has called attention to the unknown risks of advanced materials that are important for innovative solutions in the energy transition. There are also international efforts to speed up the response to environmental and health risks, and the Netherlands is helping to establish a Science Policy Panel on chemicals, pollution and waste. At the European level, the Netherlands is further committed to strengthening the Industrial Emissions Directive to reduce emissions from industrial installations to better protect people and the environment, and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the revised version of the REACH regulation (expected in late 2025). The Netherlands also advocates to accelerate the validation of globally recognised standards for test methods, so that risks can be identified at an early stage.

When harmful environmental and health risks become apparent at a later stage of use of chemicals and materials, the Netherlands acts proactively to mitigate these risks.

Efforts to reduce marine contaminants are also underway through the MSFD. A Good Environmental Status is achieved when: "Concentrations of contaminants are at levels not giving rise to pollution effects". One of the strategic goals of the OSPAR North East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030 is to counter contaminants. The earlier described Dutch and European policies aimed at reducing chemical contamination on land and in surface waters make a major contribution to achieving the marine targets. Another key pillar is the reduction of pollution by maritime shipping through the implementation of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). This is done via Dutch and European policies and regulations for seaports, for vessels under the Dutch flag, and through enforcement by the Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate.

PFAS

A specific case under the REACH Regulation concerns the PFAS restriction. PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are harmful to the environment and human and animal health, and are found in, amongst other things, food, surface water, drinking water, soil and consumer products. The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Norway and Sweden submitted a restriction proposal to the European Chemicals Agency to prohibit PFAS under the European REACH regulations.[53] This proposal aims to limit the use of PFAS and products containing PFAS as much as possible in order to minimise risks to health and the environment.

In anticipation of the restriction, the Government of the Netherlands is working with the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW) in the PFAS action programme. This action programme seeks to reduce and replace PFAS in existing industrial processes, ensuring that the use of PFAS by industry is reduced even before the restriction comes into effect. The Netherlands has launched a PFAS research programme to this end (with a budget of €6.5 million). Between 2022 and 2025,

---

[50] Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products.

[51] Government of the Netherlands (2023) Strategisch kader voor de inzet van biociden bij het voorkomen en beheersen van ongewenste organismen.

[52] European Commission (n.d.) Chemicals Strategy (accessed 30 April 2024).

[53] European Chemicals Agency (n.d.) ECHA publishes PFAS restriction proposal (accessed 30 April 2024).

this research programme will examine the potential human and environmental exposure pathways to PFAS, with the aim of generating potential courses of action for dealing with PFAS in food and drinking water.[54]

Emission policy for Substances of Very High Concern

Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) are substances that are highly dangerous to humans and the environment. SVHC have been identified by the European Union as meeting one or more of the criteria in Article 57 of the European REACH Regulation. The criteria in Article 57 of the REACH Regulation include: carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic substances, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances, as well as very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances, and substances of similar concern (such as endocrine disruptors). The aim is to eliminate all SVHC from the living environment. This also applies to emissions. The Environment and Planning Act and underlying regulations set rules for SVHC that may be emitted during commercial activities. The following sources can be used to determine whether a substance qualifies as an SVHC: the SVHC list on the website of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), the website of the European Chemicals Agency (self-classification), and information on substance properties provided by the manufacturer. The SVHC emission policy requires companies that emit SVHC to prevent their release into the environment, and if this is not possible, to reduce emissions as much as possible, for example through source control. Businesses engaging in environmentally harmful activities under Article 5.4.3 of the Environmental Activities Decree must update the SVHC emission database at least once every 5 years. This results in a national overview of the reduction of SVHC emissions. Once every five years, businesses must submit an 'Avoidance and Reduction Programme' to the competent authority which describes current SVHC emissions and the measures and techniques implemented to reduce these. The business must implement new best available techniques if these become feasible and affordable. If the best available techniques are not sufficient to adequately protect the living environment, more far-reaching measures are required for the activity to be permitted at the location.

Work is also ongoing to prevent soil and water pollution in Defence areas. The Ministry of Defence uses a management system to this end. This system includes processes to ensure, amongst other things, that the applicable legal requirements and standards for SVHC are known, that the applicable rules are included in the internal operational processes, that permits are updated as required, and that compliance with the permits and other legal requirements is monitored.

Soil contamination

Efforts to reduce soil contamination have been underway since the 1980s. Soil policy focuses on addressing historical source sites with unacceptable risks to humans, the environment, or for the spread of contamination (priority sites) by the local governments responsible for soil remediation (Soil Protection Legislation and the Environment and Planning Act). Soil is also contaminated by substances that have only recently come into focus, such as PFAS, or substances that are harmful in lower concentrations than previously thought, such as diffuse lead contaminations. Additionally, work is being done to phase out and ensure aftercare for particularly large historical contaminations. These clean-up efforts are usually coordinated with spatial developments to keep remediation costs manageable. As these involve major challenges, for which the costs often cannot be borne by individual local governments, financial support is made available. Administrative agreements have been made between the national government and local governments to this end.[55] These agreements aim to control existing historical soil contaminations by 2030, at the latest. Agreements have also been made on knowledge development and sharing, robust implementation and governance.

Within the framework of the 'Water and Soil Guiding Policy (see target 1), strategic choices have been made to promote healthy soils. With regard to soil contamination, this involves recalibrating the approach to both existing and diffuse soil contamination, focusing on minimising risks to humans and the environment.

Soil restoration is also a key theme under the National Soil, Soil Subsurface and Groundwater Programme. This includes attention on the spatial planning component of soil restoration, while also taking the physical and biological aspects of the soil into account. To this end, indicators are being developed to measure soil health in a broad sense. Goals can be set based on these indicators. This makes soil biodiversity an integral part of soil quality. The development of European Soil Monitoring Law is part of this broadening process.

[54] RIVM (n.d.) PFAS (accessed 30 April 2024).

[55] Parliamentary Paper 30015, no. 111 (21 December 2022) Bestuurlijke afspraken Bodem en ondergrond en verdeling bodemsaneringsmiddelen.

Marine litter and plastic pollution

Marine litter

Under the MSFD, in addition to existing measures, additional measures have been defined to tackle marine litter. The Netherlands focuses on the prevention of marine litter by implementing an integrated source approach, raising awareness and closing product supply chains. Dutch efforts to tackle marine litter take place in different contexts at the local, national, regional and global levels. The Programme of Measures of the MSFD focuses on a national approach with measures in six clusters: education and awareness, beaches, river basins, shipping, fisheries and plastic products. Later this year, the effectiveness of these policies will be assessed with the publication of the draft Marine Strategy Part 1.

In addition, the Netherlands works on the coherent implementation of the MSFD at the regional level, using regional marine conventions. For the Netherlands, this is the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, or the OSPAR Convention. The Netherlands actively participates in OSPAR, to implement the OSPAR Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter II, which aims to prevent and significantly reduce marine litter (at macro, meso and micro levels) and ultimately eliminate the inflow of litter into the sea. The Netherlands has also been actively working within the IMO for many years to tackle plastic marine litter from ships by means of relevant IMO instruments (such as legislation and the development of guidelines), with the aim of eliminating marine litter from ships.

Plastic pollution

The Netherlands is taking various measures to prevent plastic pollution by implementing European directives and national policies, including:

- Implementation of the European Single-use Plastic Directive (SUP directive).
- Implementation of deposits on small plastic bottles and cans.
- Implementation of the Plastic Bag Directive: retailers may not provide free plastic bags to their customers.
- Implementation of the European Directive on Port facilities for waste from ships.
- Implementation of the microplastics policy programme, including measures to prevent litter at the source. For example, there is a programme aimed at preventing litter in rivers, such as from river cruise vessels (with a budget of €8 million until 2025). The follow-up to this policy programme is currently being developed.
- The Netherlands is also exploring the possibility of a European prohibition on cigarette filters. This could be incorporated in the review of the SUP Directive or the Tobacco Products Directive.

In 2018, the Netherlands adopted a circular economy transition agenda for plastics. The goal for 2050 is to close the plastic cycle by using plastics in smarter and more economical ways and by using more high-quality secondary raw materials and biomass. The Netherlands is committed to tackling pollution, including plastic pollution, at the global level. Negotiations are ongoing at the UN level to develop a UN treaty on plastic pollution worldwide, which was initially planned for completion in 2024. The Netherlands has been advocating for the development of an ambitious, legally binding UN treaty that covers the entire plastic life cycle. The negotiations will resume in 2025. The Netherlands aligns itself with the EU High Ambition Coalition (HAC) to end plastic pollution.

Microplastics

Microplastics are small plastic particles (<5 mm) that end up in water, soil and the air due to wear and tear of products, or because they are intentionally added to products. There is growing evidence that the current level of exposure to microplastics may be harmful to human and ecosystem health. The government is taking precautionary measures to prevent and reduce emissions of microplastics.

The main sources of microplastics include plastic packaging, car tyres, plastic granules (pellets), agricultural plastics, textiles and paint. Examples of the source-based approach to plastics and microplastics are:

- Litter: Prohibition on disposable plastics such as straws, plates, cutlery and, in the near future, cups and meal containers. There is a programme aimed at preventing litter in rivers, such as from river cruise vessels (with a budget of €8 million until 2025).
- Pellets: Exploratory study into preventing pellets from being released from production sites, for example by imposing additional requirements in the permitting process. In addition, a European Directive on pellets is in development, whereby the Netherlands is advocating for an ambitious directive. Trialogues negotiations are set to begin in 2025.
- Car tyres: The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (IenW) is funding a European project to develop an improved car tyre that wears down less and so releases fewer microplastics.
- Agricultural and horticultural plastics: In early 2024, the Ministry of IenW conducted a survey on the impact of agricultural and horticultural plastics in the Netherlands.

Under the REACH Regulation, the marketing of products containing intentionally added microplastics (such as cosmetics) has been prohibited since 2023. Some applications have been directly prohibited, while others will follow in the coming years. However, this concerns a relatively small proportion (around 1%) of all microplastics

released into the environment. Recent research by the RIVM shows that the three largest sources of microplastics are 1) tyre wear on road surfaces, 2) plastic pellets used by industry for plastic products, and 3) plastic waste. Smaller sources of microplastics include paint, clothing, rubber granules used for artificial turf, and certain pesticides.
The European Commission has introduced a comprehensive package of policy measures to prevent microplastics from unintentionally ending up in the environment.
This package is part of the EU Plastic Strategy. The EU also adopted the Zero Pollution Action Plan in 2021: "Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil", which is part of European Green Deal. The Netherlands supports the goals of the EU Zero Pollution Action Plan.

The Netherlands proposes including product design requirements in the elaboration of the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation. To build knowledge on the effects of microplastics on human health, the Ministry of IenW is investing approximately €1 million, and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport around €6 million, until 2025. This knowledge development is coordinated by ZonMw. The Ministry of IenW is also investing in knowledge development on the effects of microplastics on ecosystem health. This knowledge development is conducted by the RIVM. In 2023, the RIVM carried out research into the primary sources of microplastics and options to mitigate these. Furthermore, the Ministry of IenW has asked the RIVM to identify the existing knowledge and knowledge gaps regarding microplastics in the soil and to develop a risk assessment framework for this.

As part of the National Growth Fund, €220 million has been allocated to the Circular Plastics NL project.[56]
This project aims to encourage plastics recycling by removing the current bottlenecks. The Ministry of IenW has earmarked €1.7 million for research into plastic biodegradability, so that in the future, plastics that unintentionally end up in the environment will no longer be harmful.

To determine how much plastic is present in surface water, in compliance with the monitoring obligations under the Groundwater Directive of the MSFD, the Ministry of IenW is developing a monitoring methodology and strategy for micro-, meso- and macroplastics in surface waters.
The development of the method for monitoring microplastics was completed in 2022, and will be validated between 2023 and 2025, after which the monitoring programme will be launched to assess the presence of microplastics in the Meuse and Rhine.

Overarching Dutch pollution control programmes

National Environmental Policy Plan

The National Environmental Policy Plan (NMP) is currently under development and aims to achieve a healthy, clean and safe living environment by 2050. As described in the Letters to the House of Representatives on the NMP (July 2022, July 2023 and May 2024), this living environment includes humans, animals, plants and all other living organisms. The NMP also refers to the three crises identified by the UN (climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution) and their interrelationships. The NMP focuses particularly on the issue of pollution. Besides human health, the NMP also includes goals and ambitions for the quality of water and soil (and water and soil systems).
By 2050, Dutch ecosystems should be healthy and resilient. The ecosystems in water, soil and air are diverse, with many different types of plants, animals and organisms, which exist in a natural balance. Only then can they provide valuable and sustainable ecosystem services to society. The NMP's goals and ambitions are also reflected in the biodiversity plan.

Air quality

Thanks to effective source-based policy, emissions from road traffic, industry and energy have fallen substantially, and acid rain no longer occurs in the Netherlands.[57]
Almost all of the Netherlands meets current EU air quality standards.[58] However, in line with the revised European Ambient Air Quality Directive, new, stricter standards will apply from 2030.[59] The new directive requires EU countries to meet WHO advisory levels by 2050. These levels are even lower than the revised EU levels and are purely based on health effects.

[56] Government of the Netherlands (n.d.), Circular Plastics NL.
[57] Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO Indicator 008114, Relatie ontwikkelingen emissies en luchtkwaliteit, 1990-2021.
[58] European Commission (n.d.) EU air quality standards.
[59] Informatiepunt Leefomgeving (2024) Europese Raad geeft groen licht voor aanscherping luchtkwaliteitseisen.

The Clean Air Accord is a covenant between the national government, provinces and more than 120 municipalities. The participating parties aim to jointly achieve at least 50% more health gains by reducing air pollution emissions by 2030 compared to 2016. The SLA started in early 2020 with the idea of also preventing the health damage caused by emissions lower than currently prescribed by the EU standards. The RIVM reviews whether the goal is still feasible every two years. According to the RIVM, the goal is currently just within reach,[60] but this depends on the full implementation of the SLA measures and the achievement of the climate and nitrogen targets. This is because lower nitrogen emissions lead to less nitrogen dioxide (direct health gain) but also to fewer ammonia emissions and which in turn reduces the formation of harmful fine particulate matters.[61] Policies to prevent greenhouse gases often lead to a reduction in combustion processes that release nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates. As such, climate policies almost always benefit air quality, except when they are based on biofuels, which are often more harmful than the fuels they replace.[62]

Water Framework Directive

The WFD is a European directive that aims to achieve a good chemical and ecological status of surface and groundwater. The river basin management plans for the Rhine, Meuse, Ems and Scheldt for the period 2022-2027 set out the targets and measures for both national water quality policy and area-based measures. This includes about 65 generic policy and other measures and 1,700 area-based measures which contribute to a good ecological and chemical status. Some of these measures involve modifying the physical design of water systems, for example by constructing nature-friendly banks, creating fish passes at hydraulic barriers, and creating special habitats for flora and fauna. The measures must be implemented by the end of 2027.

In the Netherlands, there are a total of about 750 water bodies that fall under the WFD, with about 140 goals per water body. This amounts to a total of over 100,000 goals to meet. We have already met more than three-quarters of these goals. However, based on the European 'one-out-all-out' principle, almost no water bodies in the Netherlands currently meet all the requirements. Over the past few years, the Netherlands has invested heavily in improving water quality. But this is a complex task, with challenges, risks and bottlenecks for implementation.

Therefore, in early 2023, the national government, provinces and water boards launched the joint WFD Impulse Programme under the leadership of the Minister of IenW to make every possible effort to comply with the WFD by the end of 2027.

Continuous efforts are necessary in the area of prevention policy regarding, for instance, industrial emissions, plant protection products, biocides, discharges from ships and the prohibition on anti-fouling agents (Tributyltin hydride, TBT), as is the continuation of measures following from various other EU conventions, such as the IMO's International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships.

Impulse Programme for Chemical Substances

Various policy areas focus on improving the quality of the living environment. For example, the national Emissions Policy for Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs) is aimed at preventing – or where this is not possible, minimising – emissions of chemicals. Additionally, there are regulations for air quality, soil quality and the use of biocides.

In December 2022, the Impulse Programme for Chemical Substances (2023-2026) was presented to the House of Representatives. This programme aims to address bottlenecks in the implementation of chemicals policy, thereby contributing to a healthy and clean living environment. The programme also facilitates the strengthening required for effective implementation and helps to bridge knowledge gaps such as the approach to the accumulation and dispersion of substances, knowledge development, and better regulatory coherence. The Impulse Programme for Chemical Substances applies a project-based approach to work towards the goal of minimising these SVHCs and further promoting national and European substances policies.[63] The Impulse Programme for Chemical Substances intersects with various policy domains and so contributes to coherent chemicals policies, for example as these affect the air, water and soil. This programme will also work to resolve any knowledge gaps and bottlenecks identified by various evaluations.[64] The main objective remains to prevent and reduce environmental pollution by hazardous chemical substances. This also includes efforts to strengthen permitting processes, especially concerning persistent substances and the accumulation of hazardous

[60] RIVM (2024) Monitoringsrapportage Doelbereik Schone Lucht Akkoord.
[61] Environmental Health Atlas (n.d.) Stikstofdioxide (NO_2).
[62] RIVM (n.d.) Gezondheidsimpact van biobrandstoffen.
[63] Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (2022) – Impulsprogramma Chemische Stoffen (2023-2026).
[64] Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (2022) Evaluatie ZZS-emissiebeleid 2016-2021 | Rapport | Rijksoverheid.nl; IPO, VNG and Omgevingsdienst NL (2022) ZZS Decentraal, VNG, IPO, ODs.

chemicals in the living environment. Businesses must continuously strive to reduce their emissions of substances of very high concern.

European legislation on pollution prevention

In addition to the aforementioned European directives and regulations, the following European directives also contribute to achieving the target: the First Zero Pollution Monitoring and Outlook, the European Commission's proposal for Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products, the Circular Economy Action Plan, the upcoming proposals on microplastics and objective 2 of the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters. The European Biodiversity Strategy (EBS) has also set a goal to reduce nutrient pollution from fertilisers by 2030 (EBS T13) and to mitigate the risks of pesticides and SVHCs (EBS T6).

Target 8.
Minimise the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience

Figure 18. Weerribben-Wieden National Park. © Nadine Kliffen / IUCN NL

To safeguard our food security, health, protection against flooding and the living environment, the government is taking measures to ensure that the Netherlands can adapt to current and future climate change (climate adaptation). Examples of such measures include afforestation, climate buffers such as creating more space for rivers, and the promotion of heat-resilient building construction.

In addition to climate adaptation, by 2030, greenhouse gas emissions in the Netherlands must be at least 55% lower than in 1990. The goal is to reduce emissions and promote carbon sequestration, for example by rewetting peatlands, managing agricultural soils more sustainably, implementing the Forest Strategy, and creating new wetlands. We are exploring the best ways to achieve this and are supporting farmers, horticulturists, public authorities and land managers to this end. With the Climate Plan 2025-2035, we are further preparing for the long-term climate goals, based on the obligations set out in the Climate Act.

Dutch policies that contribute to this target can be broadly divided into two tracks: climate adaptation policies and climate mitigation policies.

Climate adaptation

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management plays a coordinating and incentivising role in the national climate adaptation approach through two main programmes: the National Climate Adaptation Strategy (NAS) and the Delta Programme.

National Climate Adaptation Strategy

The NAS is the overarching Dutch climate adaptation strategy. The government's coalition programme states that the government will present a new NAS in 2026 with goals for infrastructure, the availability of freshwater, health, housing, cultural heritage, agriculture and nature.

The National Adaptation Plan, published in November 2023, established several principles and priorities for the revision of this NAS, including the formulation of concrete adaptation goals,[65] also for agriculture and nature. For example, the LVVN action programmes for climate adaptive agriculture and nature aim to ensure that, by 2030, all agricultural and horticultural businesses and nature area managers will be able to respond sustainably and effectively to climate change.

[65] Parliamentary Paper 31710-83 (23 November 2023) Nationaal Uitvoeringsprogramma Klimaatadaptatie, 31710-83.

Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Nature

Climate adaptation of and with nature is part of the NAS. To achieve resilient and climate-resistant nature and to use nature for climate adaptation, the Ministry of LVVN has drawn up the Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Nature. This programme aims to equip public authorities and land managers by 2030 with the tools to:

- Manage, and where possible mitigate, the impacts of the greatest climate risks for nature and biodiversity.
- Deploy nature-inclusive climate adaptation solutions in the physical living environment.
- Give climate adaptation of and with nature a structural place in policy and implementation in the physical living environment.

This applies to both existing and yet-to-be established nature, both inside and outside nature areas. To achieve this together with the stakeholders, and avoid disinvestments and maladaptation, three strategies will be deployed over the short, medium and long term:

1. Short term: optimisation of the current situation, such as more efficient use of the available water.
2. Medium term: responding to climate change by adapting to natural conditions.
3. Long term: transformation through fundamental and (eco)systemic changes.

Based on a shared vision for the future, this action programme helps public authorities and land managers to develop new practices (perspectives for action) and to scale up lessons learned and best practices so that together we will achieve a greater impact. The insights can then be incorporated in the further development of the area programmes and decision-making regarding the area of land to be set aside for the implementation of the Forest Strategy and the finalisation of the National Ecological Network (NEN). This will result in future-proof spatial planning of rural areas.

Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Agriculture

The Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Agriculture (AP KAL) has been shared with the House of Representatives in January 2020. The action programme consists of five pillars: water systems, soil systems, crops and cropping systems, and livestock farming. The supporting instruments are knowledge and innovation, a regional approach and risk management. In July 2022, the House of Representatives was informed about the continuation of the AP KAL (2023-2027).[66] The programme will henceforth focus more on the longer-term perspectives for action for farmers and horticulturists, e.g. the improved management of salinisation, the use of more robust varieties, crops and cultivation systems, and improved risk management. Farmers can contribute to improving biodiversity and addressing other local and regional challenges by applying soil and water measures to improve the soil-water balance. The programme follows the Ministry of IenW's Water and Soil Guiding Policy (in spatial planning choices).

Natura 2000 sites and the Birds and Habitats Directives

The Birds and Habitats Directive (BHD) requires the conservation of the most important nature areas (Natura 2000) in the Netherlands. Making Natura 2000 sites climate-resilient (also required under the BHD) requires many of the same types of measures that are needed to achieve the current conservation objectives: restoring hydrology, buffering external influences, improving connectivity and reducing other pressure factors. Measures can be tailored to enhance the positive contributions of nature restoration measures to climate adaptation. Nature restoration can also play an important role in mitigating climate change and its effects, for example through coastal protection, water storage, and greenhouse gas sequestration in forests, peat soils, grasslands and tidal marshes. The efforts to achieve the BHD will strengthen the resilience and robustness of the natural environment, in particular against the effects of climate change.

NL 2120 Knowledge and Innovation Programme

The Dutch government is investing €110 million from the National Growth Fund (€40 million of which is conditional) in the NL 2120 Knowledge and Innovation Programme. In this programme, public authorities, nature organisations, engineering firms, dredging companies and knowledge and professional institutions are working together to develop nature-based solutions to major challenges in the areas of climate, nature-inclusive agriculture, biodiversity and housing. For more information, see target 11.

Delta Programme

The national Delta Programme is a thematic and area-based programme which runs until 2050 that is aimed at protecting the Netherlands from flooding and ensuring an adequate freshwater supply and water-robust and climate-resistant spatial planning. For example, through the Flood Protection Programme, which includes reinforcing the primary flood defences (dykes and dunes), where possible in combination with

[66] Parliamentary Paper 35925-XIV-159 (7 July 2022) Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaten van het Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit (XIV) en het Diergezondheidsfonds (F) voor het jaar 2022 | Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal.

nature objectives. The Delta Programme for Freshwater Supply is implementing measures to ensure rainwater is retained longer in soils in both urban and rural areas, and to increase its infiltration to groundwater. Additionally, the fresh water supply in the IJsselmeer region is being safeguarded and gradually increased through river discharge management. The Delta Plan for Spatial Adaptation (DPRA) encompasses measures and projects to achieve a water-robust and climate-resistant Netherlands by 2050.

National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy

The National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy[67] was presented to the House of Representatives on 6 July 2022.

Experts warn that climate change could increase the risk of zoonotic diseases, with temperate areas like the Netherlands possibly experiencing an increase due to growing populations of mosquitoes and ticks, as well as the introduction of new vectors (e.g. the tiger mosquito) and new pathogens. When taking measures to manage the impacts of climate change, it is important to avoid creating potential vector hotspots and to be alert for both direct and indirect public health risks when creating green and blue spaces to benefit people. For example, innovative water concepts[68] aimed at counteracting the impact of climate change can both reduce and increase zoonotic risks. As part of the action plan, guidelines will be drawn up for local governments to use when making policy decisions.

Climate mitigation

Climate Act

In 2016, the European Union (including the Netherlands) signed the Paris Agreement. The goal of this agreement is to limit global warming to below 2°C, while aiming for 1.5°C.

To achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, the EU Member States have agreed to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. The EU aims to be climate neutral by 2050, which means net zero emissions of greenhouse gases. This is enshrined in European Climate Law.

The Dutch Climate Act sets targets for the Netherlands to achieve a 55% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. Another national goal is to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. This means that by 2050, the Netherlands will produce almost no greenhouse gas emissions, and those that remain will be offset domestically or within Europe by storing greenhouse gases, for example in forests or underground.

At the intersection of climate mitigation and biodiversity goals, programmes including the Forest Strategy, the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features and the National Peatland Programme are particularly relevant, as they have explicit objectives to contribute to both challenges.

Figure 19. In the middle of the 'Green Heart' ('Groene Hart') are the Nieuwkoopse Plassen, a vast lowland peat bog area. The Dutch Society for Nature Conservation is cooperating with farmers to manage the land surrounding Nieuwkoopse Plassen. © Rob Poelenjee

[67] Parliamentary Paper (6 July 2022), Nationaal Actieplan versterken Zoönosenbeleid, 25295-1935.

[68] RIVM (2017) https://www.rivm.nl/publicaties/waterkwaliteitscheck-voor-nieuwe-en-bestaande-stedelijk-waterconcepten-belang-van.

Forest Strategy

The National Climate Agreement includes a statutory objective of 0.4-0.8 Mtonne of annual additional carbon sequestration in forests, trees and nature. Efforts to this end include increasing forest area, landscape features and agroforestry, future-proofing existing forests, and measures in 'wet nature', such as marshes, peatlands and coastal ecosystems, as well as small waters and riverbanks.

These measures can partly be implemented in synergy with nature goals, such as the area of forest that contributes to both the climate objectives and the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directive (BHD), and forest restoration measures that also contribute to the objectives of the Nature Restoration Regulation. Planting forests in the major river area (in particular the creation of riparian forests) will improve biodiversity, create additional water storage capacity for climate adaptation, reduce water depletion in the floodplains, and contribute to the Natura 2000 conservation objectives. The creation and restoration of characteristic (riparian) forests in the major river area falls under the ambition for the large waters. The objectives of the Forest Strategy are as follows:

- An additional 37,400 hectares of forest.
- A quality boost to existing forested areas.
- 10% of the rural land area covered by the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features.
- Development of agroforestry.
- Encourage high-quality wood use.
- An additional 14,000 hectares of natural forest within existing and new forests.

Green Blue Network of Landscape Features

The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features programme aims to create an extensive network of natural and semi-natural landscape features in rural areas. The objective of 10% Green Blue Network of Landscape Features by 2050 stems from the objective of the Landscape Action Plan, which in itself is a further elaboration of the Climate Agreement, and is included in the Forest Strategy. As such, the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features forms part of the national implementation of the legal obligations of the Nature Restoration Regulation, the BHD, the Water Framework Directive and the Climate Act. The contribution of the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features to the Nature Restoration Regulation will be further defined, partly in continuation of the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features objective as included in the Landscape Action Plan.

The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features is implemented through the establishment, management and restoration of various landscape features. Woody landscape features such as hedges, hedgerows and shelterbelts reduce wind speed and thus also evaporation. They also increase the water retention capacity of the soil and provide a refuge for local and migrating biodiversity. The vegetation in herbaceous margins serves as important biodiversity corridors, for example for wild pollinators in the rural area. Nature-friendly banks and the restoration of buffer zones around streams help to filter the water, prevent nutrients leaching, and retain water. As such, the integration of the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features in the rural area contributes not only to carbon sequestration, but also to the vitality and resilience of Dutch nature and agriculture, so making our food supply more resilient to climate change and the associated weather extremes.

National Peatland Programme

The National Climate Agreement has set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from peatlands and wetlands by 1 Mtonne annually from 2030 onwards, as part of an adaptive and area-based strategy coordinated by the provinces. Besides reducing peat degradation and greenhouse gas emissions, secondary goals of the strategy include preventing soil subsidence, creating climate-resilient water systems, achieving good soil and water quality, preserving cultural, historical and landscape values, and strengthening biodiversity (realisation of the NEN, biodiversity in agricultural areas). Efforts to this end include raising water levels and applying water infiltration systems to rewet peatlands and prevent peat degradation, and planting water-resistant crops. Some of these measures can be achieved in synergy with nature objectives, such as creating wetlands. Such nature-based solutions that align with the characteristics of the soil and water system can also enhance landscape values and promote biodiversity. Important enabling conditions for this comprehensive strategy are that it offers farmers in peat grassland regions better prospects while also conserving and strengthening the vitality and liveability of the rural area. The current government's boost to agri-environment and climate measures is providing farmers, including in the peatland areas, with a better outlook.

Figure 20. Greenhouse gas emissions from peat degradation. Source: National Research Programme into Greenhouse Gases produced by Peat Grasslands.

National Programme on Agricultural Soils

The National Programme on Agricultural Soils (NPL) is working with parties in the agriculture supply chain to develop an area-based strategy to achieve sustainable agricultural soils. The aim is to sustainably manage all agricultural soils from 2030 onwards, and to sequester an additional 0.5 Mtonne CO_2-eq. of carbon in mineral agricultural soils each year, in line with the Climate Agreement. Sustainably managed soils emit fewer greenhouse gases. In addition, additional soil carbon sequestration makes the soil more resilient to drought, heat, salinisation and excess rainfall.

Farmers for Bio-Based Construction

Hemp cultivation is an emerging market. This crop helps to reduce the carbon footprint, restores soil structure, and reduces the use of plant protection products and fertilisers.
Farm Contractor Hofmeijer has made substantial investments to support farmers in this area. Amongst other things, they have developed specialised knowledge and purchased suitable agricultural machinery.
Farmer Herman Pieter Prangsma is one of the farmers who is growing fibre hemp. With his business Boerderij Kreel, he contributes to several nature objectives, including with hedgerows, trees and ponds.

North Sea Agreement

In the North Sea Agreement,[69] the Dutch government and other stakeholders are jointly working on the three major transitions on the North Sea: energy, nature and food, and their interrelationships. The Netherlands is committed to the North Sea Agreement, which, for example, states that the rollout of offshore wind must take place within the ecological carrying capacity of the North Sea.
The Agreement comprises a balanced package of agreements on the sustainable use of the North Sea up to 2030, with an outlook to the period beyond. It includes provisions on how and when the agreements must be achieved, enabling innovations, transitions and mitigation for the benefit of nature and fisheries.

Offshore wind

The ecological side-effects of offshore wind are of great concern to the current government. In the policy for offshore wind energy and its implementation, the harmful effects of offshore wind infrastructure on nature are avoided as much as possible, and opportunities for nature enhancement are utilised where possible. Examples include: no offshore wind in protected nature areas, the shutdown protocol for bats, and the start-stop protocol during mass nocturnal migrations of birds. There are also regulations for nature-inclusive wind farm construction, such as regarding the size of the stones used (to attract cod and other species). Efforts are also being exerted to further strengthen the nature of the North Sea by including ecological criteria in the tender procedure for offshore wind farm permits. Further research is also being conducted into the effects of offshore wind farms, the effectiveness of mitigating measures and opportunities for nature enhancement.

[69] Physical Environment Consultative Council (2020) Het akkoord voor de Noordzee.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[70]

Water domain
Water is essential for humans and nature. The Water domain of the Agenda Nature Inclusive aims to cooperate with other sectors to make water the connecting and driving force for nature-inclusive spatial planning in the Netherlands. Water-related challenges are tackled with nature-based solutions and cleverly combined with biodiversity restoration and climate adaptation. This gives the water domain an important role and driving function that will benefit most of the targets in the biodiversity plan.

The ambition to mainstream nature-inclusive water management and work on its concrete implementation in the coming years will make an important contribution to target 8. Nature-based solutions will become a standard part of water management and the preferred solution for management measures in response to the water-related challenges. Iconic projects of frontrunners are leading the way in the development towards nature-inclusive water management and demonstrate how it works in practice and what benefits it offers. In addition, the nature-inclusive water sector works on connecting with other water and spatial planning programmes and promoting the implementation of nature-inclusive management in other sectors, such as agriculture, construction and infrastructure. There is also a focus on wind energy, shipping and fisheries to improve the marine ecology of the North Sea and Wadden Sea. These activities will be shaped by an integrated area and nature-inclusive approach to all ten nature-inclusive domains. Central to this approach are inspiring and iconic projects in the area of climate-adaptive water management, nature restoration and area development, a learning water community, and a national platform for nature-inclusive water management.

[70] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 9.
Manage Wild Species Sustainably To Benefit People

Figure 21. Hares in a field. © Government of the Netherlands, photo by Hugo de Wolf

The Netherlands has a system in place for hunting policy and wildlife management. This system and its potential further development are currently being reviewed in consultation with the provinces and other stakeholders, including hunters, farmers, land managers and animal welfare organisations. The government is a proponent of a balanced approach that serves both ecological and societal interests.

Hunting policy and wildlife management

Hunting for personal benefit is currently permitted in the Netherlands, during the hunting season, for the following species: hare, rabbit, wood pigeon, pheasant and mallard duck (provided that the conservation status of these animals is not at risk). Hunting as a source of food or income for local communities plays a negligible role in the Netherlands. Public authorities may grant permission to kill other species if they cause damage or nuisance. In such cases, it must be ensured that the killing does not contribute to a deterioration of the conservation status of the species, and that there are no satisfactory alternative solutions (see also target 5). Wild population management primarily occurs to prevent agricultural damage.
More than €55 million was distributed to compensate for agricultural damage in 2023.[71]

A system change of hunting policy and wildlife management is currently in preparation. The goal of the review is a future-proof system that ensures that the damage caused by fauna remains manageable and that species are sustainably protected. The system change will be implemented in cooperation with the provinces and the involved stakeholders, such as hunters and farmers' organisations. The new system will be evaluated in the light of European laws and regulations, in particular the Birds and Habitats Directives. It is expected that the formal process to propose the legislative amendment will be initiated in 2025.

[71] Bij12 (2024) Schadecijfers 2023.

Target 10.
Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry

Figure 22. Agri-environment and climate measures with herbaceous field margins. Flowers and herbs have several benefits, including natural pest control, crop pollination, increased biodiversity and improved water quality. © Regie Plattelandsontwikkelingsprogramma

10.1 AGRICULTURE

Biodiversity challenges are inseparable from the challenges for the agriculture sector. In fact, integrating nature and agriculture creates more room for both. The government supports agricultural and horticultural businesses in their efforts to further develop and innovate their operations, focusing on reducing emissions to achieve the goals for climate, nature, water (including the Water Framework Directive), nitrogen, odour nuisance and particulates. We reward agricultural and horticultural businesses for the valuable services they provide to society, for example in the areas of agri-environment and climate measures and biodiversity.

Common Agricultural Policy - National Strategic Plan

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2023-2027 offers more incentives to future-proof farming practices, with subsidies available for farmers who invest in the transition to sustainable farming. The CAP now focuses more strongly on its goals, including CAP objective 6, 'Protect biodiversity'.[72] Several interventions will contribute to achieving this objective.

Information on figure 23 below: 'Farmers working on a biodiverse landscape'.

1. Farmers are paid a basic premium if they meet a number of conditions. These conditions ensure that a Basic Quality of Nature is pursued across Europe.
2. armers who farm in a manner that is more nature-inclusive and provide green-blue ecosystem services are compensated through the eco-scheme. They can choose from a list of eco-activities that contribute to improving the quality of biodiversity, the landscape, water, air and soil, and the climate.
3. Farmers who implement agri-environment and climate measures (AECM) manage specific habitats for plant and animal species, including farmland birds, for example by delayed mowing or creating wetland areas..

[72] The objective is described in the CAP Basic Regulation (2021/2115) as follows: "f) contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem services and preserving habitats and landscapes".

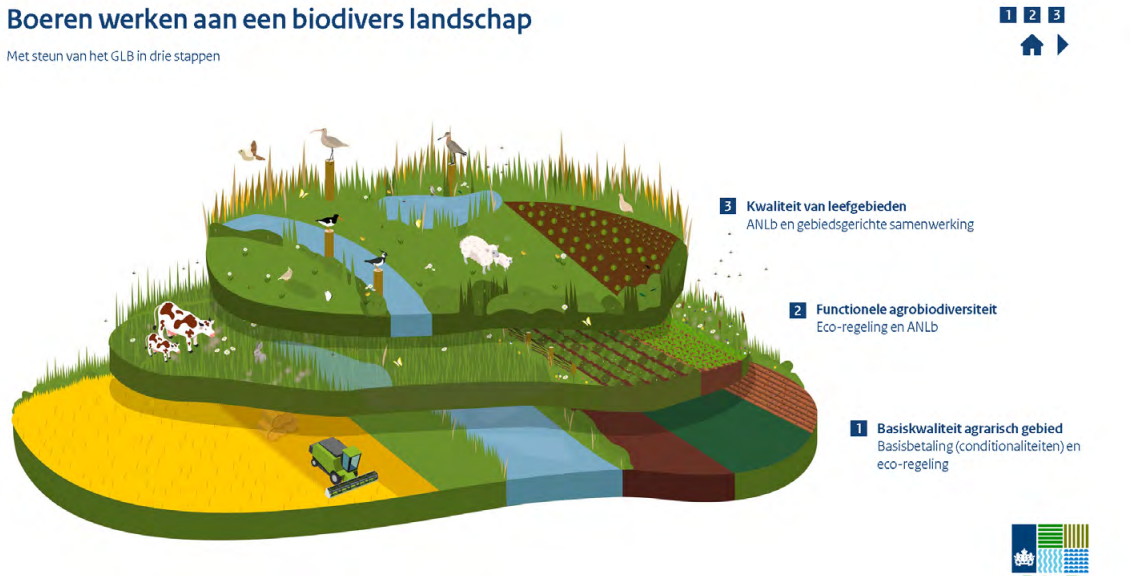


Figure 23. Farmers are working towards a more biodiverse landscape with support from the CAP in a three-stage approach; (1) basic quality of agricultural areas, (2) functional agrobiodiversity and (3) habitat quality. Source: The National Strategic Plan, Summary (published 08-12-2022)

The CAP also offers support to farmers to plant or create landscape features in their local environment. Together, these instruments contribute to the CAP 'green-blue architecture', thus improving habitats for plants and animals as well as the water quality. This is important for the protection of farmland birds, butterflies and bees, but also for fish and aquatic plants, and to create a strong ecosystem that also benefits future generations of farmers.

The achievement of the goals is also supported by the so-called 'conditionalities' or Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAECs),[73] the standards and requirements for obtaining CAP subsidies. If violations of these conditions occur, subsidies may be cut. By setting these conditions, the aim is to contribute to the improvement of climate, soil, water, biodiversity and landscape, public health and animal welfare. This includes, amongst other things, the 7th Dutch action programme concerning the Nitrates Directive and the Water Framework Directive (see target 7). The conditions apply to both first-pillar measures (European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)) and the AECM under the second-pillar (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)).

The National CAP Strategic Plan (CAP-NSP) contributes to biodiversity conservation and restoration in several ways. Various GAECs and activities under the eco-scheme contribute to this at the farm level and the individual field (parcel) level. An important GAEC for biodiversity is GAEC 8,[74] concerning the preservation of landscape features and the ban on felling hedges and trees during the breeding and growing season. Other contributions result from the ban on converting or ploughing permanent grassland that is designated as environmentally sensitive permanent grassland in Natura 2000 sites,[75] the conservation of permanent grassland, the creation of buffer strips along watercourses, and compulsory crop rotation. The eco-scheme stimulates the use of field margins, strip cropping, cover and catch crops, longer grazing seasons, herb-rich grassland, farm-grown fodder/protein crops, woodlands and long-term grassland, as well as organic agriculture.

The biodiversity protection goals for 2027 are as follows:
- Biodiversity conservation and restoration activities take place on 60% of cultivated land. Management is improved at 22% of Natura 2000 sites.
- Management of 65,000 hectares of landscape.
- Farmers receive support for preserving 170,000 rare domestic animals.

[73] The European Commission has proposed to amend some GAECs. This did not include an assessment of the impact on biodiversity and other goals. The Netherlands has asked the European Commission to carry out this assessment.

[74] The condition to maintain a 4% share of land as non-productive has been dropped as a result of the Regulation. Based on Implementing Regulation 2024/587, for 2024, the Netherlands will apply the derogation to the requirement that at least 4% of arable land in use by the farmer on the reference date must be non-productive land, to the extent that landscape features are located on or adjacent to arable land.

[75] An exception to the ploughing ban is made for sites that fall under the Birds and Habitats Directives.

- 1,330 farms receive investment support for improving biodiversity and 800 investments are being made in rural areas to improve nature, the environment and the climate.
- 6.5% of the agricultural area in the Netherlands is under organic production or transitioning to organic.

These targets were set in consultation with the provinces and the European Commission during the preparation of the CAP NSP for the period 2023-2027, based on the estimated potential in the Netherlands that could be achieved with the available CAP funds. Targets (result indicators) are an important means of assessing the ambitions and progress of the CAP NSP. Progress is reported annually, and there is a two-yearly review with the European Commission to ascertain if the CAP NSP needs to be adjusted.

Several CAP-NSP interventions are still being developed, taking into account the practical experiences of farmers and public authorities (including from pilot projects). With the financial enhancements for AECM (€500 million annually from 2026), the government makes an important contribution to achieving the nature, water and climate goals, while offering realistic revenue models for farmers through the proposed long-term compensation scheme. In the first few years, the investments will focus on areas, for example the development of landscape features on farms.

The contribution of four interventions to the specific goal of biodiversity protection is described below:

1. Eco-scheme
2. AECM
3. Cooperation measures in peatlands in and around Natura 2000 sites
4. Non-productive agricultural investments

Eco-scheme

Farmers who contribute to the landscape and provide ecosystem services will be compensated for their efforts. They can choose from a list of eco-activities that contribute to improving the quality of biodiversity, the landscape, water, air and soil, and the climate. The more eco-activities a farmer engages in, the higher the compensation. There are 26 eco-activities to choose from. Farmers can choose those activities that best align with their farm management system or interests. The chosen eco-activities must contribute to all goals in a balanced manner.

Agri-environment and climate measures (AECM)

AECM is being implemented since 1 January 2016. The core of these measures is a habitat-based approach for (animal) based on a collective, area-based strategy. AECM encourages effective and efficient agricultural nature management (more nature gain) based on collective responsibility and an area-based strategy. It supports the management of nature areas and encourages the creation of corridors between them. Moreover, many species live in agricultural areas. The habitats of these species are conserved through the application of AECM. Special attention is paid to the conservation and restoration of farmland bird populations, and efforts in this area are being expanded. There is also a budget available under the NSP to implement the measures formulated in the Project Godwit Action Plan through AECM.

The implementation of AECM is carried out by 40 agricultural collectives, in which more than 12,000 farmers collaborate. This has been proven to be effective, five years after its introduction. Farmers are more involved in the management, have more flexibility to adapt measures to conditions in the field, experience the improved spatial cohesion that this form of management promotes, and there are promising results in terms of ecology at the area level as well.

In the current CAP period, efforts are focused on expanding the management areas so that more farmers can participate. In addition, AECM can be applied to activities in buffer zones around Natura 2000 sites. The nature management packages will provide more room for agricultural climate and water management alongside biodiversity. It will also be possible to couple (non-productive) investments and management activities. The boost for AECM will continue into future CAP periods, with the number of hectares, number of participating farmer collectives and types of management packages expected to gradually increase until 2035.

Figure 24. Agri-environment and climate measures in the Amsterdam Hoorn Corridor. Water management is important for farmland birds in the Netherlands, and can contribute to biodiversity and water quality. © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Tineke Dijkstra

Cooperation measures in peatlands in and around Natura 2000 sites

This intervention supports the partial cessation of dairy farms close to nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites. As a result, fields and businesses become more extensive (less fertilisation, fewer animals per hectare, no nitrogen-based fertilisers) and more space is created on fields and businesses for a higher percentage of land subject to agri-environment and climate measures. The goal is around 50,000 hectares through to 2028.

In peatlands, groundwater levels will be raised by water retention measures in combination with a water infiltration system, with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions caused by peat oxidation. Also, dairy farms in peatland regions can apply for the same compensation as those in nitrogen-sensitive Natura 2000 sites, by reducing the use of manure and stock numbers. Raising groundwater levels in combination with reducing manure and stock numbers are especially suitable measures in areas covered by the Project Godwit Action Plan. The goal is around 22,000 hectares through to 2028.

An area-based compensation scheme is still under development for the depreciation of agricultural land while retaining its agricultural function and agreeing to benefit nature, climate and biodiversity.

Non-productive agricultural investments

This scheme aims to increase biodiversity as much as possible in combination with the implementation of other goals such as climate, water and energy. The measures include the creation and management of landscape features and forests, more efficient use of water resources, and nitrogen reduction.[76]

Climate Challenge Programme

The Climate Agreement sets national targets for the Netherlands to achieve a 55% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. These targets are recorded in the Climate Act. Government policy involves aims to reduce emissions by 60% by 2030, to ensure that the goal of a 55% reduction in emissions remains within reach in case of setbacks. The Netherlands aims to be climate neutral by 2050. Amongst other things, the Forest Strategy, the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features, the National Programme on Agricultural Soils, and the National Peatland Programme can contribute at the intersection of climate mitigation and the biodiversity objectives. The relevant policies and programmes are described in more detail under target 8, 'Climate adaptation'.

Nitrogen

For policy regarding nitrogen, see targets 2 and 7.

[76] More information about the CAP NSP can be found at Home | Toekomst GLB.

Green Blue Network of Landscape Features

The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features (GBNLF) programme aims to create an extensive national network of natural and semi-natural, small-scale and often linear landscape features in rural areas. The objective of 10% GBNLF by 2050 stems from the objective of the Landscape Action Plan, which in itself is a further elaboration of the Climate Agreement, and is included in the Forest Strategy. The Landscape Action Plan was developed by a coalition of national and regional government departments and civil society organisations and therefore can count on broad public support. The GBNLF programme is part of current policy as the national response to meet the legal obligations under the European Nature Restoration Regulation, the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Water Framework Directive and the Climate Act. As part of the European Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR), the contribution of the GBNLF, in line with the Landscape Action Plan, will be further determined. To monitor the implementation of the GBNLF, including in relation to the NRR, the government is working together with other regional authorities to develop a national register of landscape features. As rural areas in the Netherlands are largely made up of agricultural ecosystems, GBNLF measures also fall under nature-based farm management. The implementation of GBNLF is primarily secured based on the voluntary participation of landowners and farmers, often supported by the current CAP NSP. In addition, the development and management of the GBNLF is partly included in the AECM. By taking the landscape and cultural-historic landscape features into consideration, natural (often non-productive) landscape features can be used for purposes such as animals, pest control, pollination, demarcation of properties, or to create refuges and migration routes for biodiversity. This not only contributes to the vitality of Dutch nature, but also to the resilience of the agricultural sector, and thus our food supply.

The GBNLF can also be integrated into agricultural operations as a productive investment, for example through agroforestry. The Forest Strategy includes an ambition to develop 25,000 hectares of agroforestry and 1,000 hectares of food forests by 2030. Agroforestry involves cultivation systems where trees and shrubs are deliberately combined with livestock or arable and/or horticultural crops on the same land. These are productive agricultural investments that also contribute to the sustainability and integration of biodiversity-friendly activities and AECM in farming.

Organic Farming Action Plan

In 2022, the government published the Organic Farming Action Plan. This plan aims to accelerate the growth of the area under organic farming from 4% (in 2021) to 15% by 2030. That translates to an increase from about 80,000 hectares today to some 300,000 hectares by 2030. This is an ambitious target. The growth will mainly need to take place in dairy and arable farming. These are extensive farms on large areas of land, and by converting to organic methods they can contribute to the objectives for nature, nitrogen, water, biodiversity and animal welfare. It can also provide a boost to circular agriculture and agriculture-inclusive nature.

Outcome-based management

The government is working towards outcome-based management with feasible farm-specific standards for greenhouse gas and nitrogen emissions, ensuring that farmers have sufficient time to meet these targets.[77] The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) is developing various instruments to this end. The starting point is public-private cooperation where possible, for example by defining common definitions, creating data infrastructure, or establishing a nationally-supported system of key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs provide farmers with insights into their sustainability performance and opportunities to adjust their management practices. In addition, a nutrient budget instrument is being introduced for dairy and arable farmers to achieve emission reductions. This instrument can be used for outcome-based management (informing, encouraging, providing accountability, pricing and enforcing). A nutrient budget action plan has been initiated to this end.

National Growth Fund: Programme for Regenerative Agriculture

The National Growth Fund: Programme for Regenerative Agriculture (Re-Ge-NL) is working with Dutch farmers to develop a future-proof agricultural sector in which agriculture goes hand in hand with soil improvement, the restoration of soil life and nature. It also offers a viable business model to farmers. Re-Ge-NL will begin the transition to regenerative agriculture with a positive business case by working with 1,000 farmers across five focus areas until 2030. With this first step, Re-Ge-NL will become a leading example for the sector, both in the Netherlands and internationally. Between 2030 and 2040, regenerative agriculture will become the new norm. The National Growth Fund is investing up to €129 million in the project.

[77] Parliamentary Paper 30252 no. 176 (25 October 2024) Kamerbrief over bedrijfsgerichte doelsturing | Kamerstuk | Rijksoverheid.nl.

Sustainability criteria for bio-based raw materials

The use of bio-based raw materials is essential to achieve a climate-neutral and circular economy. The guiding principle is that only sustainable bio-based raw materials can make a contribution to this goal, and that these materials should ultimately only be used for the highest-value applications. However, sustainably produced bio-based raw materials are not available in unlimited quantities. Choices will have to be made as to which product groups are best suited for their use. The Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER 2020) has drawn up an assessment framework to this end, which distinguishes between low-value applications (e.g. for generating electricity or as fuel for passenger transport), transitional applications (e.g. as aviation fuel) and high-value applications (e.g. as raw material for the chemicals sector or construction). Based on this assessment framework, the previous government presented a Sustainable Bio-based Raw Materials Framework, which provides guidance on the use of sustainable bio-based raw materials in the Netherlands.

As part of the Sustainable Bio-based Raw Materials Framework, regulations are being drafted that establish sustainability criteria (including for biodiversity) for the origin of bio-based raw materials. These sustainability criteria will become prerequisites for subsidised or regulated streams of bio-based raw materials under the climate and circular economy policies.

€1.5 billion for farmers and nature in the provinces

The previous government earmarked €1.54 billion for so-called frontrunner measures in rural areas. These are measures that can be quickly implemented, for example to make livestock farms more sustainable, or for nature restoration. These measures contribute to future-proofing agriculture and to the goals for nature, water and climate. Examples include a field lab for provinces with peatlands and innovative cultivation of organic lupine, soy and field beans.

Other programmes and instruments

Finally, the following programmes and instruments are also driving the transition:

- The Agenda Nature Inclusive (see target 14), a collective of green leaders including businesses, NGOs, knowledge institutions, public authorities and citizens. The Agenda covers 10 domains, including agriculture. See target 14 for more information on the Agenda Nature Inclusive and paragraph 10.1.B for the Agriculture domain's contribution to the biodiversity plan.
- Knowledge and Innovation Agendas of the 'Top Sectors' (Climate and Energy and Agriculture, Water and Food).
- The Green Deal on Nature-inclusive Agriculture in Green Education aims to enable the further development of green education and thereby lay the foundations for a new way of farming, namely one that connects nature and agriculture. In the Green Deal on Nature-inclusive Agriculture in Green Education, parties are working together to initiate, accelerate and broaden this development.
- The establishment of a good system for monitoring nature in rural areas, so that these areas can be (better) visualised and followed.
- Basic Quality of Nature, which is an indicator of environmental quality. This offers a way to improve all the essential conditions for a species.
- Various subsidies for initiatives that support nature-inclusive farming through both supply and demand measures (biodiversity-friendly food).

European legislation

At the European level, the Nature Restoration Regulation contributes to target 10. The Nature Restoration Regulation (see target 2) sets out goals for restoring agricultural ecosystems. The National Restoration Plan, which under the European Nature Restoration Regulation must be drawn up before 1 September 2027, will further define the Dutch contribution to nature restoration.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[78]

Agriculture domain

State and non-state actors are working together within the agriculture domain of the Agenda Nature Inclusive to accelerate the transition to nature-based agriculture. This includes the following goals:

- Improving the knowledge infrastructure for nature-inclusive farmers, by strengthening and expanding regional knowledge platforms and practice networks.
- Improving the earning potential of nature-inclusive farming by encouraging the financing of, and investment in, nature-inclusive farms and their development.
- Increasing support for nature-inclusive farming, both among farmers, other agricultural stakeholders, and the wider community.

Under the Agenda Nature Inclusive, knowledge, earning potential and support are seen as necessary conditions for nature-inclusive and biodiversity-friendly farming. In this respect, the cooperation between state and non-state actors is essential.

[78] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from various sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

10.2 Aquaculture and fisheries

Figure 25. Shrimp boat on the Wadden Sea © Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature

We are proud of our Dutch fishermen, who have been contributing to our food security for centuries. Fishing is about the responsible harvest of high-quality food in harmony with the ecological system of healthy waters, seas and oceans. We focus on supporting innovations in fisheries, with an emphasis on sustainability and strengthening nature. For the shrimp fishing industry, a voluntary decommissioning scheme is being offered, combined with a viable future for those who wish to continue.

Vision on Food from the Sea and Great Waters

In March 2024, the 'Vision on Food from the Sea and Great Waters' was submitted to the House of Representatives. The guiding principles for this vision are that 1) food from the sea is important, because it is a regional and healthy product with a relatively low carbon footprint; and 2) food harvesting should take place within the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. To achieve this latter goal, measures will be taken to reduce the impacts on the ecosystem. These measures are outlined below. Depending on the area and type of fishing, this will involve reducing seabed disturbance, bycatch and CO_2 emissions. Concrete measures for biodiversity protection (area and species protection) are addressed under target 2. The 'Vision on Food from the Sea and Great Waters' will be further developed in 2025 into concrete actions within an implementation agenda, in collaboration with stakeholders, including the fisheries sector and NGOs.

European Common Fisheries Policy

Fishing and aquaculture fall under the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The CFP aims to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term and are managed to obtain economic, social and employment benefits while assuring food security. The CFP applies a precautionary approach that aims to ensure that fish stocks achieve and maintain a specific biomass level. This method of fisheries management allows a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) to be achieved for the fishing industry without jeopardising the reproduction of fish stocks. Managing fish stocks at the MSY level is a key focus of Dutch fisheries policy. The CFP applies an ecosystem-based approach to minimise the negative impacts of fishing and aquaculture on the marine ecosystem and biodiversity.

Specifically for the protection of eel, the EU Eel Regulation[79] has been in force since 2007 as a framework for Member States on which to base national measures to improve eel stocks. To this end, the Netherlands has drawn up a national eel management plan incorporating various measures to improve eel stocks. This plan includes restrictive measures such as a closed season for eel fishing in coastal waters, the IJsselmeer and other inland waters. Measures are also being taken to remove barriers to migrating eels where possible.

[79] Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel.

Small-scale coastal and inland fisheries

For the non-marine waters that are not covered by the CFP, the Netherlands has developed national policies to ensure a balance between fishing and the carrying capacity of the fished stocks. This applies to shellfish fishing, small-scale coastal fisheries and fisheries on inland waters and the IJsselmeer.

North Sea and coastal fisheries

Dutch policy for fishing in the North Sea and shrimp fishing in coastal waters aims to ensure sufficient healthy and safe food, harvested within the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. To achieve this, the policy focuses on reducing CO_2 emissions, bycatch and seabed disturbance. The Netherlands aims to achieve these goals mainly through innovations and permits. For shrimp fishing, which takes place almost entirely in protected areas, measures to restore the balance between fishing and nature are being discussed with the sector and nature organisations as part of the Vision for the Future of Shrimp Fishing. The North Sea fleet has already been reduced by a third as part of a recent restructuring, which is expected to reduce the ecosystem impact. However, investing in sustainability remains as important as ever.

The Fisheries Innovation Network (VIN) has been established to pool innovative activities in the sector. The VIN is a collaborative network of the Ministry of LVVN with stakeholders (fishermen, shipyards, machinery manufacturers, fishing net specialists, NGOs, scientists, etc.). As a networking organisation, the North Sea Community of Practice also focuses on developing ideas and fostering collaboration for new forms of food harvesting as part of a sustainable blue economy.

Pelagic fisheries

Pelagic fisheries are mainly active outside the North Sea and provide the largest volume of Dutch catches for herring and mackerel. These fish species score very favourably in terms of their carbon footprint. Furthermore, this type of fishing does not cause seabed disturbance and has little to no bycatch.

Means to stimulate sustainability

European and national instruments are being allocated to continue the development of fisheries in the North Sea and the exploration of new forms of food harvesting. This will include subsidy schemes for innovations and investments up until 2030. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) also makes innovation subsidy schemes available for other fisheries and the aquaculture sector.

Concrete quantitative targets

The Netherlands endorses the targets of the CFP. Quantitative agreements have also been made with various non-state actors, including through the North Sea Agreement, the 'Covenant on the transition of the mussel sector and nature restoration in the Wadden Sea', and the 'Addendum to the Covenant on the transition of the mussel sector and nature restoration in the Wadden Sea'.

10.3 Forestry

Figure 26. Harvested trees © Public Prosecution Service, photo by Loes Spruijt-van der Meer

Forests fulfil multiple functions. Dutch government policy aims to achieve sustainable forest management that strikes the right balance between economic interests and biodiversity. Another goal of the current government is to enhance carbon sequestration in forests, including by implementing the Forest Strategy. There are several guidelines for timber production in the Netherlands.

Forestry

Forests in the Netherlands perform various functions simultaneously, including supporting nature, recreation and wellbeing as well as climate regulation and the production of timber. These functions align with the internationally recognised principles of sustainable forest management.[80] All forests in the Netherlands are protected under the Nature Conservation Act. Forests with a production function are never solely used for timber harvesting, but have a dual function in combination with nature and biodiversity. The nature function imposes restrictions on the production function and vice versa. Timber harvesting may only take place if an exemption is granted from the Environment and Planning Act. These exemptions are subject to the condition that the harvesting is carried out with care and with minimum impact on the forest ecosystem. The Code of Conduct for Forest Species Protection provides guidelines and describes which agreements apply to ensure responsible harvesting. For instance, the code of conduct stipulates that clearcutting is prohibited, only group felling of trees is allowed up to a maximum area of 0.5 hectares, and only a maximum of 30% of a forest may be in the rejuvenation phase at any time. In addition, the Environment and Planning Act mandates that all felling must be reported and the felled area must be compensated with new planting in the same location (or in exception cases, elsewhere). This ensures that the area of forest in the Netherlands will not decrease. It is still possible to obtain an exemption from the reporting and replanting obligations when forest is felled for nature transformation within a Natura 2000 area. However, as part of the Forest Strategy, it has been agreed with the provinces that this forest must be compensated, even retroactively. This will also be included in the Environment and Planning Act at a later stage.

A key component of Dutch forest policy is the revitalisation of existing forests. This revitalisation policy aims to establish more varied forests with natural succession. These revitalised forests feature trees of various ages and species, established on healthy soil. This contributes to forest resilience, biodiversity and carbon sequestration. It also ensures that the forest itself becomes more self-regulating and climate-resilient. This is described in the Forest Strategy, as part of which the provinces are preparing revitalisation plans.[81]

National Forest Strategy

In 2020, the National Forest Strategy for 2030 was adopted by the national government and the provinces. The Forest Strategy has the following goals:

- An additional 37,400 ha. of forest.
- A quality boost for existing forest.
- 10% of the rural land area covered by the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features.
- Development of agroforestry.
- Encourage high-quality utilisation of wood.
- An additional 14,000 hectares of natural forest within existing and new forests.

[80] Vereniging van Bos- en Natuurterreineigenaren (2022) Gedragscode soortenbescherming bosbeheer 2022.
[81] Ministry of LVVN, Association of Provincial Authorities (2020) Bossenstrategie: Bos voor de toekomst.

Target 11.
Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People

Figure 27. Weerribben-Wieden National Park. © Nadine Kliffen/IUCN NL

Biodiversity contributes to the preservation of ecosystem services that are essential for both human wellbeing and the economy. These services include fertile soils, clean water, clean air, climate adaptation, pollinators for food crops, and natural resistance to pests and diseases. Biodiversity also plays a crucial role in the availability of medicines, building materials and industrial raw materials, and contributes to recreation, tourism and a more attractive living environment. The Netherlands works to ensure the preservation of these ecosystem services through policies aimed at nature restoration and the sustainable use of natural resources as well as the deployment of nature-based solutions (NbS). Knowledge development in the areas of natural capital and ecosystem services also contributes to this.

Dutch policy on nature protection and restoration

Focusing on robust nature policies contributes to the restoration and protection of ecosystem services in nature areas (including inland, coastal and marine waters), in rural and urban areas, and in buffer zones. Examples of these policies include the Birds and Habitats Directives (see targets 2 and 3), the National Ecological Network (including the Forest Strategy), the Water Framework Directive (see target 7) and the Nature Programme (see target 2); the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Wadden Sea Implementation Programme (see targets 2 and 3); the Programmatic Approach to Urban Green Spaces and the Healthy Living Environment Programme (see target 12).

Example of a nature-based solution: Prins Hendrik Sand Dyke on Texel

Nature-based solutions offer many opportunities for climate adaptation and protection against flooding while enhancing natural values. In recent years, the Dutch water boards and other bodies have been gaining experience with nature-based solutions. An example of a nature-based solution for flood protection is the Prins Hendrik Zanddijk on Texel. This dyke was reinforced with sand on the Wadden Sea side on the instructions of the Hollands Noorderkwartier water board. The end result very much resembles the natural situation as it was before the dyke was constructed: a new dune landscape has established on the old dyke, and a salt marsh landscape has formed on the sea side. This contributes to the biodiversity of this area.

Dutch efforts on nature-based solutions

Deploying NbS can help address societal challenges in areas such as climate adaptation, water, biodiversity and health. The NL2120 knowledge and innovation programme[82] was established with an investment of €110 million from the National Growth Fund. NL2120 invests in research into NbS.

[82] National Growth Fund (n.d.), NL2120 het groene verdienvermogen.

The goal is to mitigate climate impacts and restore biodiversity, while also maintaining productive capacity and enhancing general well-being. The programme combines a national knowledge programme with the development of practical experience in ongoing local projects in various landscape types, such as the high sandy soils, peat grasslands and urban areas. Through these projects, stakeholders learn how NbS, innovative revenue models and societal transition processes work. By combining knowledge development and practical experience, NL2120 is helping to integrate, deepen and enrich the existing knowledge base. The programme also seeks to align with existing policies such as the National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment where possible and to include NbS as a solution while sustainably utilising natural capital. The consortium, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (IenW), includes knowledge organisations, educational institutions, companies, green civil society organisations and public authorities.

Green Blue Network of Landscape Features

The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features (GBNLF) programme aims to create an extensive network of natural and semi-natural, small-scale and often linear landscape features integrated throughout rural areas. Landscape features, such as hedgerows or nature-friendly banks along watercourses, improve the resilience and climate-adaptive capacity of agricultural and other ecosystems against weather extremes such as drought or flooding (for example, by reducing wind speed or increasing water storage capacity). In addition, the envisaged GBNLF provides areas where species can find refuge, migrate and interact, fostering biodiversity (such as wild pollinators) and improving the Basic Quality of Nature. The GBNLF thus ensures the vitality of nature for the benefit of society, and actively contributes to NbS for future-proofing rural areas and agriculture, and in turn, our food security. The objective of 10% GBNLF by 2050 stems from the objective of the Landscape Action Plan, which in itself is a further elaboration of the Climate Agreement, and is included in the Forest Strategy. Further implementation of the GBNLF is ongoing with active participation from the national government, partly driven by the Landscape Action Plan. For more information, see target 10.

Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Nature

The Action Programme for Climate Adaptation Nature is part of the National Climate Adaptation Strategy (see target 8) and aims to create resilient and climate-proof nature while using nature for climate adaptation.
The ambition for 2030 is to equip public authorities and land managers, so that they can:

- Manage, and where possible mitigate, the impacts of the greatest climate risks for nature and biodiversity.
- Implement nature-based climate adaptation solutions in the physical living environment.
- Make climate adaptation of and with nature a permanent component of policy and its implementation in the physical living environment.

Nature plays an important role in climate adaptation. Freshwater ecosystems, for instance, serve as our buffers during dry periods, and store water during heavy rains. We aim to accelerate the transition towards a future-proof Netherlands, where nature inclusivity and the water, soil and ecosystems form the foundation. The inter-connectedness between water, biodiversity and other spatial planning objectives requires an integrated approach.

Programmatic Approach to Great Waters

The Programmatic Approach to Great Waters (PAGW, see target 2) contributes to improving the ecosystem functions and services of the Netherlands' large waters. This policy also contributes to achieving target 8, specifically in the area of climate adaptation. Transitions in use and management will enable economic use within the constraints of the large waters ecosystem. Long-term ecological visions for the large waters have been developed to enable more targeted interventions. The PAGW collaborates with the Flood Protection Programme, Room for the River 2.0 and other water challenges. NbS are a means to keep the Netherlands safe and liveable. With these measures, the PAGW will achieve a baseline situation for sustainable ecological water systems that also meet the conditions for fully achieving the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directives/Natura 2000. The investment in the PAGW was approximately €1.8 billion in 2018.

Wageningen University & Research has been commissioned by the Ministry of LVVN to investigate opportunities to drive and accelerate the application of NbS to meet societal goals. The project was launched in 2022 and aims to offer perspectives for action to the Ministry and other stakeholders, including through the exploration of four concrete case studies. NbS are also included in the 'Policy Compass for Civil Servants', the guide for policymakers in the national government (see target 14).

In addition to these initiatives, NbS are also being used as a solution for various societal objectives, including in: Water and Soil Stewardship (see target 1), integrated river management, the Sand Motor (*Zandmotor*), Water in Balance, 'Benchmark for Green Climate Adaptive Built Environment', the construction of natural banks and promoting biodiversity on dykes, Amsterdam Rainproof, Smart Rivers, the construction of climate buffers, the West-Brabant Bee Landscape, etc.

Knowledge development for natural capital and ecosystem services

The Knowledge and Innovation Agenda for Agriculture, Water and Food 2024-2027[83] describes the knowledge and innovation needed to respond to issues in the domain of agriculture, water and food, and consists of six missions. One of these missions is resilient nature, with innovation programmes aimed at enhancing nature and biodiversity, strengthening and valuing ecosystem services, effective and sustainable use of NbS, transitioning to a nature-inclusive society, and technology and data-driven nature policy and management. This Knowledge and Innovation Agenda also describes important enabling conditions needed to achieve the desired impact, such as effective knowledge dissemination to businesses in practice and strong collaboration with education and national and international (knowledge) partners.

The Natural Capital Accounts (NKR)[84] for monitoring and economic analysis provide insight into the value of ecosystems and describe the size and quality of ecosystems, the quantity of ecosystem services provided and their monetary value. Applications include mapping of the state and trends of ecosystems and the quantity of services they provide. The 12 ecosystem services described in the NKR represent a value of over €13 billion per year.[85] In addition, the total value of marine ecosystem services in the Dutch part of the North Sea is €6 billion per year.[86] These values do not yet cover all ecosystem services, nor do they include intrinsic values of nature, such as the beauty of the landscape. These accounts were developed by Statistics Netherlands and Wageningen University & Research and are based on the European environmental economic accounts (EEEA). Parts of the NKR are currently included in the Monitor of Well-being and Sustainable Development Goals for monitoring purposes.

The Ecosystem Services Valuation Database (ESVD)[87] collects information on economic welfare values related to ecosystem services, measured in monetary units. Communicating such values in monetary terms provides recognisable information that can be used to internalise the importance of nature in the decision-making of public authorities, businesses and the financial sector. The ESVD currently contains more than 10,000 data points from more than 1,100 studies around the world, spanning all biomes, ecosystem services and geographical regions. The ESVD was developed by the Foundation for Sustainable Development. The Atlas Natural Capital[88] for knowledge dissemination and decision-making processes maps the state and value of ecosystems and associated services. This digital atlas compiles available knowledge and maps on ecosystem services from various knowledge institutions. It also suggests options for action and best practices. The Green Benefit Planner for municipalities is based on this Atlas. It was developed by the RIVM in collaboration with Wageningen Environmental Research (WEnR), Wageningen Economic Research, Deltares, Statistics Netherlands, PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, BIJ12 and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency.

The Natural Capital Model for scenario analysis includes a set of ecosystem service models based on a set of base maps.[89] The model can calculate and spatially visualise the effects of various scenarios on the provision of ecosystem services in a given area. The Natural Capital Model has, for example, been used as the basis for PBL's Nature Outlook (Figure 28) and for the evaluation of Amsterdam's Green Vision. It was developed by WenR, the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, and PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency.

[83] KIA-LWV (n.d.) Missie 1: Natuur – KIA Landbouw, Water en Voedsel.
[84] CBS (2021) Natuurlijk Kapitaalrekeningen Nederland 2013-2018 | CBS.
[85] Statistics Netherlands (2021) https://opendata.cbs.nl/#/CBS/nl/dataset/85854NED/table?dl=A3E21.
[86] Bogaart et al. (2023) https://research.wur.nl/en/publications/seea-ocean-ecosystem-accounting-for-the-dutch-north-sea-towards-a.
[87] ESVD (n.d.) Our database | Ecosystem Services Valuation Database.
[88] Atlas Natural Capital (n.d.) Atlas Natuurlijk Kapitaal | Atlas Natuurlijk Kapitaal.
[89] PBL (n.d.) Natuurlijk Kapitaal Model | Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving.

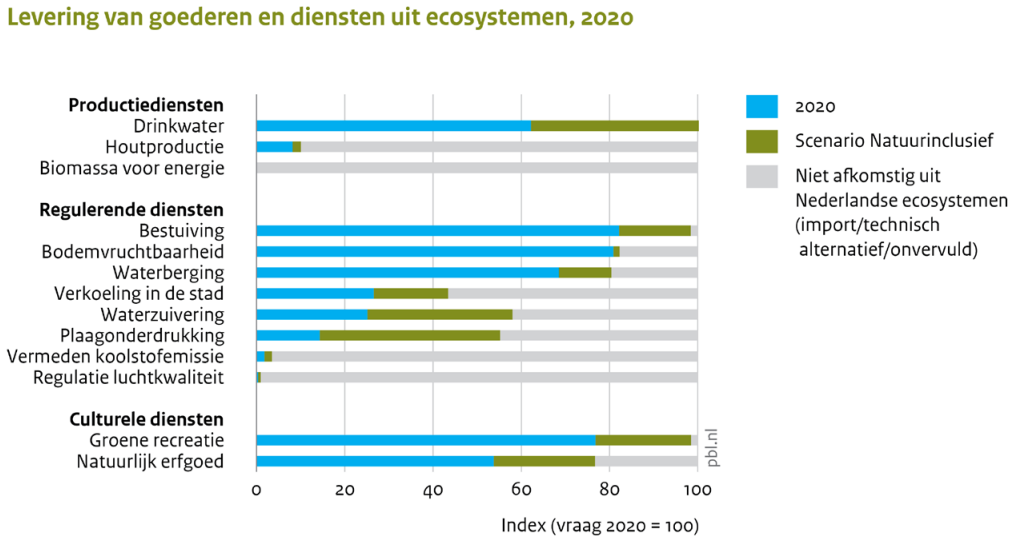


Figure 28. Provision of goods and services from ecosystems (blue) under a nature-based design of the Netherlands (green) relative to total demand (100%). More ecosystem services are provided under nature-based spatial planning. Source: Natural Capital Model | PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[90]

The aim of the Agenda Nature Inclusive is to strengthen the movement of the Netherlands towards a nature-inclusive society by 2050. This will help to promote overall nature and biodiversity restoration and allow the positive power of nature to be used sustainably to achieve other societal goals. Here, nature inclusive is defined as the extent to which social and economic activities are intertwined with nature, and where space is deliberately created for biodiversity. This also includes the potential of nature-based solutions.

[90] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 12.
Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity

Figure 29. Urban green spaces. © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Tineke Dijkstra

The Netherlands faces a major housing challenge. Not only do we want to build enough houses, we also want to ensure a safe, pleasant and healthy living environment with good access to work, education, recreation, and nature and culture. We do this, amongst other things by preserving enough green spaces in and around cities and designing the urban environment to be more resilient to climate change. The liveability of both new and existing residential areas has a major impact on everyone's well-being, and nature and biodiversity can help to improve that liveability.

The Nature Restoration Regulation in urban areas - Urban green spaces

The Netherlands is working on the implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation. Article 8 of the European Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR) is being implemented based on the urban green spaces (GIOS) approach. For each of the urban ecosystem areas, the NRR calls for the prevention of national net decline of urban green spaces and tree canopy cover up to 2030, and a positive trend in urban green spaces and tree canopy cover from 2030 onwards. This will be shaped in practice in the National Restoration Plan which will be drawn up in line with the NRR.

The ambition is to develop green spaces as part of a safe, liveable and healthy living environment that encourages physical activity and recreation and is climate-adaptive and biodiverse.

This approach has multiple goals: 1) climate adaptation, 2) improving the liveability in urban areas (also in relation to the urbanisation goals), 3) promoting a healthy living environment, and 4) strengthening biodiversity in urban areas. The focus lies on developing a coherent approach to urban green spaces that maximises its contribution to achieving these objectives, while emphasizing the importance of local governments' support.

In 2024, the first version of the 'Guidelines for urban green spaces' was published. The guidelines help local governments to clearly formulate their green visions, ambitions and goals, to develop a strategy and plan for implementing, managing and maintaining green spaces, the spatial translation of these plans and putting green spatial planning on municipal, regional and provincial agendas and as an equal pillar in spatial planning.
The Basic Quality of Nature for the built environment forms part of this. The lessons learned will be further addressed to update and refine the guidelines in 2025 together with municipalities and other parties.

Knowledge development and knowledge sharing

In addition to the guidelines, several tools are being developed for other local governments, and knowledge is being gained for the realisation of urban green spaces, such as knowledge about the basic conditions species require (the Basic Quality of Nature). Opportunities for sharing knowledge through learning networks or a digital knowledge base are also being explored. A significant amount of knowledge already exists in the policy, research

and implementation domains. Previously, tools and data have been developed to visualise the effects of urban green on ecosystem services, separate from GIOS. Examples include the Atlas Natural Capital, the Green Benefit Planner, the Natural Capital Accounts (see target 11), and the 'Guidance for nature in Social Cost-Benefit Analyses' (see target 14). The government also supports various physical and digital networks such as the 'Platform for climate-adaptive building with nature' and the Green Blue Networks.

Benchmark for Green Climate Adaptive Built Environment

The Benchmark for Green Climate Adaptive Built Environment forms the basis of climate-adaptive construction. The Benchmark clearly defines what we mean by climate-adaptive construction and design, and consists of qualitative objectives, quantitative performance requirements, and guidelines in the following areas: flooding, drought, heat, biodiversity and soil subsidence. The umbrella organisations of the local and regional authorities have expressed an administrative commitment to implement the Benchmark where possible. The goal for biodiversity and nature inclusivity in the Benchmark is as follows: "Green-blue networks and local biodiversity are strengthened at all scale levels." This is elaborated in the following guidelines:

- Creating and conserving valuable habitats and the Basic Quality of Nature.
- Green solutions based on natural processes and structures are preferred over technical solutions.
- Maintaining and achieving a percentage of green spaces at the neighbourhood level.

Nature-inclusive construction

Nature-inclusive construction methods can support efforts to increase the area covered by urban green and blue spaces. There are several relevant ongoing developments:

- **Basic Quality of Nature:** To support the restoration of ecosystems outside nature areas, a programmatic approach is being developed to work on the Basic Quality of Nature. This specifically concerns the restoration of conditions and ecosystems necessary for common species such as the hedgehog, cornflower and house sparrow. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) works in consultation with provinces, other ministries, and social and knowledge partners to develop the Basic Quality of Nature. More information about the Basic Quality of Nature can be found under target 2.
- **Species management plans:** For the nature-inclusive insulation of older buildings, the government has made funds available to draft Species Management Plans (SMPs) at the local level. SMPs identify the species and the mitigating and compensatory measures needed in a specific area, so that the provinces can make an informed decision about granting area-based permits. A municipality can also include other spatial planning objectives in an SMP.

National Growth Fund: Programme for Working Landscapes of the Future

Working Landscapes of the Future is a broad initiative involving various parties who are working towards future-oriented, green, healthy and climate-proof business parks of the future through innovations in various areas. This programme, co-financed by the National Growth Fund with €26 million, aims to transform business parks into green, healthy, energy-efficient and climate-resilient working landscapes of the future over a nine-year period. Achieving this goal will require innovation in several areas. Working Landscapes of the Future is focusing on five solution pathways:

- Substantiating and sharing business cases for greening business parks.
  This will contribute to making business parks more sustainable and climate resilient.
- Connecting public and private interests to achieve joint funding opportunities.
- Enhancing understanding of the value and benefits of green spaces.
- Developing, testing and applying innovative physical solutions.
- Strengthening the green sector through a new labour market approach..

The innovations will be tested at selected business parks starting in 2024.

Green Blue Network of Landscape Features

The Green Blue Network of Landscape Features (GBNLF) programme aims to create an extensive network of natural and semi-natural and often linear and small-scale landscape features integrated throughout the Dutch cultural-historical landscape. The objective of 10% GBNLF in the rural area stems from the objective of the Landscape Action Plan, which in itself is a further elaboration of the Climate Agreement, and is included in the Forest Strategy. Creating the GBNLF in rural areas also contributes to the greening of urban edges and other urban residential areas. This provides residents with direct access to the ecological corridors and buffers of the GBNLF and simultaneously connects urban and rural green and blue spaces. The GBNLF thus contributes to the various ecosystem services that are needed in urban areas, such as climate adaptation and water management. This promotes the integration of biodiversity both inside and outside urban areas, in conjunction with the urban spatial planning objectives. The use of the GBNLF will be further determined based on the NRR, in continuation of the goals included in the Forest Strategy.

Ecological verge management

The Natura 2000 sites managed by Rijkswaterstaat include parts of verges along main roads and floodplains. ProRail manages the verges along the railways. The national infrastructure is subject to basic quality requirements, with a minimum quality it must meet to fulfil its transport function. It must also comply with various laws and regulations, including those relating to species protection. The protection of endangered species is relevant for roughly 20% of this area. In addition, ProRail is currently working on a tender procedure for sustainable verge management under the title 'More nature in the verges'. This involves green contractors making more biodiversity-friendly choices in the execution of green maintenance. ProRail also aims to plant more trees for every tree felled than the legal obligation requires.

The Green Infrastructure Networks project is exploring which joint measures could have a positive impact on biodiversity restoration in collaboration with infrastructure and grid operators. The Agenda Nature Inclusive also encourages ecological verge management within the infrastructure domain.

Healthy Living Environment Programme

A healthy living environment encourages healthy behaviour, physical exercise, social interaction, and helps protect against health risks. The Healthy Living Environment programme focuses on professionals from the social and physical domain who work to create a healthy living environment at the local and regional level. By making knowledge and data more accessible and providing practical, applicable tools, professionals can integrate health in their policies and practices. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport has commissioned this programme, which is implemented by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment and ZonMw.

Green spaces and water can influence health and are an important theme in the design and planning of healthy living environments. In the Healthy Living Environment Programme, the green/blue theme is reflected in:

- Practical guidelines to be developed for non-standardised aspects of a healthy living environment (green/blue, exercise-friendliness, social interaction).
- Knowledge development and application through living labs and subsidy projects aimed at a greener environment, and better protection of communities from the negative effects of climate change.
- Highlighting the benefits of a green living environment, focusing on types of green spaces and features in relation to health.
- Strengthening existing learning structures with knowledge on the relationship between health and the living environment, including a freely accessible learning module.
- Further development of various instruments, such as a basic set of indicators for a healthy living environment and guides to the spatial planning of green spaces.
- Combining design principles, practical examples and instruments in an online Toolbox.
- Input of knowledge for the further development of the 'Guidelines for urban green spaces development'.

Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery

The Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery is a group of expert organisations and municipalities who are committed to increasing biodiversity in public spaces. The aim of the Delta Plan is to encourage and activate organisations to take more action for biodiversity recovery. The Delta Plan has established various ambitions and goals for the built environment, as follows:

- 10% of the rural area will consist of landscape features by 2050.
- 50% of public space will be managed ecologically by 2030.
- Every new spatial plan will lead to an increase in biodiversity. This will apply to at least 50% of all plans by 2030.

National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy

The National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy is aimed at strengthening policy on the prevention, monitoring and control of zoonotic infectious diseases (see target 5). To prevent an increase in vector-borne infectious diseases, it is important to be alert for both direct and indirect public health risks when creating green and blue spaces to benefit people.

Urban areas are 'greened and blued' for various purposes, such as cooling, climate adaptation, or biodiversity. There are also conceivable examples where more greenery is planted to increase people's well-being or bring cooling, but not necessarily to increase biodiversity. For instance, creating a grassy lawn with a few trees will have less of an impact on biodiversity than a public space with various species of shrubs and trees. Therefore, the goal and function of green and blue spaces need to be carefully considered in each new development. Guidelines[91] are being prepared under the National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy that can be used by local governments to make policy decisions in the design of rural and urban areas.

[91] Guidelines already exist for zoonotic risks, such as the 'Livestock farming and community health guide'.

The guidelines can also be used by other parties, such as environmental services, land management organisations and nature organisations. Local governments have an important role in integrating infectious disease control in green and blue spaces management and advising on the design of the living environment.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[92]

Domains within the Agenda Nature Inclusive that contribute significantly to increasing green and blue spaces in the city are the Business Parks domain and the Construction domain. These domains each have their own ambitions and plans. They also work together with other domains to ensure targeted and well-substantiated integration of green and blue features in various environments. This is based on research into basic human needs with respect to green and blue nature in their environment, for example through the 'City as Nature Park' initiative.

Business Parks domain

The ambition is to accelerate the transition of business parks into nature-inclusive landscapes, both for existing parks and new developments. This domain wants business parks to become places that are fully integrated into the landscape, with space for both people and nature, and where the businesses of the future can thrive. To achieve this ambition, we are striving for the optimal use of space, with a focus on multiple uses.

Each of the activities of the Business Parks domain is linked to one or more of the 'Top 10 measures' established by the 'Platform for climate-adaptive building with nature' (KAN)[93] in collaboration with the Agenda Nature Inclusive and 'Everything is Health'. The Top 10 measures serve as a guideline to drive concrete results. Measures 6 and 7 are less relevant for business parks and some other measures require adjustment to each specific situation. The Business Parks domain is therefore developing its own version of these measures.

In addition to linking activities to the Top 10 measures, the domain has four projects that contribute to target 12 (and partially to target 8) of the biodiversity plan:

1. Behavioural influence: This involves developing a narrative based on working practice by collecting experiences and integrating lessons learned. The target audience includes decision-makers in other fields, park managers, business associations, companies and (local) civil servants.
2. Ecological knowledge development in business parks: This project involves a working group with ecologists and entrepreneurs to develop a roadmap. The focus is on identifying space on business parks for ecological development in both place and time.
3. Legal instruments: This project involves research into the existing legal instruments for nature-inclusive business parks for both new construction and existing buildings and sites. It is important here that the economic function can be retained.
4. Research into healthy green business parks: This project is being carried out in collaboration with Fontys University of Applied Sciences. Their research includes case studies on how to accelerate initiatives in health and biodiversity for greening business parks. Fontys will also identify success and failure factors.

[92] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

[93] KAN Bouwen (2023) Natuurinclusief bouwen voor gezonde bewoners; Top-10 maatregelen voor nieuwbouw en gebiedsontwikkeling.

Construction domain

The ambition of the Construction domain is for nature to become an integral part of the built environment. The built environment cannot exist without nature. We need nature in our built-up areas to improve the quality of air and water, for climate adaptation, health, and spaces for recreation and relaxation. For sustainable nature conservation, it is essential to halt the current decline in biodiversity and to restore nature. We also aim to use bio-based building materials made from locally produced plant-based materials, so that it not only promotes local biodiversity but also reduces pressures on biodiversity elsewhere.

Nature outside built-up areas, such as Natura 2000 sites, can be supported by high-quality green-blue corridors that connect built-up areas, enabling the Basic Quality of Nature to be achieved, for example through the availability of foraging and nesting habitats. Plants, animals and their environment are mutually dependent and form a coherent whole: an ecosystem. The strengthening of ecosystems, and therefore all the benefits that nature provides, is considered as a fundamental part of construction and development. The Construction domain aims to accelerate the transition towards this goal.

The Construction domain is developing and implementing a vision and strategy to raise awareness and bring about behavioural change in favour of a more nature-inclusive built environment. Our work covers spatial planning, design, construction and use of buildings. In order to make the built environment nature-inclusive, it is essential to connect the different spatial scales (area, plot and building) in policymaking, implementation and use. Within our domain, we focus on the construction and use of new and existing buildings, so living and utility. But it also includes the direct living environment and thus the spatial planning of the built environment.

In short, the Construction domain operates across a wide range of contexts that includes buildings, infrastructure and public and private living environments where people live, work and create. All projects under the Construction domain contribute to the biodiversity plan, and in particular targets 8, 11, 12, 14, 19, and 21.

Target 13.
Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge

Figure 32. Potato plant © Valerie Kuypers

Certain wild plant species, bacteria and fungi have useful properties that can be used in agriculture or for medicines and cosmetics. The Nagoya Protocol ensures the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of such genetic resources. The Netherlands is a signatory to this protocol and therefore uses genetic material from organisms within its frameworks. Compliance with the protocol is governed by the European ABS Regulation, and the Netherlands has implemented the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act and the policy document 'Sources of Existence'.

Sources of Existence

In 2002, the Dutch government adopted the policy document 'Sources of Existence'.[94] This policy document is currently being updated to address the latest developments in research and innovation, the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and the sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, associated traditional knowledge, and Digital Sequence Information (DSI). This policy document serves as a guideline for government programmes and activities involving genetic resources. Its main objective is formulated as "the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and the just sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources".

As a Party to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Netherlands recognises the national sovereignty of countries over their genetic resources and fulfils its obligations under the Convention. At the same time, the Netherlands aims to ensure, as much as possible, unrestricted access to and the exchange of genetic material, within and between countries, for the purposes of knowledge development and for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. An exchange must be based on mutual and pre-agreed terms between the providing and receiving parties, and must contribute to the conservation, management and sustainable use of genetic resources in the countries of origin. These exchanges are also grounded on agreements that ensure a fair distribution of the benefits arising from the use of the relevant genetic material, and so contributes to poverty reduction in developing countries. Local and indigenous knowledge on the management and use of genetic resources is respected, and effort is exerted to achieve the fair and equitable distribution of benefits. Finally, users of genetic resources must contribute to the transparent and international exchange of knowledge and information on genetic resources, with a particular focus on the origin of the genetic material.

[94] Parliamentary Paper 34142, no. 5 (9 March 2015) Kamerstuk 34142, nr. 5 | Overheid.nl > Officiële bekendmakingen.

The policy document highlights the fact that many developing countries and some western countries have developed laws and regulations governing the access to and management of genetic resources, but that there are very large differences between countries. It is therefore deemed necessary to improve the information sharing on such policies, laws and regulations. Companies, institutions and citizens are urged to treat policies, laws and regulations that have been agreed internationally or adopted in other countries with due diligence. It is emphasized that obtaining prior and informed consent for individual transactions involving genetic resources is of great importance to avoid potential conflicts, particularly with countries that have adopted far-reaching legislation. The government does not consider it necessary to affirm its sovereignty regarding access to Dutch genetic resources in national legislation (see section 3.2 of the policy document). With respect to international cooperation, the Netherlands will continue to actively promote coherence between the various international forums and promote the effective interaction between the international and national approaches to genetic resources.

Statutory Research Task Genetic Resources

Under the policy outlined in the aforementioned policy document, the government has signed a series of five-year agreements with Wageningen University & Research's Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands (CGN). These agreements focus on statutory research into genetic diversity and the identification of species of importance for agriculture and forestry, and a work programme that contributes to the conservation and use of genetic resources through international cooperation. Under these agreements, CGN carries out the Statutory Research Task Genetic Resources (WOT GB) on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN). The work programme enables the maintenance of ex situ collections and related information and documentation instruments, as well as support for in situ conservation by other actors (including on farms), regional cooperation in European networks, policy support for the government, and educational activities aimed at reaching a broader public. CGN manages a collection of important crop species, which will be expanded in the coming years, following the recommendations of an external evaluation by Technopolis.[95]

CGN's activities in the field of access and benefit-sharing (ABS) carried out under the WOT programme are particularly relevant to target 13. First, CGN is the designated National Focal Point (NFP) for ABS in the Netherlands. The NFP provides education and information on ABS, both to raise awareness about ABS among the various user groups in the Netherlands, and to ensure they have sufficient knowledge of the relevant laws and regulations.

In addition, a significant part of the 'Technical policy recommendations for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources' component is aimed at supporting the Ministry of LVVN with its activities at international fora related to ABS, such as the CBD, the Nagoya Protocol, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA).

Access and benefit-sharing in relation to the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

The Netherlands is party to the CBD (which entered into force in 1993) and the underlying Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use (which entered into force in 2014). The CBD and the Nagoya Protocol are important international agreements on access and benefit-sharing in relation to the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

The Netherlands is also party to several specialised instruments concerning the access to and sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, notably the ITPGRFA (which covers more than 60 food and feed crops) and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework of the World Health Organization (which covers influenza viruses with human pandemic potential).

Benefit-Sharing in relation to the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

Within the EU, compliance with the Nagoya Protocol is implemented by the EU ABS Regulation,[96] which entered into force on 12 October 2014. This regulation is legally binding and contains obligations for users of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge within the EU, and for governments of EU Member States. Member States may adopt additional ABS legislation, for example on access to genetic resources. The EU ABS Regulation applies to genetic resources that 1) were

[95] Technopolis Group (2020) Evaluatie WOT Genetische Bronnen.

[96] Regulation (EU) No. 511/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on compliance measures for users from the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization in the Union.

obtained on or after 12 October 2014, 2) were obtained from a country that is party to the Nagoya Protocol and has established applicable access rules, and 3) are used within the EU. The Implementing Regulation,[97] which entered into force in 2015, further specifies certain provisions of the EU ABS Regulation. In particular, it provides information on the EU register of collections, due diligence declarations and recognised best practices.

The Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act came into force on 23 April 2016 to implement the Nagoya Protocol and the ABS Regulation in the Netherlands. The Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act contains definitions and addresses the implementation of the protocol, the designation of competent authorities, sanctions and other measures. The explanatory memorandum to the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act gives the background to the protocol, explains what it does, and discusses its relationships with other treaties. It also elaborates on the EU ABS Regulation and its implementation in the Netherlands.

The memorandum also describes the relationships with other legislation and the regulatory burden, and also includes an article-by-article explanation of the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act. The annex sets out the relationships between the articles of the protocol, the ABS Regulation and the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act.

Article 1 of the Regulation of the State Secretary for Economic Affairs of 31 March 2016, no. WJZ/15145152, containing the implementing provisions of the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act (Regeling uitvoering Wet implementatie Nagoya Protocol) designates the articles of EU Regulation 511/2014 and EU Implementing Regulation 2015/1866 that are subject to criminal enforcement. These provisions concern the observance of prescribed due diligence requirements and cooperation with the verification thereof by users of genetic resources. Conduct in violation of the provisions designated in this regulation is treated as an economic offence.

In the Decree of the State Secretary for Economic Affairs of 31 March 2016, No. WJZ/15163191, on the designation of regulators and a national focal point under the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act, the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority was designated as the body responsible for supervising compliance with the provisions under or pursuant to the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act. CGN has been designated as the national focal point for access and benefit-sharing referred to in Article 4(1) of the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act. As the national focal point for access and benefit-sharing, CGN is charged with providing guidance to users of genetic resources and answering the questions of existing and prospective users.

With the publication of the Decree of 8 April 2016 establishing the date of entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Act, the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act entered into force on 23 April 2016.

Access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

The EU ABS Regulation only addresses the compliance aspects of the Nagoya Protocol. Access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge is not regulated at the EU level, but at the national level. This means that each EU country can establish its own rules for access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

The legislation implementing the Nagoya Protocol in the Netherlands does not contain provisions on access to genetic resources in the Netherlands, as the Dutch government does not consider it necessary to affirm its sovereignty regarding access to Dutch genetic resources in national legislation (section 6.2.1 of the explanatory memorandum to the Nagoya Protocol (Implementation) Act). This means that no prior and informed consent is required to obtain genetic resources in the Netherlands. In some cases, however, access to in-situ genetic resources is restricted by laws and regulations governing species protection, protected areas, and animal and plant diseases. In these cases, consent to collect genetic material must be sought from the landowner, who could be a farmer, a government authority, a citizen or a company. Additional rules may apply regarding environmental impact. Genetic resources located on farms or in gardens are privately owned, and so the consent of the owner is required to (re)move these resources in any way. Collection holders may impose conditions (e.g. in the form of a Material Transfer Agreement, or MTA), which often depend on the conditions under which the collection holders themselves acquired the material.

Digital Sequence Information

The Netherlands is actively participating in multilateral negotiations that have been ongoing for several years in various UN fora regarding whether the use of DSI of genetic resources should be subject to access and benefit-sharing obligations analogous to the use of

[97] Implementing Regulation 2015/1866 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation No 511/2014 as regards the register of collections, monitoring user compliance and best practices.

genetic resources. The primary discussion forum is the CBD. During COP-15 of the CBD in 2022, it was decided to develop a multilateral mechanism (MLM) for sharing the benefits arising from the use of DSI of genetic resources, including the establishment of a global fund.[98] Subsequently, during COP-16 of the CBD in 2024, it was decided to operationalise the MLM for the use of DSI of genetic resources, including the establishment of the Cali Fund.[99] The mechanism is based on a multilateral approach and falls directly under the CBD, and not the Nagoya Protocol, and it will therefore not follow the bilateral approach of the Nagoya Protocol. A follow-up process has been initiated in the lead-up to COP-17, with an extensive intersessional process to further develop the details of the operationalisation. This also includes an extensive review process, including the option to extend the MLM for DSI of genetic sources to include genetic sources in due course on a voluntary basis. During the intersessional process, the terms and conditions of the MLM and the establishment of the Cali Fund will be discussed. In particular, these negotiations will take place in a Steering Committee and a Funding Allocation Committee under the CBD. The Netherlands has submitted its candidature for these intersessional committees and remains actively involved in other fora where DSI is discussed (such as FAO, WHO, WIPO and BBNJ) in order to reach policy coherent solutions.

Other instruments

The Netherlands is also involved in the development of specialised ABS instruments and other international ABS processes:

- For marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- For pathogens with human pandemic potential (Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System, or PABS), under the WHO. Although the exact scope of the instrument has not yet been defined, WHO Member States have decided to include pathogenic materials as well as sequence information, thereby creating a link with the Nagoya Protocol and the DSI MLM under the CBD.
- Implementation of a disclosure requirement in patent applications for inventions based on a genetic resource, under the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Within the ITPGRFA, efforts are underway to continue to improve the Multilateral System (MLS) for ABS. The ITPGRFA's MLS comprises a Global pool of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) designed to facilitate access to PGRFA and ensure fair and equitable distribution of the benefits arising from their use. To improve both access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the sharing of benefits that arise from their use, a process to improve the ITPGRFA's MLS was restarted in 2022. Key elements discussed are DSI/GSD, expansion of the MLS to all PGRFA, and the payment structure and rates.

Budget

Contributions

- CBD: USD 88,110 (2022-2023), ITPGRFA (FAO) USD 110,202 (2022-2023) HGIS, resources of (inter) national organisations.

National implementation

- WOT Genetic Resources, total subsidy for all activities: €3,476,026 (excl. VAT) per year (2022-2026);[100]
- Of this amount, approximately €100,000 is available per year for CGN's activities as the National Focal Point for ABS, and about €50,000 per year for technical policy advice on ABS and DSI.
- SeedNL public-private partnership (LVVN, BHOS, Plantum, NAO): €450,000 (incl. VAT) per year (2023-2027) Food security resources.

Enforcement

- NVWA, Nagoya Protocol Compliance (CBD) €68,015 per year (500 hours x 136.03).

Voluntary contributions

- ITPGRFA: USD 150,000 per year (2021-2023) for improvement of Multilateral System for ABS (participation of sponsored delegates in informal consultation process).
- GIZ, the ABS Initiative: USD 250,000 per year (2023-2024), informal consultations and capacity building to support CBD and FAO processes around ABS and DSI.

[98] Convention on Biological Diversity (2022) Decision 15/9 Digital sequence information on genetic resources.
[99] Convention on Biological Diversity (2024) Decision 16/2 Digital sequence information on genetic resources.
[100] Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands, Wageningen University & Research (2021) Meerjarenplan WOT Genetische Bronnen 2022-2026 557374.

Target 14.
Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-making at Every Level in all Sectors

Figure 33. The 'Green Lung' at Aeres University of Applied Sciences Almere © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Tineke Dijkstra

The current government is committed to integrating nature into our living and working environments. This integration is complex, but it offers opportunities to distribute the costs and benefits as fairly as possible across the different areas and sectors. This creates space for social and economic activities. By collaborating within the national government and with other public authorities, we are connecting the nature restoration objectives to the challenges of the energy transition, housing construction, accessibility, water and climate, and the earning potential of farmers. We encourage the active involvement of all relevant sectors, including private funding, for example through the Agenda Nature Inclusive.

Agenda Nature Inclusive

The Agenda Nature Inclusive is a societal initiative that was launched by a consortium of public and private parties and has since evolved into the Nature Inclusive Collective. This is a broad network of public-private partnerships in ten domains: business parks, construction, energy, the financial sector, health, infrastructure, agriculture, education, the leisure economy and water. Since 2022, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) has been supporting the social ambitions of the Nature Inclusive Collective with the help of a programme office.[101]

The goal of the Agenda Nature Inclusive is to take steps towards achieving a nature-inclusive society by 2050. The Agenda focuses on enhancing the 70% non-protected nature in the Netherlands by integrating nature in our living, working and recreational environments.
The approach is designed to promote nature-inclusive thinking and action, based on the positive power of nature and the importance of our natural capital for people and the economy. The aim of the Agenda Nature Inclusive hence aligns seamlessly with target 14.
The Agenda promotes overall biodiversity restoration and protects and uses nature and ecosystem services to achieve other societal goals.

[101] Parliamentary Paper 33576, no. 272 (16 June 2022) Kabinetsreactie agenda Natuurinclusief.

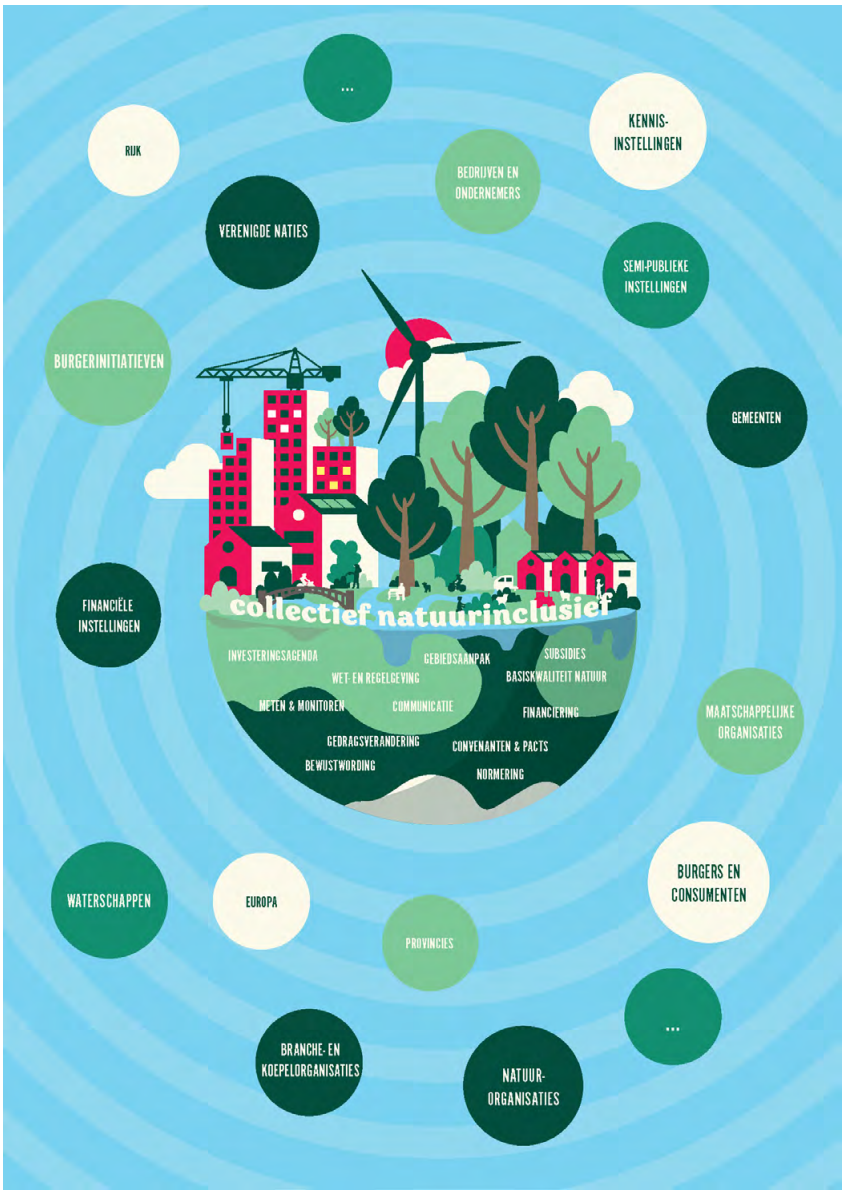


Figure 34. Visualisation of the Nature Inclusive Collective. A nature-inclusive society is manifested in a green and healthy living environment, for both people and nature. We lead the way and provide the 'fertile ground' in which a nature-inclusive society can flourish. We work together with everyone to make this happen. Source: Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0.

The Nature Inclusive Collective operates according to the 'whole-of-society approach' (Figure 34). Since 2023, there is a Nature-Inclusive Ambassador. The ambassador also chairs the Nature Inclusive Council (NiNO), which consists of leaders representing the domains, local governments and civil society parties in a personal capacity. The public-private partnership significantly stimulates the nature-inclusive movement by disseminating knowledge on practical opportunities for sectors, businesses and organisations to become nature-inclusive. In doing so, a win-win situation for nature and the domain is always sought.

In autumn 2023, the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was adopted by NiNO and presented, as a societal product, to the House of Representatives, all public authorities and involved private parties. The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 outlines the ambitions for 2050 and concrete actions for the period 2024-2026. The agenda explicitly aims to contribute to the goals and targets of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Biodiversity Strategy, and other relevant policy developments such as the Basic Quality of Nature, in combination with other societal objectives such as the national housing target, the energy transition, climate adaptation, a healthy living environment and general well-being.

To further elaborate the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0, the Nature Inclusive Collective commissioned an independent consultancy firm to produce a Nature Inclusive Investment Agenda. This report provides an overview of the expected costs and benefits associated with the ambitions described in the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 (Figure 35). It does not make any claims; its purpose is to provide perspectives for action for the involved domains of the Nature Inclusive Collective. A list of possible instruments and other practical tools to achieve and finance the public-private ambitions of the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 are also part of the Investment Agenda.

In the spring of 2024, the relevant public authorities commissioned an exploratory study (*bestuurlijke verkenning*) in response to the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0. The study focuses on the question of how public authorities can collaborate effectively on nature-inclusive issues and support this broad social movement. The exploratory study is expected to be completed before the summer of 2025.

Figure 35. Costs and benefits of the Agenda Nature Inclusive over time. Source: Nature Inclusive Investment Agenda – 'Zo komen we op gang' (De Natuurverdubbelaars and Rebel, 2024).

Instruments for including biodiversity in decision-making

Collaboration with various knowledge institutions in the development of methods, data and tools is crucial to be able to assess the functional values of nature for the domains and their societal objectives and factor these into decision-making.

Natural Capital Accounts (NKR) serve as the Dutch interpretation of target 14 regarding the implementation of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) developed by the UN. These, developed by Statistics Netherlands and Wageningen University & Research, describe the extent and quality of ecosystems as well as the quantity and (monetary) values of the ecosystem services provided since 2013. Components of the NKR are currently included in the Monitor of Well-being and Sustainable Development Goals for monitoring purposes. Other applications are being explored. A more detailed description of the NKR is included under target 11.

Biodiversity in the Policy Compass

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) has incorporated nature-based solutions (NbS) as a supporting instrument in the 'Policy Compass', the central guide for the development of policy within the Dutch national government. The Ministry of LVVN also funds a long-term Wageningen University & Research project to make NbS applicable for policymakers. For more information, see target 11.

Biodiversity in public procurement and tendering processes

Biodiversity – as part of theme 'environment' – is one of the six themes within Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP). The aim of SPP is to maximise the procurement power of all public authorities to achieve societal goals in the physical and social domain, and make the economy more sustainable (see the National SPP Plan 2021-2025). Following a commission by LVVN, PIANOo (the Dutch Public Procurement Expertise Centre) explored how biodiversity is currently included in public procurement and tendering. They concluded that biodiversity is not yet firmly embedded in the SPP criteria, and that only a limited number of tenders refer to biodiversity.[102] The next steps will focus on integrating biodiversity criteria into all public procurement and tendering processes, starting with the sectors with the greatest impact on biodiversity, such as infrastructure and water, construction and agriculture.

SCBA Guidelines for Nature for integral trade-offs

A social cost-benefit analysis (SCBA) is a tool for carrying out integrated analyses of spatial planning measures. The SCBA Guidelines for Nature, developed by CE Delft and Arcadis, can be used to calculate the effects of policy decisions on ecosystems and biodiversity in physical and/or monetary

[102] Schuttelaar & Partners (2024) https://www.pianoo.nl/sites/default/files/media/documents/2024-05/onderzoeksrapport-biodiversiteit-in-mvi-criteria-en-aanbestedingen-april2024.pdf.

terms. It includes a special focus on effects on developments in general welfare and thus on the social value of nature, expressed in ecosystem services. The use of SCBAs in spatial development is in line with the Council for the Environment and Infrastructure's advice in 'Nature Inclusive Netherlands', which recommends to improve the use of SCBAs to prevent environmental damage and take biodiversity restoration and the sustainable use of ecosystem services into account in spatial planning.

Spatial planning policy

The integration of biodiversity into spatial planning policies is also part of this target (see target 1 for a more detailed explanation). Of particular importance for this target is that the Draft National Spatial Strategy, which is preparatory to the definitive National Spatial Strategy, has incorporated nature and green spaces in two of the three spatial planning movements for the whole of the Netherlands.[103] In this framework, there is a need to find a balance between agriculture and nature, and on creating a nature-inclusive living environment in towns and villages. It also seeks to incorporate nature inclusiveness in the implementation of the transition towards a climate-neutral and circular society. The current National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment (NOVI) assessment principles (multifunctional use, no shifting of burdens to future generations, and harmonisation with the specific characteristics and identities of an area) are also useful for nature-inclusive spatial planning. Furthermore, the main objective of the Environment and Planning Act is to strike the right balance between the protection and use of the physical living environment.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0

The Nature Inclusive Collective is working on implementing the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 through public-private partnerships in ten domains. Each domain contributes in distinct ways to, and mostly have a positive impact on, multiple targets of the biodiversity plan. For an explanation of the specific contributions of the ten domains, see:

Target 1 (Spatial planning)	Energy Domain
Target 2 (Nature restoration)	Infrastructure Domain
Target 8 (Climate)	Water Domain
Target 10 (Agriculture)	Agriculture Domain
Target 12 (Urban)	Business Parks Domain and Construction Domain
Target 14 (Policy)	Health Domain
Target 16 (Footprint)	Leisure Economy Domain
Target 19 (Finance)	Financial Domain
Target 21 (Knowledge)	Education Domain

Health domain

At this time, the actions of the Health Domain have a less direct connection to the current biodiversity plan targets. The Health domain recommends including the concept of 'Planetary Health' (or nature-inclusive health) in international evaluations of the biodiversity plan targets: human health and biodiversity go hand in hand. This is seen as an important perspective for biodiversity mainstreaming.

This section was written by the Nature Inclusive Collective.

[103] Parliamentary Paper 29435, no. 264 (6 October 2023) Brief van de minister van binnenlandse zaken en koninkrijksrelaties.

Target 15.
Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts

Figure 36. Ecosystems also represent an economic value © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Tineke Dijkstra

Businesses can influence biodiversity both positively and negatively. They bring innovative ideas for societal challenges and invest in innovation that will provide benefits in the future, for example in the areas of health, climate, nature and the living environment. The government seeks to support the private sector in this as effectively as possible with nature-friendly policy instruments and partnerships, including through the Agenda Nature Inclusive. It is important that space remains for the economy. The government therefore allows room for businesses to operate and makes adjustments where necessary.

Businesses, organisations and biodiversity

The government supports businesses and financial institutions in implementing legislation and regulations related to International Corporate Social Responsibility (ICSR) and encourages them to monitor, report and improve their biodiversity impacts, dependencies and risks. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) and Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) support (coalitions of) businesses, financial institutions, knowledge institutions, NGOs and other public authorities in the development and application of methods, tools and data.

Figure 37. Why the economy cannot exist without biodiversity; the intertwining of the economy and biodiversity. Source: De Nederlandsche Bank

EU legislation on ICSR

The government expects Dutch businesses to exercise due diligence in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights[104] and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct.[105] These voluntary international frameworks require businesses to identify, prioritise and address risks to people and the environment (including biodiversity) in their international supply chains, addressing the most severe risks first, and to communicate transparently about their actions.

The government is implementing EU legislation that encourages and requires large companies and financial institutions to identify, prevent, manage, and report the dependencies and risks to humans and the environment (including biodiversity) in their value chains. Examples are the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive[106] (CSRD), Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive[107] (CSDDD), Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation[108] and the EU taxonomy for sustainable activities.[109] Furthermore, the Deforestation-free Products Regulation[110] prohibits businesses from importing certain products that have contributed to deforestation, and the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation[111] promotes more sustainable and circular products. The European Commission is working on additional measures to prevent greenwashing (Green Claims Directive).[112]

In autumn 2024, the European Commission announced an 'omnibus proposal' aimed at reducing the regulatory burden by coordinating multiple European laws. At the moment, only few details are available about this proposal, but it is expected to be related to the CSRD and CSDDD. The government supports the goal of reducing the regulatory burden, as described in the coalition programme. At the same time, any changes to this legislation should not compromise the ambitions for sustainability reporting and due diligence aimed at promoting corporate social responsibility.

In the vision for the financial sector[113], the Minister of Finance stresses that reporting burdens must be reduced to enable an effective sustainable transition. Financial institutions have an important role to play in this transition. In recent years, the main focus in Europe and the Netherlands has been on improved transparency about corporate sustainability and managing sustainability-related financial risks. This has been useful, but there is a lack of consistency in the reporting. For instance, different definitions are used (for example for sustainable finance), and businesses are required to report multiple times on the same kinds of issues under various laws, for example concerning potential negative environmental impacts. This creates double reporting burdens and adds unnecessary complexity to the framework. The government is committed to introducing simplicity and coherence to the framework.

Supporting civil society initiatives and sector coalitions

The government supports various initiatives aimed at helping businesses and financial institutions meet their reporting obligations, for example by developing and applying methods and instruments to measure, report and improve the impacts, dependencies and risks for biodiversity and ecosystem services. Examples include:

The Netherlands

CSR Netherlands' Societal Programme on Natural Capital:[114] The Ministry of LVVN subsidises CSR Netherlands to organise Communities of Practice in which businesses (particularly in the agrifood and construction sectors) gain knowledge and experience in the assessment of their impacts and dependencies relating to biodiversity. These businesses can then embed this knowledge in their revenue models. CSR Netherlands also organises the CRSD Community of Practice,[115] which helps businesses prepare for the CSRD.

[104] UN (n.d.) The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework.
[105] Ministry of Foreign Affairs (n.d.) Home | Nationaal Contactpunt OESO-richtlijnen.
[106] European Commission (n.d.) Corporate sustainability reporting - European Commission.
[107] European Commission (n.d.) Corporate sustainability due diligence - European Commission.
[108] European Commission (n.d.) Sustainability-related disclosure in the financial services sector - European Commission.
[109] European Commission (n.d.) EU taxonomy for sustainable activities - European Commission.
[110] European Commission (n.d.) Regulation on Deforestation-free products - European Commission.
[111] European Commission (n.d.) Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation - European Commission.
[112] European Commission (n.d.) Green claims - European Commission.
[113] Parliamentary Paper 2025D01633 (20 January 2025) https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/ad5e12c9-a98b-4dc0-91e3-ed5ae4d9fb13/file.
[114] Natural Capital (n.d.) Natuurlijk Kapitaal | De natuur werkt. Ook met jou.
[115] CSR Netherlands (n.d.) Community of Practice: Aan de slag met de CSRD | MVO Nederland.

Agenda Nature Inclusive:[116] The government supports the Agenda Nature Inclusive, in which businesses, public authorities and other parties are working together on achieving a nature-inclusive society in 2050. The ambitions and actions of these parties are set out in the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0, and include aligning the reports with the CSRD. For more information, see target 14.

Working Group on Biodiversity of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform:[117] The Ministry of LVVN contributes to the Working Group on Biodiversity of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform. In this platform, regulators, Dutch financial institutions, social organisations and various ministries work together to make the Netherlands more sustainable.

Initiatives to support implementation of International Corporate Social Responsibility legislation:
The government – in cooperation with VNO-NCW/MKB NL, the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER), the Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants (NBA) and CSR Netherlands – is developing several initiatives, aimed both at companies subject to reporting obligations and SMEs that are part of the value chains of companies subject to reporting obligations.

The government informs businesses about the CSRD, including through the websites of the **Chamber of Commerce (KvK) and Business.gov.nl (*Ondernemersplein*).**

The **CSR support centre** is hosted by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency and supports companies in implementing the OECD guidelines and ICSR legislation, including the CSRD and CSDDD. The CSR Support Centre includes an ESRS Navigator,[118] which is a practical guide for businesses on the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) - the reporting standards that fall under the CSRD.

The government has also commissioned the **Stichting Projecten MKB-Nederland** (foundation for projects of the Dutch Federation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) to support SMEs in implementing the CSRD to strengthen sectoral cooperation. In collaboration with the SER and the NBA, the foundation organises thematic and stakeholder meetings, online Q&A sessions, and an information package for industries.

In addition, the government has applied for the European Commission's **Technical Support Instrument Flagship 'Improving Sustainability Reporting for Businesses'**. Under this initiative, the government will work with other member states to support SMEs in the value chains of reporting companies, and clarify and facilitate data sources for data points under the ESRS.

The Hague University of Applied Sciences is currently conducting a study on the indirect effects of the CSRD on SMEs. The aim of the study is to develop actions and recommendations to help SMEs respond to requests for sustainability data they receive from reporting companies. This study will be completed in 2025, after which the government will determine what further support is needed based on the results.

International

Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD):[119] The Ministry of LVVN is one of the founding members of the TNFD, which is developing a reporting framework for impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services. The Ministry of LVVN also participates in the Stewardship Council and is funding the TNFD to develop a framework for nature transition plans for private parties.

Partnership for Biodiversity Accounting Financials (PBAF):[120] The Ministry of LVVN supports the PBAF, for example in the development of the 'Biodiversity Footprint of Financial Institutions tool and guidance' (annual publication of the PBAF Standard) that financial institutions can use to measure and report their impacts and dependencies. For example, PBAF has integrated the impacts of investments on the monetary value of ecosystem services into this standard.

Ecosystem Services Valuation Database (ESVD):[121]
The Ministry of LVVN is funding the ESVD, a global database with information on the monetary value of ecosystem services. This data helps companies and financial institutions to take account of their impacts and dependencies in relation to ecosystem services. For more information, see target 11.

---

[116] Nature Inclusivity Collective (n.d.) Naar een Natuurinclusief Nederland in 2050: Doe mee aan de Groene Revolutie! Collectief Natuurinclusief.
[117] DNB (n.d.) Werkgroep Biodiversiteit | De Nederlandsche Bank.
[118] Netherlands Enterprise Agency (2025) https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2025-01/ESRS_Navigator_januari_2025.pdf.
[119] TNFD (n.d.) The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures.
[120] PBAF (n.d.) The PBAF Standard enables financial institutions to assess and disclose impact and dependencies on biodiversity of loans and investments | PBAF - Partnership for Biodiversity Accounting Financials.
[121] ESVD (n.d.) Ecosystem Services Valuation Database | Foundation for Sustainable Development |Environmental Research.

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): The Ministry of LVVN and the PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency have both contributed a lead author for two chapters of the methodological assessment of business impacts and dependencies in relation to biodiversity and ecosystem services (currently under development).[122]

EU Business and Biodiversity Platform:[123] The Ministry of LVVN contributes to the EU Business & Biodiversity Platform, in which companies, financial institutions and governments collaborate and share knowledge to promote the integration of biodiversity and natural capital in business operations and decision-making processes.

Finance for Biodiversity Foundation:[124] Through the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, the Ministry of LVVN supports the Finance for Biodiversity Foundation (FfB) and UNEP-FI in developing a framework for nature-positive finance. A discussion paper was published in 2024 with the aim of operationalising the concept of 'Finance for Nature Positive' for the private financial sector to identify both the positive and negative impact of private investment on nature. In 2025, UNEP-FI and the FfB will work to develop a framework and roadmap for financial institutions.

Regulation

De Nederlandse Bank (DNB) aims to integrate sustainability in its core tasks by 2025. To achieve this, DNB has drawn up a Sustainable Finance Strategy.[125] As part of this strategy, work is being done to integrate climate and environmental risks in standard prudential regulations. In 2023, DNB published a guide for managing climate and environmental risks, calling on regulated institutions to monitor biodiversity risks and provide information on material risks.[126] A consultation will take place in 2025 to update this guide.[127] DNB is also working on methods to quantify biodiversity risks in collaboration with PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. With its report 'Indebted to Nature', DNB was the first central bank to quantify the financial sector's exposure to nature-related risks.[128] A scenario-based study has also been published in collaboration with PBL to explore the repercussions of measures to combat nature degradation on economic and financial stability.[129] Finally, DNB co-chairs the Task Force on Nature-related Risks under the Network for Greening the Financial System.[130] In this role it contributes to several publications such as 'Nature-related Financial Risks: a Conceptual Framework to guide Action by Central Banks and Supervisors'.[131]

Consultation on climate measures for the financial sector

The previous ministers of Finance, Economic Affairs, and Climate Policy launched a consultation to explore additional climate legislation and other measures for financial institutions.[132] The consultation also included a request for input on the potential inclusion of biodiversity. However, to reduce the reporting burden, no new (reporting) obligations are currently being introduced on sustainable finance through additional national regulations.

Knowledge development for the private sector

The government promotes knowledge development in the area of biodiversity and related impacts and dependencies within the business and financial sectors. For example, including reports on biodiversity footprints,[133] the dependencies on ecosystem services[134] and the harmonisation of biodiversity accounting methods.[135] The PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency also contributes, for example with its 'Business & Biodiversity' report[136] and the development of models such as GLOBIO and IMAGE that visualise the interactions between economy and ecology.

---

122 IPBES (n.d.) Business and biodiversity assessment | IPBES secretariat.
123 European Commission (n.d.) Our members - European Commission.
124 UN (2024) Finance for Nature Positive Discussion Paper – United Nations Environment – Finance Initiative.
125 DNB (2023) Sustainable finance strategy 2021-2025.
126 DNB (2023) Gids voor de beheersing van klimaat- en milieurisico's.
127 DNB (2025) https://www.dnb.nl/media/oeohiyq4/gids-beheersing-van-klimaat-en-milieurisico-s_web.pdf.
128 DNB (2020) Indebted to nature – Exploring biodiversity risks for the Dutch financial sector – 2020 – DNB-PBL.
129 DNB (2023) The economic and financial stability repercussions of nature degradation for the Netherlands: Exploring scenarios with transition shocks | De Nederlandsche Bank.
130 NGFS (n.d.) Welcome to the NGFS website | Network for Greening the Financial System.
131 NGFS (2024) Nature-related Financial Risks: a Conceptual Framework to guide Action by Central Banks and Supervisors | Network for Greening the Financial System.
132 Ministry of Finance (2023) Overheid.nl | Consultatie Consultatie klimaatmaatregelen financiële sector.
133 Ministry of LVVN (2021) Biodiversity Footprint for Financial Institutions: Exploring Biodiversity Assessment in 4 cases | Report | Government.nl.
134 Ministry of LVVN (2021) Biodiversity impact and ecosystem service dependencies | Report | Government.nl.
135 PBAF Netherlands (2020) PBAF_commongroundpaper2020.pdf.
136 PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2020) Business for Biodiversity | PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency.

Target 16.
Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices and Reduce our Footprint

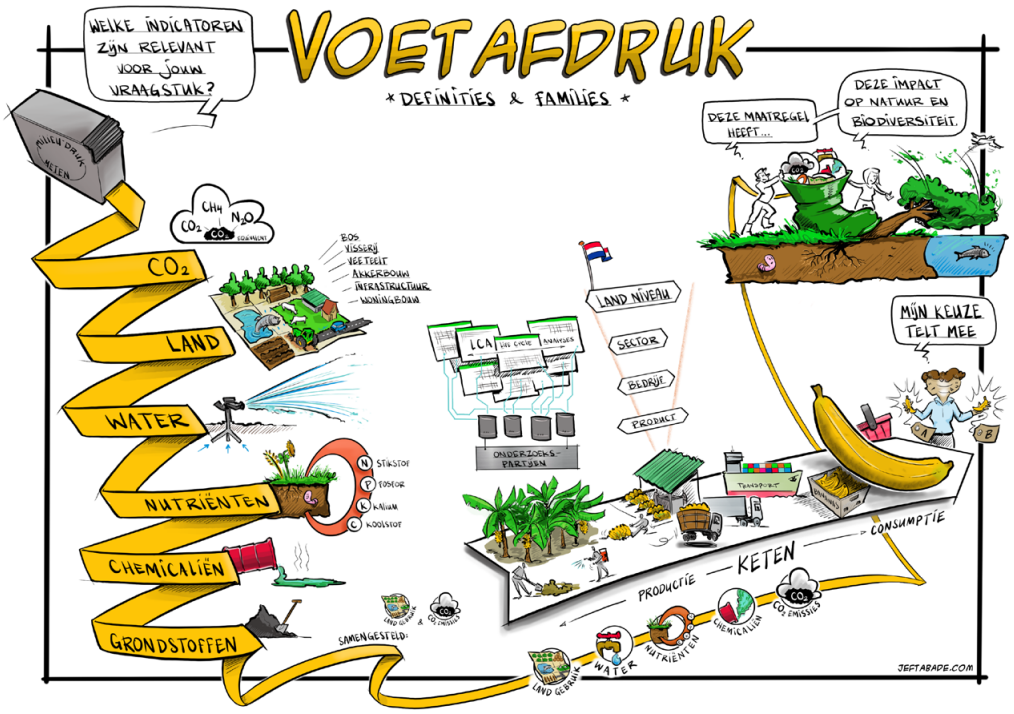


Figure 38. Footprint: Definitions and families.

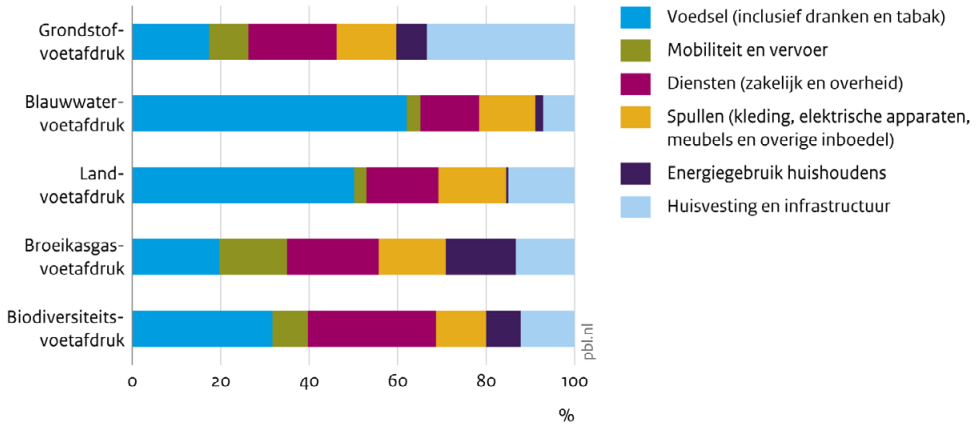
Consumers who wish to make sustainable choices must have the opportunity to do so. The government does not want to stand in the way of this, but rather wants to explicitly leave this choice up to consumers themselves. The government does not see a major role for itself in this regard, and the same applies to reducing our footprint. The previous goal of halving the Dutch ecological footprint by 2050 is not endorsed by the current government. Activities in existing policy areas (such as agriculture and food policy, climate policy and circular economy policy) that indirectly contribute to reducing the Dutch footprint also contribute to this target.

The Dutch footprint

The consumption of the Dutch population and the production that takes place in the Netherlands have an impact on the conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity and the functioning of natural ecosystems within our national borders, but also beyond them. The Netherlands is doing what is possible to improve nature within its borders, but also to restore, preserve and improve biodiversity in the rest of the world. Reducing the footprint of our own consumption is up to the consumers and producers. The government does not see a major role for itself in this regard.

Producers, civil society organisations and knowledge institutions all play an important role in developing products and cultivation methods, promoting sustainable products, and increasing the supply of products with a smaller footprint. They are already making an important contribution to mainstream biodiversity challenges and the development of standards for the footprint of products and organisations. The Dutch impact on the conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity elsewhere in the world is also effected by international biodiversity policy objectives. We work with other countries to reduce this impact, but the Netherlands does not need to be a frontrunner. Should knowledge and skills be developed in the Netherlands to increase the sustainability and efficiency of its production processes, we are willing to promote this internationally, as this will contribute to our future earning potential.

Voetafdrukken door consumptie naar productgroep, 2020



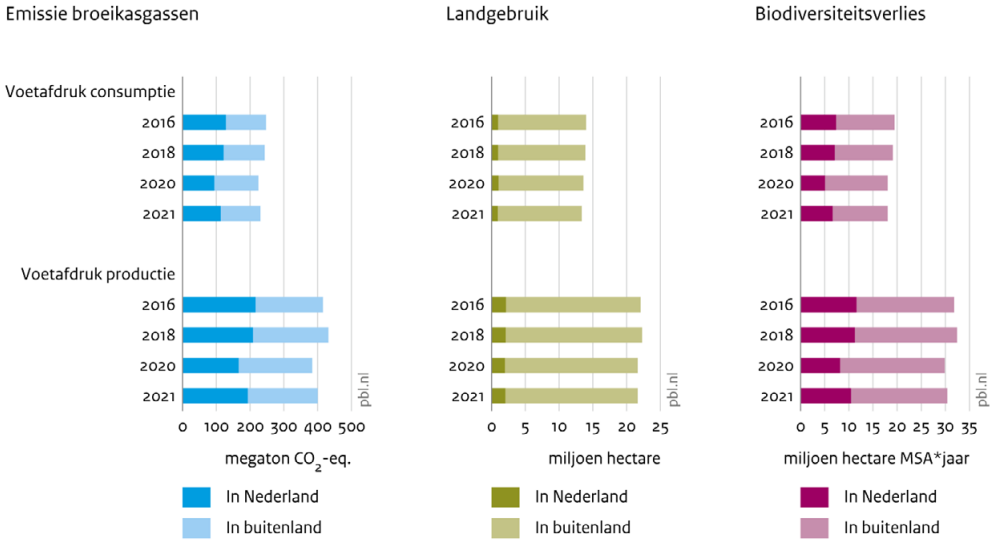
Bron: PBL

Figure 39. Footprints of consumption by product group. Source: PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2020)

In 2021, the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) advised working with a 'family of footprints'[137] for shaping policies, and also to make the possible trade-offs more transparent. PBL also recommended including the footprint of production in the Netherlands alongside the footprint of consumption. The overview of the PBL publication[138] below compares the various footprint indicators.

The footprint of Dutch consumption was about 5.7 hectares per capita in 2018. Of this, 36% is the global production space required for our consumption, particularly for food and raw materials. The remaining 64% of the footprint is the virtual area that would be needed to offset the CO_2 emissions produced as a result of our consumption (excluding international air and shipping traffic and other greenhouse gases).

Milieueffecten van Nederlands grondstoffengebruik



Bron: CBS et al. 2025

Figure 40. Environmental impacts of Dutch resource consumption. PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency and Statistics Netherlands (2025)

[137] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2021), Halveren van de Nederlandse voetafdruk.
[138] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2023), Integrale Circulaire Economie Rapportage.

Three building blocks of the Dutch effort

Many policies have been developed in the Netherlands and in the EU in recent years that contribute to reducing our footprint, both by the government and society. The building blocks to reduce the Dutch footprint are explained below. This includes both the footprint and 'family of footprints' at various levels of scale (from product level, to organisation level, to national level). The three most important building blocks are presented below.

Building block 1: Measuring

Knowledge is already available concerning the footprint and the 'family of footprints' (for example data on CO_2 emissions and land use) that helps determine the policy options. However, for policy evaluations, and to identify possible trade-offs between various footprints, it is desirable to expand the knowledge on the impacts of policies on footprints, and further develop the various footprints. The national government has updated its Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) 2024-2027.[139] This Agenda offers opportunities to jointly address specific questions about footprints with the business community, knowledge institutions and civil society, for example from a supply chain perspective (both the production and consumption side) of the footprint.

The aim is to work with PBL and relevant knowledge institutions to develop a standardised set of methods that could also be applied at the international level, allowing countries to compare the progress they are making in reducing their footprints,[140] and also to ensure a level playing field between countries. For example, for the water footprint, the indicator needs to be expanded to include rainwater, and also the water that is needed to dilute polluted water to meet the quality requirements in the standards.[141] At the European level, working groups make agreements with Member States on how the environmental footprint of products and organisations should be measured. This makes it possible to compare environmental performance.[142] Non-state actors are developing product life-cycle analyses to determine the total environmental impact of products. The national government is involved in the EU working groups focused on this standardisation.

Building block 2: Policy coherence

PBL advises developing an integrated and coherent interdepartmental long-term vision for reducing the Dutch footprint. It also recommends mobilising a broad group of civil society actors to help shape the necessary policies and related measures and instruments.

Keeping in mind the interests of the Global South, the 'Policy coherence for development action plan' also addresses policies aimed at the Netherlands' climate, land and water footprint.[143] The action plan identifies policies that contribute to this, specifically considering the footprint beyond the Dutch borders and the interests of the Global South.

Building block 3: Implementing policies

To reduce the Dutch footprint, many policies have already been developed in all areas of the consumption and production supply chain (energy, food, transport, construction and consumer goods). Many of the implemented national policies contribute to reducing the footprint, without requiring national provisions. Non-state actors are also taking steps to reduce their footprint. The knowledge and skills being developed in the Netherlands in this field also contribute to our sustainable earning capacity.

Various policy areas contribute to reducing the Netherlands' footprint. These areas include circular economy policy, the Agenda Nature Inclusive (see target 14), the Action plan 'Growth of organic production and consumption', sustainable food policy, policies for sustainable agricultural production, policies for greening the financial sector (see target 19), the implementation of EU regulations for international corporate social responsibility (see target 15), education (see target 21), and Dutch climate policy.

Circular economy policy

The National Circular Economy Programme (NPCE) 2023-2030 sets out the roadmap to accelerate the transition to a circular economy. The national government aims to halve the use of primary, abiotic raw materials by 2030, and to achieve a circular economy by 2050, where the impact of raw materials production and consumption is reduced to within planetary boundaries. In a circular economy, raw materials are used more sparingly and used and reused responsibly.

---

[139] Government of the Netherlands (2023), Kennis- en Innovatieconvenant 2024-2027.
[140] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2023), Hoofdlijnen Werkprogramma PBL.
[141] PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (2015) Trends in Nederlandse Voetafdrukken 1995-2010.
[142] European Commission (n.d.), Evironmental Footprint methods.
[143] Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023) Rapport — Beter afgestemd? Evaluatie van het Actieplan Beleidscoherentie voor Ontwikkeling | Rapport | Directie Internationaal Onderzoek en Beleidsevaluatie (IOB).

This reduces the climate, biodiversity and environmental footprint and increases the security of supply of raw materials.

The NPCE focuses specifically on product groups with a large footprint within five priority supply chains: plastics, manufacturing, construction, biomass, and food and consumer goods. Examples include product groups such as electrical appliances, textiles, coastal defence works and housing. Activities within the biomass and food supply chain fall under sustainable agricultural production and food policy (see policy areas 3 and 4).

The NPCE sets out measures to encourage producers to offer more sustainable and circular products and services. For example, the Dutch Circular Accelerator Hub! (*"Versnellingshuis Nederland Circulair!"*) helps companies and their supply chain partners to make their supply more sustainable and their production chains circular. The NPCE also includes measures to encourage consumers to make more sustainable, circular choices. Based on a developed behavioural strategy 'Citizens and Circular Economy', efforts are made to encourage and facilitate the desired circular behaviour among citizens. In parallel, Milieu Centraal functions as an independent public information body to inform consumers about sustainable consumption and suggest concrete perspectives for action. The government also advocates for ambitious EU legislation on the circular economy to promote the Dutch circular objectives, which encourage a level playing field for businesses to improve the competitiveness of the private sector. This would also improve the security of supply of raw materials at the European level and protect the environment and public health. For example, this includes tightening European product-specific design requirements under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation. The focus is on design requirements such as repairability and reusability, so that products last longer. It could also include requirements on the use of recyclate and the carbon and environmental footprints of products, for example to reduce emissions and the use of primary raw materials in production processes.

One strategy to make raw materials use circular is to replace primary raw materials with bio-based raw materials. Increasing the supply of bio-based raw materials can only be justified in combination with due attention to soil management, nature and biodiversity.

However, these sustainably produced bio-based raw materials are not available in unlimited quantities. The government has therefore presented a Sustainable Bio-based Raw Materials Framework, which provides guidance for the use of sustainable bio-based raw materials in the Netherlands, and sets sustainability requirements for the biomass used. The framework distinguishes between low-grade applications (e.g. for generating electricity or as fuel for passenger transport), bridging applications (e.g. as fuel for aviation) and high-grade applications (e.g. as raw material for the chemicals sector or construction). Textiles, paper and cardboard, food and animal feed are currently not within the scope of the Framework. It is currently being explored whether the Framework can be expanded to include other applications, so that the various applications can be considered in relation to each other.

International Corporate Social Responsibility

More sustainable production can also help reduce the consumption footprint. International Corporate Social Responsibility is an important instrument to this end. The Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the EU Taxonomy, and European regulations on batteries and conflict minerals will help reduce the consumption footprint in the coming years. This also applies to the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), which entered into force on 25 July 2024 and is currently being transposed into national legislation (see also target 15).

The Netherlands aims to ensure that these regulations and directives are mutually coherent in order to increase their impact and minimise the regulatory burden on business. Due diligence requirements in the various laws are aligned as closely as possible with the guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which ask businesses to demonstrate how they have prevented the risks of environmental damage and human rights violations. For the implementation of upcoming legislation, active diplomatic efforts and supporting policies from both Europe and the Netherlands are essential. The government is therefore committed to dialogue with partner countries and is cooperating with initiatives that help companies and producing countries to make a positive impact on people and the environment.

Sustainable food policy

Dutch food policy, both aquatic and terrestrial, is aimed at preventing food losses and waste, promoting transparency in food sustainability (and the efforts made by market and supply chain actors to this end), and working towards future-proof food production and consumption. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, the aim is to halve our food waste by 2030 compared to 2015.

The government supports the ambition to reduce food waste[144] by funding the Together Against Food Waste Foundation (a partnership with, among others, the private sector), monitoring food waste, and providing information to interested consumers through the Netherlands Nutrition Centre. A precondition for a sustainable food system is that parties are transparent about how food products are produced and what impact this has on people and society.

Businesses can become more competitive in the sustainability market by being more transparent about the sustainability of food products and the companies in the food supply chain. To encourage this, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) funds the evaluation of certifications by Milieu Centraal. There are some 140 commercial sustainability certifications and logos in the Dutch food market. Milieu Centraal assesses these and has identified 12 leading labels that are particularly ambitious and transparent. These include *Organic, Beter Leven* (better life for meat and dairy), MSC/ASC (for fish), *On the way to planet proof* (agricultural products) and *Fairtrade*. To increase transparency in food sustainability, the Netherlands is investing in a database (the RIVM 'Environmental impact of food database') that will provide insight into the average environmental impact of some 3,000 products as of 2025. In addition, the Sustainable Supermarkets dashboard provides insight into supermarkets' sustainability efforts. The Netherlands Nutrition Centre receives funding to support people who want to eat more sustainably and healthily.

The Netherlands Nutrition Centre has incorporated various recommendations into a food pyramid, which gives citizens guidance for action in relation to their eating and drinking habits. Consumption of sustainable food is monitored annually. The requirements for the organic certification are established in EU regulations. The Netherlands is also working at the European level to develop environmental criteria for various products together with the private sector. Food from the sea (seaweed, fish, crustaceans and shellfish) occupies a special position. Given their low carbon, land and water footprint, these foods can play a role in sustainable food consumption. However, it is important to be able to compare food products from the land and sea. When developing indicators, this requires special attention.

Policies for sustainable agricultural production

Various policies exist to help reduce the national and international footprint of Dutch agricultural production. This mainly concerns the mission-driven innovation programmes, the implementation of the European Deforestation Regulation, agricultural emissions policy, crop protection policy, the Action plan 'Growth of organic production and consumption',[145] and policies to reduce food losses in the production chain. Internationally, an important role is envisaged for the LVVN Attaché Network, diplomats and staff working at embassies worldwide to promote the policy objectives in the area of water, climate, food and biodiversity.

Multiannual innovation programmes

Innovation is indispensable for the Netherlands to retain its position among the world's most competitive and sustainable markets, and to meet societal goals.
We therefore invest in technologies and markets with growth opportunities for the Netherlands. The innovation missions describe attractive prospects for the Netherlands: a resilient nature and robust water and soil systems, both in the built environment and in a thriving rural landscape in which agriculture and horticulture in all their forms are a key pillar of the economy. The broad valorisation of resources from the food production sector, via smart processing technologies, into food and high-quality non-food products, makes a substantial contribution to the overall sustainability of the system, and also to the earning power of farmers and other supply chain actors. The innovation fund finances innovative technologies that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

EU Deforestation Regulation

Similar to the CSDDD, the implementation of the EUDR also reduces our footprint. The Regulation requires companies to demonstrate that the products they import (soy, palm oil, beef, cocoa, timber, coffee, rubber, and products derived from these) are not linked to deforestation and have been legally produced. For now, the EUDR only has forests in its scope. Other fragile ecosystems, which also play an important role in the various countries, are not covered by the regulation. The implementation, and where possible expansion, of the Deforestation Regulation and the application of the International Corporate Social Responsibility Directives does make it possible to reduce the environmental impact of various imported agrocommodities sold on the EU market.

[144] Ministry of LVVN (n.d.) Vermindering voedselverspilling | Voeding | Rijksoverheid.nl.
[145] Ministry of LVVN (2022) Actieplan - Groei van biologische productie en consumptie | Kamerstuk | Rijksoverheid.nl.

Figure 41. Logging in Suriname © Britta Jaschinski/IUCN NL

Agricultural emissions policy

For the agricultural sector, the government aims to develop a balanced and broadly supported policy package that will sufficiently reduce emissions in keeping with the goal of climate neutrality in 2050. To provide clarity for the long term, the government is working towards outcome-based management, with feasible farm-specific targets for greenhouse gas and nitrogen emissions, so that farmers have sufficient time to meet these targets. Besides the focus on farm-specific emission targets, the government is implementing various national measures in line with ongoing programmes. These measures are, on the one hand, aimed at supporting businesses in their efforts to develop, innovate and achieve emission reductions. On the other, they provide support to businesses who want to leave the sector, amongst other things through a broad cessation scheme. In addition, the government focuses on regions that face the greatest challenges and/or where concrete solutions are available with the 'Land for Agriculture and Nature' (RLN) approach. A measurement protocol for methane emission monitoring is also under development. Manure policy, with successive action programmes under the Nitrates Directive, is focused on improving water quality.

Minimum Crop Protection[146]

The Ministry of LVVN is working on sustainable production with resilient plants and cultivation systems that reduce the impact of diseases and pests while avoiding the use of chemical-synthetic plant protection products as much as possible. Wherever plant production products are used, this is done in line with the principles of integrated pest management, the use of low-risk substances, and with minimum emissions into the environment and residues on products. This will simultaneously create an enduring economic perspective for agriculture and horticulture. Policies for plant protection products are further described under target 7.

The Action plan 'Growth of organic production and consumption'[147]

Because it is based on extensive production methods and use of natural and local raw materials where possible, organic farming has a smaller footprint. This results in cleaner water, healthier soil, more biodiversity and improved animal welfare. With the action plan, the national government aims to increase organic production to 15% of the Dutch agricultural land by 2030. Growth in consumer and market demand is an important enabling condition.

[146] Ministry of LVVN (2019) https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/ronl-1fe2900b-5755-4bc2-a10e-cab52a7fb3ca/pdf.
[147] Ministry of LVVN (2022) Actieplan - Groei van biologische productie en consumptie | Kamerstuk | Rijksoverheid.nl.

Reduction of losses in the food chain

In addition to food waste policies focussed on consumers (see sustainable food policy), there are also policies to reduce food losses in the production chain, from the harvest to the points of sale. The national government has broadened the target of 50% less food waste to include the entire food chain by 2030 (compared to 2015). Reducing these losses will reduce our footprint, not only domestically, but also in the countries from which we import products, and sometimes also re-export to other (mainly EU countries. Agri-logistic solutions (packaging, refrigeration, storage and transport) can make an important contribution to reducing food losses and, therefore, the footprint.

Climate policy

The greenhouse gas footprint of Dutch consumption (not only CO_2 emissions, but also emissions of other greenhouse gases) was 271 Mtonne CO_2 equivalents in 2018. Of these, 37% were domestic emissions and 63% emissions from abroad. For domestic emissions, the goal in the Climate Act is to be climate neutral by 2050. This is a significant step towards halving the greenhouse gas footprint. An interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 55% compared to 1990 has been set for 2030. The climate policy is further described under target 8. The government also wants to substantially reduce the emissions abroad. To this end, numerous activities are being carried out to support and encourage other countries to reduce their emissions. Efforts are also being made to increase the sustainability of domestic consumption. One of the goals of the umbrella climate campaign is to influence the behaviour of the public to help them choose alternative, more sustainable products. The 'Dial it down' campaign was established in collaboration with key ministries and focuses on the themes of housing (including energy), travel, goods and food. Policies that lead to more sustainable production (such as for the circular economy) also contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, as mentioned in a Letter to the House of Representatives on the policy agenda for a climate-neutral Netherlands, the national government is working on the national implementation of policies to reduce supply chain emissions. This includes advocating for follow-up steps in the EU. The CSDDD, under which large companies in the EU are required to draw up a climate plan and make efforts to implement it, provides an important basis for supply chain emission reduction policies while ensuring a level playing field in Europe.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[148]

Leisure Economy domain

The Leisure Economy domain has the ambition to bring recreation into balance with nature, so that each recreational visit has as little impact on nature as possible. This means that visitors must respect the rules set by land managers, such as not leaving trash behind, staying on paths and following instructions regarding dogs. Additionally, regenerative behaviour is encouraged, whereby visitors give something back to nature, such as by contributing to maintenance and development efforts. The leaders in this domain are establishing a research programme to better understand the desired and actual nature-inclusive behaviour of visitors, how to manage this, and what interventions to carry out. They are also working on integrated collaboration between various parties in the Leisure Economy domain and the nature sector to encourage nature-inclusive behaviour. The aim is to develop a joint communication campaign and a code of conduct for nature, and scale up existing initiatives such as anti-litter campaigns and clean-ups.

The Leisure Economy domain stands out within the Agenda Nature Inclusive with its focus on 'the nature experience' and the encouragement of nature-inclusive behaviour among visitors to nature. This is an important aspect of the transition to a nature-inclusive society, in which nature is embedded in all our thinking and actions. The knowledge, experience and best practices developed in the coming years by the leaders of the Leisure Economy domain (and parties wishing to join them) can serve as inspiration for other domains and their local and international supply chains.

[148] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 17.
Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology

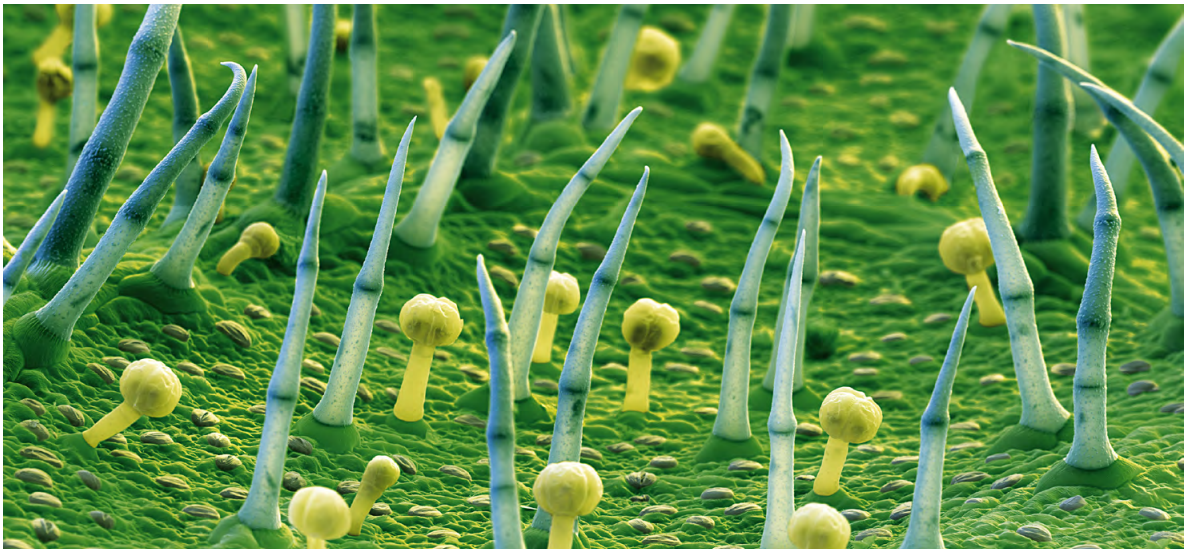


Figure 42. Close-up of a genetically modified potato © BASF, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 DID

Biotechnology harnesses biological processes in innovative ways, for example to produce food, medicines and new materials. The government encourages the development of biotechnology, while also taking measures to manage associated risks. International rules governing biotechnology are set out in the Cartagena Protocol, which ensures the safe use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for humans, animals and the environment. The Netherlands has signed this protocol and fully implemented it in cooperation with the European Union.

Biotechnology laws and regulations

There are laws and regulations governing biotechnology to ensure human, animal and environmental safety. The government monitors whether researchers use biotechnology in accordance with the law. The regulations for biotechnology safeguard human, animal and environmental safety.

The regulations focus on three types of use:

- research that may only take place in enclosed spaces, such as greenhouses or laboratories;
- research and trials that are deemed safe enough to take place outside those enclosed spaces, such as field trials with crops or clinical trials with drugs;
- when the product has been demonstrated to be safe, on its admission to the (common) European market.

Consumers can decide whether they choose to buy genetically modified products. Manufacturers of these products must provide information on the label if more than 0.9% of the product is genetically modified.

Cartagena Protocol has been implemented

The Netherlands, together with the EU, has fully implemented the Cartagena Protocol, and so has complied with target 17 for many years now. The Dutch situation relating to each complementary Global Biodiversity Framework indicator is indicated below.

- The Netherlands has the necessary legal and administrative measures in place for biosafety (2009/41, 2001/18 and 1829/2003 and the GMO Decree and Regulation).
- The Netherlands has implemented biosecurity measures.
- The Netherlands has the necessary measures and resources for the detection and identification of biotechnological products (covered in 2001/18, the GMO Decree and Regulation, and the EU food and feed regulation 1829/2003).
- The Netherlands conducts science-based risk assessments in support of biosafety decision-making (2009/41, 2001/18 and 1829/2003 and the GMO Decree and Regulation).
- The Netherlands implements the relevant provisions of the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety.
- The Netherlands has adopted and implemented risk management measures (2009/41, 2001/18 and 1829/2003 and the GMO Decree and Regulation).

- The Netherlands has implemented legal and technical measures for restoration and compensation (2004/35 environmental liability).
- The Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol has also been incorporated in EU and Dutch legislation.
- The Netherlands has a system for restoration and compensation of damage related to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. This is included in EU and national legislation.
- The Netherlands has a mechanism to facilitate sharing of and access to information on the potential negative impacts of biotechnology on biodiversity and human health. Access to information and decisions is provided through the Biosafety Clearing House, the national GMO licensing database, EU databases for deliberate releases of genetically modified organisms (2001/18 parts B and C) and the Community register of GM food and feed. These sources contain information on GMOs and their use, with the corresponding risk assessments

Current EU targets and measures:
- EU GMO legislation.
- New legislation on genomic techniques (proposal in preparation).

Target 18.
Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity

Figure 43. De Hoge Veluwe National Park© Frans de Wit

Public financial flows and incentives have both positive and negative effects on biodiversity. Some subsidies encourage the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, while other financial flows and incentives can (unintentionally) harm it. The government is aware that eliminating or redirecting certain financial flows and incentives can reduce ecological threats, but it must hereby explicitly consider whether the biodiversity benefits outweigh the potential social or economic drawbacks.

Biodiversity impact of financial flows and incentives

In autumn 2024, the Netherlands launched a government-wide study into the positive and negative impacts of government funding on the environment and biodiversity. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature developed an assessment method and protocol to ensure a standardised procedure. Both products were internationally reviewed during a workshop with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment, Germany, France, Italy, Finland and Australia. The method aligns with OECD guidelines and the reporting requirements of both the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (for target 18) and the European Commission for Environmentally Harmful Subsidies. The study covers multiple sectors and the participating ministries are united in a Community of Practice (CoP). The study will be completed by mid-2025, after which possible follow-up steps for improvement will be explored.

Target 19.
Mobilise Financial Resources for Biodiversity

Figure 44. Driel fish pass © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Thea van den Heuvel

Spending on biodiversity will provide multiple financial, economic and societal benefits and allow businesses and financial institutions to manage the risks of biodiversity loss more effectively, especially in the long term. The government therefore supports entrepreneurs in innovation and development. We reward entrepreneurs for the services they provide to society, for example in the areas of agri-environment and climate measures and biodiversity (AECM). For example, the government has earmarked funds for AECM and nature restoration. According to Statistics Netherlands, Dutch public authorities spent about €1.34 billion[149] on nature and landscape in 2021.

The government is also considering how private funding, public-private partnerships and other public funding initiatives can contribute to achieving its objectives, for example through investments in agricultural innovation under Invest-NL.

In accordance with the agreements under the Global Biodiversity Framework, the Netherlands will draw up a National Biodiversity Finance Plan with the aim of achieving greater understanding of, and find sufficient funding for, biodiversity. Below are a number of measures through which the government is contributing to target 19.

Subgoal a) International funding

Financial resources for biodiversity in developing countries.
To meet its obligations, the Netherlands must report to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) every few years on the government's contribution to biodiversity in developing countries, with the next report due in February 2026.

In 2024, the most recent year for which data is available, around €220 million from the Foreign Trade and Development Aid budget was spent on activities in developing countries that also contributed to biodiversity. On 20 February, the Policy Letter on Development Aid was shared with the House of Representatives.[150] Within the priorities and choices outlined in this letter, contributions

[149] Statistics Netherlands (2024) Kosten en financiering van het milieubeheer.
[150] Parliamentary Paper 36180-133 (20 February 2025) Doen waar Nederland goed in is - Strategie voor Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking | Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal.

are made to international biodiversity where appropriate, taking into account the effectiveness of interventions in areas such as food security and water. This includes contributions to nature-based solutions (see target 11).

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) also contributes, for example through the LVVN councils that operate abroad.

Subgoal b) National funding

Resources for nature in the Netherlands

According to Statistics Netherlands, Dutch public authorities spent about €1.34 billion[151] on nature and landscape in 2021 (direct expenditure plus transfers). The government has earmarked about €5 billion for the agricultural sector and intends to allocate up to €500 million for nature restoration. No additional public funds are envisaged.

National Biodiversity Finance Plan

In accordance with the agreements under the Global Biodiversity Framework, the Netherlands will draw up a National Biodiversity Finance Plan[152] describing:

1. How much funding is needed for nature.
2. How much funding is currently available.
3. Ways to mobilise additional funding, including public-private innovative funding mechanisms. To this end, the Netherlands receives technical support from IUCN's through the EU Technical Support Instrument in a joint project with Belgium, Finland and Luxembourg. This National Biodiversity Finance Plan will align with the National Restoration Plan and will seek collaboration with various stakeholders.

Subgoal c) Private funding

Developing instruments for the private sector

Mobilising the private sector receives ongoing attention. The government supports several initiatives that help the private sector to identify impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities related to biodiversity. Examples include support to the Partnership for Biodiversity Accounting Financials, the Ecosystem Services Valuation Database, the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures, CSR Netherlands, the Capitals Coalition and research by DNB and PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. For more information, see target 15. A greater understanding of the private sector's relationship with biodiversity and ecosystem services will encourage financial institutions to use their financial products, such as investments, loans and insurance to achieve a more positive impact on biodiversity.

Working Group on Biodiversity of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform

The Ministry of LVVN contributes to the Working Group on Biodiversity of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform.[153]Through this platform, regulators, Dutch financial institutions, civil society organisations and various ministries collaborate on various environmental challenges, including biodiversity in the Netherlands.

Agenda Nature Inclusive

The Netherlands supports the Agenda Nature Inclusive, a public-private initiative that is charting the course towards a nature-inclusive society and financial sector in 2050. The Financial Sector domain, which includes both financial institutions and public authorities, has the ambition to direct financial flows towards biodiversity. It brings together concrete measures to identify and improve biodiversity impacts (see section 19.B for more information on this domain). The Agenda also focuses on nature-inclusivity in financial products and innovative financing models. See target 14 for more information on the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 and the Nature Inclusive Investment Agenda.

[151] Statistics Netherlands (2024) Kosten en financiering van het milieubeheer.
[152] Ministry of LVVN (2023) A Review of experience and recommendations for National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and National Biodiversity Finance Plans | Report | Government.nl.
[153] DNB (n.d.) Werkgroep Biodiversiteit | De Nederlandsche Bank.

Subgoal d) Innovative financing

Research into innovative financing

The government is committed to knowledge development on innovative financing models for biodiversity. Examples of completed studies include the EcoAgriculture Partners report[154] on financing area-based landscape projects, and the Wolfs Company study[155] on public-private blended finance models for nature projects. In the coming period, the Netherlands will focus on knowledge development on area-based public-private financing (blended finance), bio-credits, and payments for ecosystem services.
The Dutch embassy in the United Kingdom is exploring opportunities for international cooperation on biodiversity financing with the UK and Ireland.

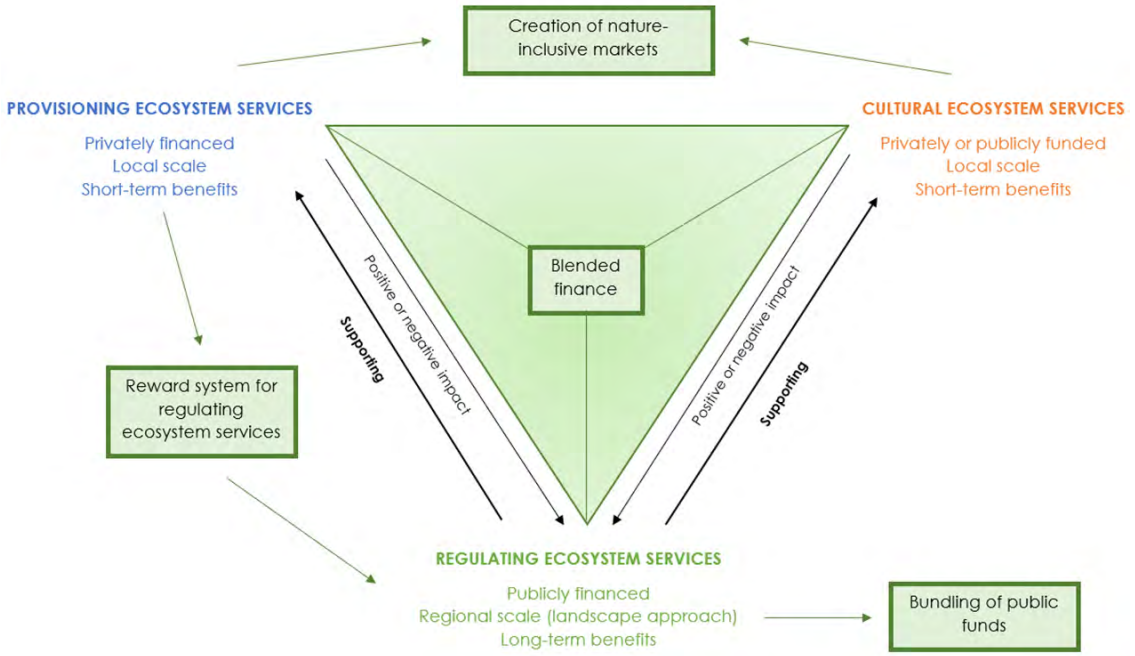


Figure 45. The three types of ecosystem services differ in terms of public or private funding, scale and the time frame over which the benefits become apparent. There are financing strategies that fit the characteristics of each type of ecosystem service, such as creating nature-inclusive markets, pooling public financial resources, and private incentive schemes for regulating ecosystem services. Blended finance can bring the three types of ecosystem services together in a single public-private financing mechanism. Source: Van Leenders & Heijblom, 2024

Payments for ecosystem services

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2023-2027 rewards farmers more for future-proof practices, with a special focus on conservation of nature, climate and the environment, alongside food production. For instance, the National CAP Strategic Plan includes schemes that compensate farmers for providing ecosystem services.

- Eco-schemes[156] allow farmers to claim an eco-bonus if they contribute to improving the climate, soil and air, water, landscape and biodiversity. The greater the contribution, the greater the bonus. Examples include growing break crops to improve soil structure, and planting nitrogen-fixing crops for more nitrogen uptake. The budget for the eco-schemes is €152 million per year. AECM agricultural collectives of farmers or other land users for improving biodiversity, climate and water on or adjacent to farmland. Examples include managing wet grasslands for the benefit of farmland birds such as the black-tailed godwit, and maintaining nature-friendly banks. The budget for AECM will increase from €100 million per year to €120 million per year in the current CAP period (2023-2027). With an additional €500 million that has been structurally earmarked for AECM, it is expected that the area subject to AECM will increase substantially. With this, the number of hectares where AECM management packages are applied could potentially expand from the current 100,000 to around 280,000 hectares by 2032, depending

[154] Seth Shames, Margot Hill Clarvis and Gabrielle Kissinger (2014) Synthesis: Financing Strategies for Integrated Landscape Investment.
[155] Wolfs Company (2023) Developing-blended-finance-capacity-for-nature-on-a-national-level.pdf.
[156] Netherlands Enterprise Agency (2024) Eco-regeling 2024 | RVO.nl.

on future decisions, for example on the intensity of management measures.[157] With the cooperation measure for peatlands in Natura 2000 buffer zones,[158] the extensification of dairy farming is supported.[159] There are three categories of subsidies in 2024, namely for the drafting of an area plan and the establishment of partnerships (€1.2 million); raising groundwater levels in peatlands and possible extensification (€37.5 million); and extensification in buffer zones around Natura 2000 sites (€105 million). Approximately €370 million has been made available for this cooperation scheme until 2028.

Invest-NL

In the past year, Invest-NL has explored how it can contribute to strengthening biodiversity. The result is a review of its impact, public environment, market and vision of its role, summarised in a vision document. The underlying research was conducted in collaboration with financial institutions, knowledge institutions, businesses, NGOs and public authorities.

Green bonds

The Dutch government periodically raises money through green bonds to finance sustainable measures and projects.[160]The issuance of green bonds also stimulates the green bond market. When issuing green bonds, the government applies the EU Taxonomy. Since July 2023, nature conservation and restoration have been included in the EU Taxonomy.[161]

Subgoal e) Synergies with climate funding

Knowledge development on the relationship between climate and biodiversity

The Netherlands contributes to knowledge development in the financial sector on the relationship between climate and biodiversity, including synergies and trade-offs.[162]

Working Group on Climate Adaptation of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform

Various ministries contribute to the Working Group on Climate Adaptation[163] of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform. The working group also explores solutions for financial and insurance instruments that simultaneously contribute to climate mitigation, nature inclusiveness and biodiversity.[164]

Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action

The Dutch Minister of Finance serves, at least until April 2025, as co-chair of the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action together with their Indonesian counterpart.[165] The coalition shares knowledge and assists countries in integrating climate and biodiversity into the finance ministers' policies.[166]

---

[157] Letter to the House of Representatives no. 33576, no. 402 (13 December 2024) Kamerstuk 33576, nr. 402 | Overheid.nl > Officiële bekendmakingen.

[158] Netherlands Enterprise Agency (2024) Cooperation in peatland areas and Natura 2000 transition areas | RVO.nl.

[159] Extensification involves increasing the area of agricultural land per animal, or keeping fewer animals on the same area of land if additional agricultural land is not available.

[160] Ministry of Finance (n.d.) Groene obligaties steunen groene uitgaven overheid | Verduurzaming financiële sector | Rijksoverheid.nl.

[161] European Commission (2023) taxonomy-regulation-delegated-act-2022-environmental-annex-4_en_0.pdf.

[162] For example, the Ministry of LVVN commissioned the study he Climate-Biodiversity Nexus: Quantified in four investment cases

[163] DNB (n.d.) Werkgroep Klimaatadaptatie | De Nederlandsche Bank.

[164] Sustainable Finance Platform (2023) Klimaatadaptatie in een stroomversnelling.

[165] Coalition of Finance Ministers.

[166] For example, in 2022 it published the report An Overview of Nature-Related Risks and Potential Policy Actions for Ministries of Finance: Bending The Curve of Nature Loss and organised workshops to discuss this report and share experiences.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[167]

Financial Sector domain

Within the Financial Sector domain of the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0, work is being carried out to develop definitions and criteria that financial institutions can use to set conditions for financing and investments in biodiversity. Efforts are also underway to develop and deploy instruments for public-private partnerships for investing in nature inclusivity. In addition, financial knowledge is made available to develop innovative revenue models for nature-inclusive solutions within the other domains such as Construction, Energy, Infrastructure, Agriculture and Water.

Clear and long-term government policy on nature inclusivity enables the financial sector to more actively fulfil its role across various domains and sectors. There is also an increasing need for area-based approaches and cooperation. Unilateral investments in nature currently often fail to yield sufficient returns for both individual investors and the collective. Therefore, it is important to work together so that as many parties as possible can benefit from nature-inclusive investments.

[167] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Target 20.
Strengthen Biodiversity Capacity-building and Scientific and Technical Cooperation

Figure 46. Plants in Erlenmeyer flasks © CHUTTERSNAP via Unsplash

Innovation is an indispensable instrument for achieving societal goals. For example, innovative green-blue solutions contribute to sustainable soil and water management, which are crucial elements of climate resilience, animal and plant health, and food security. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) stimulates innovation by strengthening existing structures and policies in collaboration with young entrepreneurs and other innovative organisations. Besides its work on innovation policy, the government is also actively investing in research and development. The goal of the innovation, research and development initiatives is effective and constructive partnerships within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in Europe and internationally.

Global cooperation on biodiversity data and information provision

The Netherlands is a member of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), an international network and databank for biodiversity information, and has established a corresponding Dutch knowledge hub called NLBIF. The GBIF and NLBIF share the common goal of giving everyone, everywhere, open access to data on all species of life on earth. NLBIF supports the mobilisation and exchange of biodiversity data through capacity building (workshops, training programmes, helpdesk, project funding, etc.). The Netherlands participates in the EU-funded Biodiversity Information for Development (BID) programme via GBIF. This multiannual programme led by GBIF aims to stimulate capacity building in relation to biodiversity information and data, and the use of biodiversity data in research and policy in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific islands.

The Netherlands has a national focal point for the Clearing House Mechanism under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The biodiversiteit.nl website is used to this end. The Netherlands provides support in this area to two CBD member states: Grenada and Palau.

Dutch contribution to global capacity-building initiatives

The Netherlands was a member of the Taskforce on Capacity Building of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services from 2014 to 2019 and again from 2024 to 2027.

The Netherlands is a donor to the Global Environment Facility, an international fund that contributes to combatting biodiversity loss, pollution, climate change and pressures on the physical living environment worldwide, and thus contributes to the capacity-building activities of the Global Environment Facility. The Netherlands also contributes to capacity and knowledge building on the use of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) in developing countries by supporting the international activities of the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment.

Transnational research collaboration and North-South scientific cooperation

The Netherlands is a co-lead for the internationalisation of the Biodiversa+ programme, which promotes international collaboration in biodiversity research, amongst other things. In that context, it also liaises with GBIF to strengthen research infrastructures and streamline global governance related to biodiversity monitoring. There are various programmes and long-term initiatives to promote North-South cooperation in scientific research. The Dutch Research Council (NWO) has the WOTRO Science for Global Development programme, a domain-crossing initiative to encourage, fund and facilitate research on inclusive global development and find sustainable solutions to societal and environmental issues in low and middle-income countries. Through this programme, NWO encourages international participation in Dutch research projects, such as the Money Follows Cooperation initiative

Seven Dutch knowledge institutions have a special mandate to develop knowledge and education in collaboration with development cooperation partner countries. These institutions are united in *Stichting Samenwerkingsverband Instituten van Internationaal Onderwijs Landbouwuniversiteit* (SAIL) *Wageningen* and unite international higher education, research and capacity building. The SAIL platform aims to promote the production and sharing of knowledge on inclusive global sustainable development, with a special focus on the Global South. SAIL institutions focus on bridging knowledge between North-South, South-South and North-North to help strengthen the capacity of individuals, institutions and organisations.

The Netherlands contributes to the global UNESCO network of over 600 university chairs to promote knowledge sharing and capacity building for sustainable development. The Netherlands currently has 14 UNESCO chairs.

Stimulating North-South cooperation in innovation and technology

International collaboration on innovation, education and science is promoted through the LVVN attaché network (LAN), the network of water attachés (Infrastructure and Water Management, IenW), the network of innovation attachés (Climate Policy and Green Growth, KGG) and the network of education and science attachés (Education, Culture and Science, OCW). These networks all fall under the various embassy teams in varying compositions and carry out bilateral knowledge and innovation missions. Activities are carried out within the framework of the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) for Agriculture, Water and Food, which will actively focus on nature (air, water, soil and biodiversity) in the period 2024-2027.

This KIA is a joint product of the ministries of LVVN, VWS and IenW and the 'top sectors' Agri & Food, Horticulture & Propagation Materials, and Water & Maritime.

The Dutch development bank (FMO) stimulates and finances innovations from agrifood SMEs in developing countries. The National Space Office, with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, supports the use of remote sensing for satellite data for assessing sustainability challenges in developing countries, including biodiversity monitoring.The Netherlands' Partners for Water programme includes several thematic approaches, including Nature-based Solutions (see target 11) and 'Water and Food', where North-South partnerships are formed.

The current work on biodiversity is primarily multilateral. In the coming years, LVVN will expand this to include bilateral collaboration with a number of selected countries. The work on biodiversity and water also requires a critical examination of the collaborations the ministry currently supports. Both 'do no harm' (prevent biodiversity loss) and 'do good' (actively contribute to biodiversity restoration) are relevant in this context. An important role is envisaged for the LAN, diplomats and local staff working at embassies worldwide to contribute to the policy goals in the area of water, climate, food and biodiversity. When it comes to biodiversity conservation and restoration, the Netherlands also has a lot to learn from other countries.

Teams from the LAN work in the economic departments of 60 Dutch embassies and/or consulates and serve more than 80 countries. They also represent the Netherlands at international organisations such as the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

The LAN has a strong network within governments, civil society and the private sector in strategic partner countries. In these countries, the network identifies innovations, best practices, opportunities for cooperation between governments, and market opportunities for companies. The attachés assess developments and can help connect Dutch stakeholders with those in the countries where they are based.

The LAN contributes internationally to a sustainable global food supply and improving biodiversity, in line with the vision of the Ministry of LVVN and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Capacity building and development of research and educational institutions

Nuffic's Orange Knowledge Programme provides scholarships to foreign students and supports and encourages North-South institutional cooperation and exchanges between educational and knowledge institutions. The Association of Netherlands Municipalities' International capacity-building programme for local governments works to strengthen local governance in developing countries, for example through the Inclusive Green Growth for Cities programme. At the European level, cooperation is facilitated via Erasmus+ to strengthen education, training and employment opportunities. Over the past 10 years, 16 international Erasmus+ Biodiversity projects have been carried out by Dutch knowledge institutions, with a total budget of €7 million.

Target 21.
Ensure That Knowledge is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action

Figure 47. Launch of 'Mrs Mol', a children's book written by Janneke Schotveld, to teach children about the importance of a healthy soil with a rich soil life. © Hanno De Vries

The government and the provinces are working together on a coherent system for ecological information provision. A lot of data is stored in the Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna. The government wants to make this database publicly accessible by 2025. We also encourage innovation by fostering cooperation between businesses, the government, civil society organisations and knowledge institutions, including through biodiversity-related Knowledge and Innovation Agendas (KIA). Finally, we invest in up-to-date and engaging green education and knowledge sharing.

Dutch science and research policy

Dutch science and research policy encourages and facilitates fundamental, practical and applied research by all research domains, including in the field of biodiversity. The Dutch Research Council (NWO) funds and coordinates research programmes. The Dutch Research Agenda (NWA) focuses on interdisciplinary research, collaboration with society, and encouraging knowledge building in the fields of fundamental, practice-based and applied knowledge. For biodiversity, this is reflected through the NWA Green Route: Nature and biodiversity in a rapidly changing environment. The Taskforce for Applied Research SIA invests in applied research, including on the topic of biodiversity. The Biodiversity XL Centre of Excellence in Biodiversity Research is a partnership of Dutch institutions for biodiversity research, consisting of Naturalis Biodiversity Centre, Westerdijk Institute (KNAW), the Dutch Institute for Ecology (NIOO-KNAW) and NIOZ-NWO. Dutch science and research policy continues to support participation in European research initiatives, including Horizon and Biodiversa+ (see below). Long-term and large-scale scientific infrastructure is also funded through the National Roadmap. Within the green life sciences, projects include ARISE,[168] LTER-LIFE[169] and XL-EFES.[170]

[168] Naturalis (n.d.) ARISE: Nederlandse soorten kennen en herkennen.
[169] LTER-LIFE (n.d.) LTER-LIFE.
[170] E.g. Dutch Research Council (2021) Nationale Roadmap Grootschalige Wetenschappelijke Infrastructuur.

Dutch knowledge and innovation policy

Dutch knowledge and innovation policy aims to promote collaboration between businesses, the government, civil society organisations and knowledge parties for knowledge development, innovation and embedding within society. This involves managing various biodiversity-related KIAs, including the Agriculture-Water-Food KIA, and in particular its Resilient Nature Mission.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) manages various knowledge instruments aimed at nature and biodiversity restoration and the integration of nature in living, working and residential environments, including the Dutch Knowledge Network for Restoration and Management of Nature (*OBN Natuurkennis*). LVVN also funds policy supporting research by Wageningen Research, including the Resilient Nature Mission (focusing on technology and data-driven nature policy and management), the knowledge programme for 'Agriculture and Horticulture within the limits of the natural environment', and the Knowledge Programme Climate-smart Forestry.

Through the Applied Research Facilities Fund of the Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth, large-scale investments are made in biodiversity research and technologies. The National Growth Fund encourages innovations for ecosystem services (see targets 10, 11 and 12). There is also an innovation policy specifically aimed at encouraging the development and application of new key technologies for biodiversity monitoring, in particular eDNA techniques and digital technologies (KIA digitalisation, Multiannual Mission-driven Innovation Programmes (MMIPs) and key technologies for the Agriculture-Water-Food KIA). Various departments implement national knowledge agendas in the fields of water, climate, the Dutch delta and organic agriculture to support policy goals.

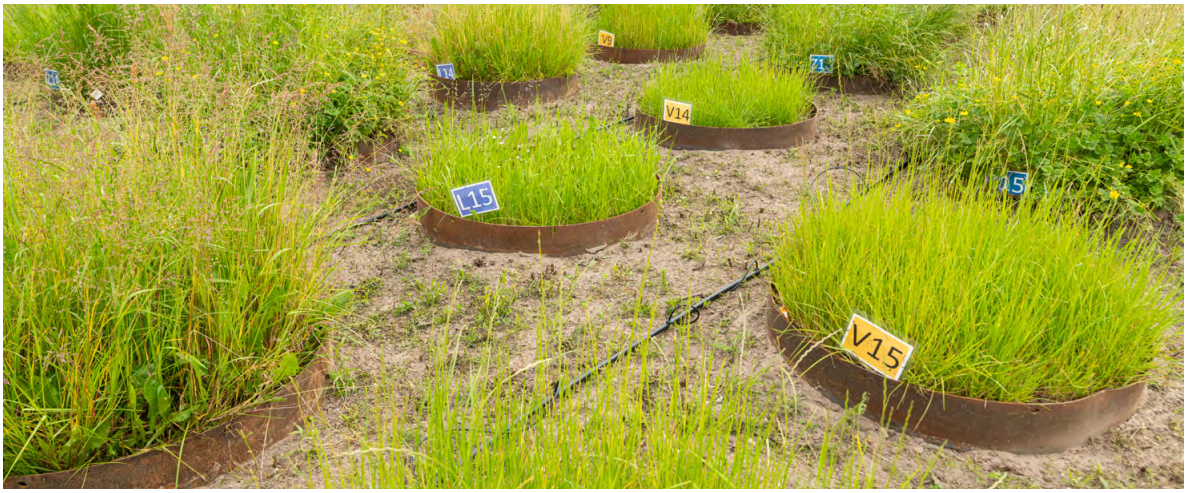


Figure 48. The Soil Calibration Centre conducts research to restore soil life in the Netherlands as much as possible to facilitate healthy nature and a healthy society. © Government of the Netherlands, photo by Herman Zonderland.

Innovation in the green domain is further encouraged through various schemes, including 'Start-up in Residence', an innovation competition for start-ups addressing societal issues. Start-ups and SMEs can apply for early-stage loans to explore whether their innovation has a chance of succeeding in the market.

Applied research, practice-based research and knowledge development on biodiversity

The national government established the TO2 scheme to fund applied research, including in the green domain, which is carried out by TO2 institutions such as Wageningen University & Research, Deltares and the Dutch Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO). National knowledge institutions such as the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL), Statistics Netherlands, and Naturalis Biodiversity Center make important contributions to biodiversity knowledge and information. Applied research in the green domain is facilitated through the WR Knowledge Desk and WR policy-supporting research. The Ministry of LVVN also funds long-term fundamental research into biodiversity through Knowledge Base Research Grants, such as the Knowledge base programme on biodiversity and resilient ecosystems.

Together with lead organisation SIA (part of NWO), the Ministry of LVVN funds multiannual practical research programmes, conducted by lectors, within the Food & Green applied research programme.

In addition, investments are made in the infrastructure and lectorates of universities of applied sciences through SPRONG Groen The 'green' universities of applied sciences include Aeres, Van Hall Larenstein, HAS Green Academy and InHolland. Expertise platforms (knowledge platforms that bring together practice, research and vocational education institutions) in green education are also supported.

Various lectorates and expertise platforms are active in 'hotspots' that pay explicit attention to biodiversity, such as Yuverta's 'blue hotspot'. Yuverta also has a water and soil expertise platform and a green city expertise platform, while Terra has a nature-inclusive agriculture expertise platform (relaunched as an expertise platform on regenerative stewardship), a lectorate on inclusive nature management, a lectorate on bee health (at Van Hall Larenstein) and a lectorate on innovative biomonitoring (at HAS Green Academy).

Nature data, information and reporting

The national government and provinces are working together to promote a coherent ecological information system for national, provincial and local objectives. Volunteers, species monitoring organisations and the Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring (NEM) all play a role in this system.

The NEM is a partnership between various government organisations for monitoring nature policy objectives. Nature monitoring is important for compiling well-founded and substantiated international reports (such as for the Birds and Habitats Directives and OSPAR), national and provincial policy evaluation (Nature Pact) and national indicators (PBL).

The implementation of the monitoring is vested in national species monitoring organisations that coordinate and carry out counts together with 16,000 volunteer observers. Statistics Netherlands provides quality assurance of the data. Their observations are included in the Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna (NDFF), ensuring that the data is also available to third parties. The NDFF is currently undergoing a transition to a public nature database.

There is a wide range of policies, legal obligations and initiatives that govern information provision and support to biodiversity data collection, including:

- Government-facilitated statistics, informative websites and scenarios such as:
  - Environmental Data Compendium (with a section on biodiversity); Progress Report Nature, State of Agriculture, Nature and Food; Natura 2000 profile documents and building blocks; Assessment of the Living Environment; Dutch Key Register of the Subsurface; Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database; Learning Evaluation of the Nature Pact, and Atlas Natural Capital.
- Statutory Research Programme into nature and environmental information provision, including:
  - Statutory reporting under Natura 2000, TMAP and TWSC (Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation), IWC and ASCOBANS (Whaling Conventions) and CCAMLR (Antarctica).
- Planning functions of Statistics Netherlands (for statistical data on nature and the environment), PBL and periodic evaluations and/or explorations of nature policy (WOT N&M).
- Various statutory and other reports, such as progress reports nature (NEN), the red lists, statutory reports on the Birds and Habitats Directives (six-yearly) and AERIUS nitrogen measurement and reporting.
- Support to various databases of species data and biodiversity, including NEM, Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna, and databases of species monitoring organisations.
- Various nature monitoring initiatives, including Birds and Habitats Directives/UPN and Basic Quality of Nature/Biodiversity Planner.
- Netherlands Space Office/RVO: nature monitoring with remote sensing.
- National Expertise Centre Invasive Alien Species (NEC-E): research into effects and prevalence of invasive alien species.

Digital technology and artificial intelligence

The use of digital technology to collect biodiversity data is rapidly expanding. One such initiative is the Netherlands Space Office's Small Business and Innovation Research. This is a scheme to encourage the use of satellite data for biodiversity monitoring. ARISE and LTER-LIFE are examples of large-scale research infrastructures. From a policy perspective, efforts include the Ministry of LVVN's Digitalisation Action Plan, the Implementation Programme for the Digitalisation of the North Sea and innovation incentives through the MMIP key technologies. Applied research is also being initiated into robotisation in the natural and living environment.

Teaching and education

This includes supporting nature and sustainability education inside and outside schools, for example by promoting green/nature-inclusive schoolyards and urban agriculture, the 'Sustainable Progress' (*Duurzaam Door*) education and learning network programme (with biodiversity as one of the main themes), and raising more awareness and mobilising the public on various biodiversity themes.

A key feature of the Dutch approach to CEPA (Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness) is the extensive and finely meshed network of local and regional centres for nature and sustainability education (NDEs). There are also many national NGOs engaged in providing information and education, both within mainstream education and in extracurricular activities and activities focusing on other target groups.

Globally, the NDE network is characterised by:

- Some 140 local and regional nature and sustainability education centres, largely funded by local governments. Many of the projects are aimed at raising awareness, familiarisation with and learning about nature and ecology, as well as their value, in primary and secondary schools. There are also information and activation campaigns aimed at the general public. Petting zoos, school gardens, nature playgrounds and botanical gardens contribute to this network of educational activities located close to communities.
- A second line of provincial and national NGOs, such as SME, GDO and IVN, the nature and environmental federations and provincial landscape management, that support nature and environmental education and mobilise the public to engage in biodiversity. An example is the volunteer activities of 'counters' (monitoring and measuring), 'restorers' (voluntary nature management) and 'storytellers' (excursions, campaigns, sponsorship and education).
- Information and education in and around national parks through visitor centres and family and school activities is largely carried out by land management organisations, with support from IVN.
- A network of smaller and larger nature museums, in addition to the national research institute for biodiversity, Naturalis.

Support for these networks and the professionalisation of the organisations is facilitated by, amongst others, the 'Sustainable Progress' programme, 'Jong Leren Eten' and the National Parks policies. Structural investments in green education are also being made through GroenPact:

- GroenPact is a network partnership of more than 80 parties from government, education and the private sector that focus on working, learning and innovating. In education, this includes VMBO, MBO, HBO institutions and universities.
- GroenPact works on the major challenges related to climate change, nature and water, and the transitions in rural and urban areas. This includes our water, soil and food system, our system of production and consumption, and our nature and living environment. Biodiversity is an important theme here.
- GroenPact also pays attention to the effects of biodiversity on the future labour market, which includes the development of relevant professions that will play a role in biodiversity restoration, such as ecologists or agricultural nature managers. Related questions:
  - Who is needed to improve and restore biodiversity?
  - What knowledge and skills do they need (innovation of education and lifelong learning) and how can this knowledge be spread?
  - How can current practices be organised differently to better improve and restore biodiversity?
  - How can we adapt our learning ecosystem to this?
- The KIEM-green/MBO scheme is aimed at encouraging new partnerships between expertise platforms, lectorates, knowledge institutions and SME partners in the green domain.

Other initiatives facilitated by policy:

- Support for the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery and the Knowledge and Innovation Working Group.
- The Nature Programme's young professionals initiative.
- National Think Tank 2022 on Biodiversity Loss.
- 'We are Nature' campaign (Ministry of LVVN's Communications Directorate).
- VBNE and OBN: nature knowledge platform, capacity building and strengthening nature knowledge.
- Professionalisation of the ecology profession through innovation in education.

The Netherlands participates in various international bodies aimed at strengthening sustainability education (Education for Sustainable Development), including the UNESCO ESD2030 working group, the UNECE ESD steering group, the European Education Area's Learning for Sustainability working group and ASEM (Asian-Europe Meeting on sustainability education). The national agreements and international ambitions have been elaborated in the Dutch implementation plan on Education for Sustainability.[171]

[171] Ministries of LVVN, KGG and OCW (2024) Bijlage 1: Uitvoeringsplan Duurzaamheid in het Onderwijs | Rapport | Rijksoverheid.nl

Knowledge management, utilisation, access and sharing

The Ministry of LVVN supports digital platforms to disseminate knowledge, connect various knowledge sources and create digital interaction. Examples are the Green Knowledge Base and the Dutch Knowledge Network for Restoration and Management of Nature. In addition, 'Knowledge Made-to-Measure' under the 'Top Sectors' scheme offers the opportunity to translate existing knowledge to the practical environment of SMEs and green education.

Policy promoting practical knowledge, local knowledge, practical applications, and indigenous and historical knowledge

Examples include (non-exhaustive):

- Heritage Deal (encouraging pilot projects on heritage sites and landscape and nature improvement).
- National Cultural Heritage Agency (sharing cultural-historical knowledge in landscape and nature management).
- NWO-NWA living labs.
- The Agenda Nature Inclusive (through the availability of nature and sustainability education nationwide, knowledge and information about biodiversity are made accessible to all of society). The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 outlines five ambition and action pathways for education from 2024-2026).
- Dutch Research Agenda (NWA);
- Landscape Monitor: the Landscape Monitor provides visual representations of changes in the Dutch landscape.

The NWA aims to make a positive and structural contribution to the knowledge society of tomorrow, where new knowledge flows easily from researcher to user, and where new questions from practice and society quickly and naturally become the subject of new research.
The NWA offers public authorities the opportunity to promote research themes relevant to them and to obtain well-informed answers to societal issues. Each year, public authorities can suggest themes and policy questions to the NWA for which research is desirable. Example research programmes include 'Living labs for restoring biodiversity in rural areas', 'Biodiversity in the Amazon', and 'Knowledge development for the transition to nature-inclusive municipal policy for biodiversity restoration in urban areas'.

Science for policy

In line with its ministerial responsibility for research and science, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is committed to strengthening research for policy within the national government. The Netherlands already has a rich scientific advisory landscape, and ministries regularly apply the scientific insights of advisory councils, knowledge institutions and planning agencies in their policy domains. However, there is still room for improvement. Also, many of the existing networks of policymakers and scientists operate within a single domain, while a dynamic, multidisciplinary, cross-domain approach is in fact essential for many of the complex issues facing the national government. This requires structural exchanges (science-policy interactions), in which policymakers and scientists from different disciplines engage in dialogue on the key research questions involved in a societal issue.
We need the scientific insights of all the different disciplines to solve our current societal challenges. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has established a Science for Policy team in collaboration with stakeholders in the field to improve the government-wide knowledge function and to explore the options for dialogue and collaboration between science and policy around the complex issues of the moment.

Strengthening the international biodiversity knowledge and data infrastructure

The Netherlands is a member of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and funds the national NLBIF hub that maintains and updates the technical infrastructure for providing free access, worldwide, to Dutch biodiversity data with GBIF (see also target 20). The Netherlands is involved in the new European Research Infrastructure Consortium for Long-term Ecological Research and in LifeWatch. The Netherlands also participates in the European research partnership Biodiversa+ (NWO and LVVN), Horizon Europe and ERA-NET. The Netherlands contributes to the EC Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity through PBL and the Ministry of LVVN. In addition, the Netherlands has a focal point for the Dutch contributions to the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, an independent scientific knowledge network on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

'Joining forces for biodiversity' Consortium

The Toolbox All4Biodiversity[172] is a valuable overview of ongoing activities and initiatives in relation to target 21. More information is available on the biodiversiteit.nl website.[173]

[172] Samen voor Biodiversiteit (n.d.) Deltaplan Biodiversiteitsherstel.
[173] Biodiversiteit.nl (n.d.) Gegevens, Informatie en Kennis.

Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0[174]

Education domain

Just as nature provides the foundation of our society, the way we educate and raise our children forms the foundation for creating a nature-inclusive society. Both the education itself and the physical educational environment are important. Ideally, these will reinforce each other: nature-inclusive education in a nature-inclusive educational environment. Based on this premise, the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 outlines five ambition and action pathways for education for the period 2024-2026:

1. education in development
2. nature-inclusive citizenship education
3. education for a nature-inclusive labour market
4. nature-inclusive educational environments
5. support structure for nature and sustainability education (NDE)

For each of these action lines, the availability of data, information and knowledge plays a role. The Nature Inclusive Collective is committed to ensuring that these are made accessible through channels suited to the target groups. This encourages cooperation between organisations and mutual learning. Regarding action pathways 1 and 4, knowledge is actively collected and shared to remove the barriers to their use.

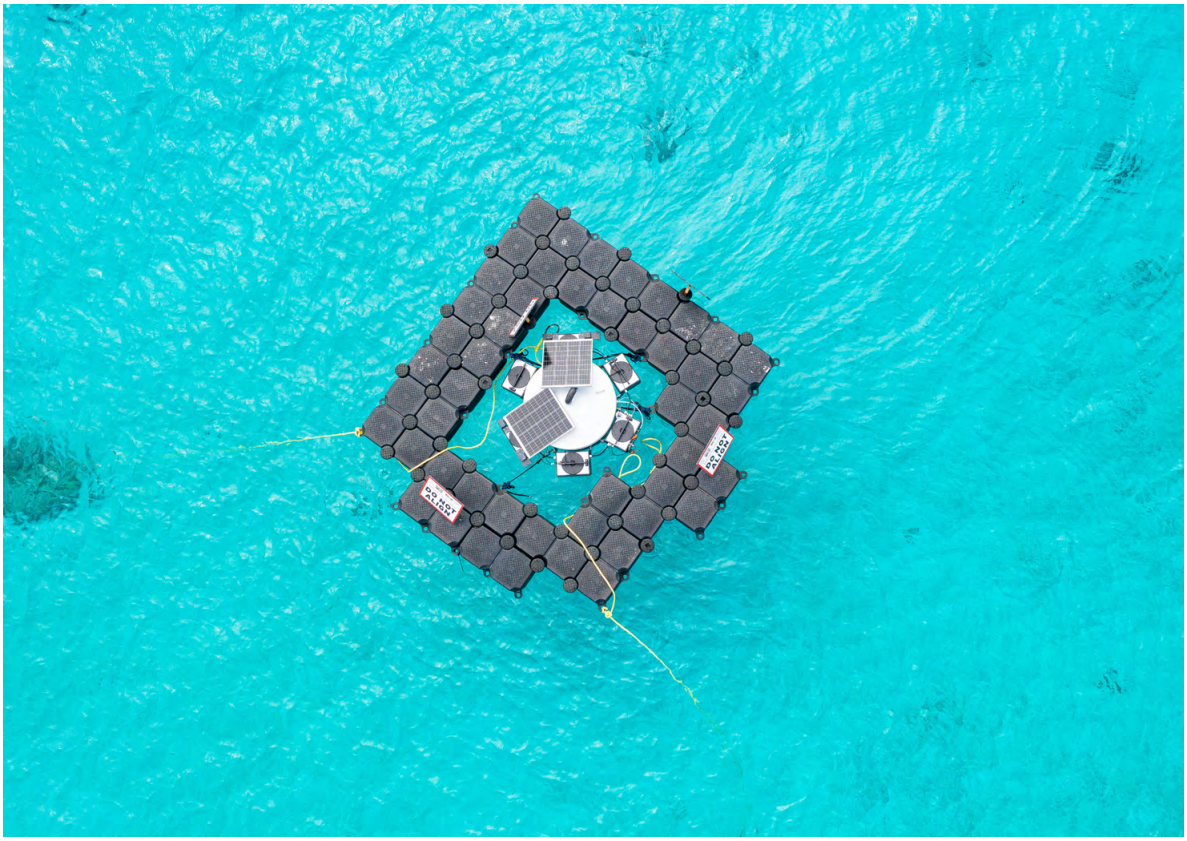


Figure 49. In this Rotterdam Zoo project, a floating breeding system is being tested off the island of Bonaire to study how fish reproduce in open water. Photo: Casper Douma.

[174] The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 was prepared by Dutch public and private leaders from different sectors. More information can be found under target 14.

Targets 22 & 23.
Ensure Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for All. Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action.

Figure 50. The Green Livelihoods Alliance (GLA) protects tropical forests and the people who directly depend on them. © Stephanie Broekarts

When working to improve biodiversity, it is important to involve various stakeholders so that the right balance can be found between the various social objectives and interests. The Netherlands has various projects, programmes and initiatives that contribute to participation and inclusiveness of various groups in society, including in agriculture, urban green spaces and nature areas.

National policy

The Netherlands has established various projects, programmes and initiatives that contribute to actively involving citizens (and in particular women, youth and other underrepresented groups) in policymaking and the implementation of biodiversity objectives, including in agriculture, urban green spaces and nature areas.

In the Netherlands, various efforts are being made to ensure the accessibility of nature and agriculture for everyone and with everyone. Examples include:

- Youth participation in biodiversity decision-making (in agriculture): the 'Design approach to buffer zones', the Young Professionals programme, young farmers and farm succession, encouraging the involvement of the youth in rural objectives.
- Women's participation and role in agriculture: facilitating the Women & Food network, which consists of women from across the agricultural supply chain and aims to strengthen women's potential and agricultural entrepreneurship and incorporating diverse perspectives in policymaking.
- Knowledge development in the area of women's entrepreneurship and specific innovation pathways for women in agrifood.
- The State Forest Service actively works on inclusivity when recruiting new forest rangers.
- The Urban Green Spaces programme (see target 12) also strives to make nature accessible to residents of deprived neighbourhoods.
- The Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 (see target 14) includes participatory growth projects and campaigns in which the provinces and the State Forest Service also participate.
- An inventory of the existing programmes for green-blue schoolyards of the provinces, municipalities and water boards, and what has yet to be done in this respect, is being carried out as part of the Dutch implementation plan on Education for Sustainability.[175]

[175] Parliamentary Paper 32813-1397 (31 mei 2024) Kabinetsaanpak Klimaatbeleid | Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal.

Figure 51. Women & Food working group and the Rural Development Programme (RDP). The RDP contributes to a thriving rural area by encouraging competitive, sustainable and innovative agriculture and strengthening biodiversity © Government of the Netherlands

Climate & Energy Programme of the Ministry of Education, Culture & Science

The Climate & Energy Programme of the Ministry of Education, Culture & Science contributes to these targets through three campaigns:

1. **Research into future-proof housing:** The research focuses on the incidence of gender inequality in the least future-proof areas of the Netherlands and Bonaire. It will map the following:
   - the least future-proof houses in the Netherlands and Bonaire, who lives there (specified by gender, age and migration background), the type of housing (social housing or owner-occupied), income level (low and middle, including people in or near poverty), and the intersections between these;
   - potential interventions, e.g. best practices for preventing gender inequality and promoting gender equality in these areas (to achieve climate adaptation).
2. **Women in technology:** accelerating gender equality in education. An enabling condition for the energy transition is the participation of women in the market for work related to the transition. This condition follows from women's choices of study. We are using resources from the Climate Fund to ensure that stereotypes, social norms and conservative ideas about the roles of men and women do not affect students' study and career choices, or how they are advised by their teachers.
3. **Women in leadership:** We are striving to get more women in top positions and in decision-making roles. More women in leadership positions can strengthen decision-making aimed at achieving sustainability goals.

International policy

With the cabinet-wide Feminist Foreign Policy, the Netherlands is committed to equal rights for women and LHBTIQ+ persons. By 'feminist', we mean equality and equal treatment for all. When more people have equal opportunities, it contributes to a safer, more stable and prosperous world. This policy therefore increases the effectiveness of Dutch foreign policy. The policy has four starting points: women's rights are respected (rights); women are actively involved in political decision-making (representation); there are sufficient resources available to achieve these goals (funding); and policies are adapted according to the local context (context specific).

Inclusiveness is one of the intersecting themes of the international work of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN).[176] This means continually checking whether the right parties are involved in decision-making, including women, young people and small businesses. We deploy the network of diplomatic missions to further advance inclusive decision-making, both diplomatically and economically, which is needed to enable a sustainable food system, within the planet's carrying capacity. We also explicitly include the role and position of women, young people and minority groups in the design of our projects and programmes. A concrete example is the involvement of young people through the UN Youth Representatives on Biodiversity and Food appointed by the Ministry of LVVN.

Current EU targets and measures:

EUBDS A60	Put in place a new biodiversity governance framework
EUBDS A63	Improve environmental compliance assurance
EUBDS A64	Revise the Aarhus Regulation
EUBDS A65	Review and possible revision of the Environmental Crime Directive
EUBDS A100	Increase mutual benefits and decrease trade-offs between biodiversity protection and human rights, gender, health, education, conflict sensitivity, the rights-based approach, land tenure and the role of indigenous peoples and local communities

[176] Ministry of LVVN (2024) https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2024/03/15/kamerbrief-volhoudbare-voedselsystemen-over-de-grens-de-internationale-inzet-van-lnv.

The road to 2030

The preceding text describes, per target, how the Netherlands works in various ways to conserve and restore biodiversity, and thereby contributes to the implementation of the international targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework. In the following chapter, the government considers the next steps to take to ensure the conservation and restoration of nature in the Netherlands for the benefit of people, nature and the economy, as well as the context in which those steps will be taken, in line with the current coalition programme.[177]

Spatial planning considerations and an integrated approach

There is a lot of pressure on the available space in the Netherlands. This calls for balanced and well-considered choices and multifunctional land use. Efforts to improve biodiversity will therefore have to take other societal challenges into account, such as housing, the energy transition, mobility, agriculture, water management, nature conservation, the economy, and defence. Similarly, balanced choices must be made at the European level regarding land use and the achievement of international objectives. The government will engage in discussions at the European level to determine which actions are most appropriate in which locations. The spatial planning choices within the Netherlands will be further detailed in the National Spatial Strategy.

Many of the societal challenges are closely interrelated and cannot be considered in isolation. For example, agriculture and nature are inextricably linked; integrating the two sectors can generate new opportunities, leading to more space for both nature and agriculture, and innovative solutions can be devised to address both challenges. In a recently published report, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) stresses that, given their interconnectedness, challenges for biodiversity, water, food, health and climate require an integrated approach.[178] It is important to promote collaboration between the various sectors to find solutions that both conserve nature and contribute to other social objectives. This collaboration will contribute to achieving GBF targets 1 and 14.

Figure 52. Organic dairy farms invest in farmland bird management, biodiversity, water quality and continuous soil improvement © Government of the Netherlands, photo by Hugo de Wolf

[177] Government of the Netherlands (2024) Regeerprogramma | Regering | Rijksoverheid.nl.
[178] IPBES (2024) Thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health | IPBES secretariat.

The current Integrated Agriculture and Nature Programme and the Agenda Nature Inclusive 2.0 are examples of this joint approach. In the coming years, work will continue on the 'Space for Agriculture and Nature' approach, which will focus on statutory goals and safeguarding the future of the agriculture sector.[179] This approach will help to make spatial planning choices for the development of agriculture and nature and aims to enhance the coherence in national rural policy.

To achieve the nature objectives, the government works on integrating nature into our living and working environments. This ensures that the challenge is distributed across the various sectors and regions, while creating space for social and economic activities, including permit issuance. The active involvement of various sectors, including private investment, is encouraged (GBF target 19). After all, we all bear responsibility for ensuring a Netherlands where there is a balance between thriving rural areas, robust nature (including in urban areas), and space to live, work, recreation and entrepreneurship.

Nature restoration on land and in water

Preventing nature degradation and achieving nature restoration are essential for ensuring sustainable economic development. With regard to nature restoration, the government pursues an area-based approach, where local biodiversity is strengthened and space is created for robust natural areas on land and water. Reassessing Natura 2000 sites is part of this. This requires measures to reduce adverse impacts on nature, such as water depletion, habitat fragmentation and excessive nitrogen deposition (GBF targets 2, 3, 7 and 8). The government aims to achieve these goals wherever possible with minimal regulatory burden. The recently appointed 'Ministerial Committee for the Economy & Nature Restoration' has been tasked with deciding on a concrete programme with the goal of deregulating the Netherlands and offering better prospects to the sectors affected by the various rulings.[180]

The National Restoration Plan, which must be established by the 1st of September 2027 under the European Nature Restoration Regulation, will outline the government's approach to nature restoration. The Nature Restoration Regulation sets targets for restoring terrestrial, coastal, freshwater, saltwater, urban, agricultural and forest ecosystems, and rivers and pollinators. As such, this plan will make a major contribution to GBF targets 1 to 12. Nature monitoring will also be intensified within the framework of the European Nature Restoration Regulation, so that the actual state of Dutch nature will guide further policymaking, including developments in rural areas.

Figure 53. The Gelderse Poort nature reserve, an unprotected floodplain. This area is used for floodwater storage and nature development, and provides more room for the river. © Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, photo by Tineke Dijkstra.

[179] Parliamentary Paper 36600-XIV-66 (29 November 2024) Kamerbrief Ruimte voor Landbouw en Natuur | Kamerstuk | Rijksoverheid.nl.
[180] Letter to House of Representatives 33576, no. 417. (24 January 2025) Instellen Ministeriële Commissie Economie & Natuurherstel.

Nature restoration is also crucial for food security. The government is particularly concerned about the decline of bee, butterfly and hoverfly populations, both in the Netherlands and globally, because of the crucial role they play in food security, the economy and biodiversity. The NL Pollinator Strategy aims to effectively counter the decline of pollinators in the Netherlands (GBF target 4). Especially in a densely populated country like the Netherlands, nature restoration can also lead to conflicts between humans and wildlife. Examples include the increasing numbers of incidents involving wolves, humans and livestock. The government is now working with the provinces to develop a National Wolf Strategy to address this issue.

Given the importance of water for agriculture, the drinking water supply, industry and nature, amongst other things, the National Water Programme (2027) will focus on conscious water consumption, a robust water system and a future-proof drinking water sector. The revised Room for the River programme (2026) will focus on short-term (and where possible long-term) measures aimed at restoring riverbeds and space for high river discharges. Steps are also being taken in sectors such as agriculture, such as reducing nutrient and pesticide runoff, the industry and the reduction of residues, as part of the broader water strategy. The continuation of the Implementation Programme for the Vision for the Future of Plant Protection 2030 will help enhancing the future resilience of agriculture and nature by preventing the spread of diseases and pests and reducing environmentally harmful residues. A new approach for the structural reduction of nitrogen emissions is also currently being developed.

Innovation and sustainability

Innovation plays a key role in making sectors such as agriculture, horticulture and fisheries more sustainable, and is important for achieving the climate and energy goals of the Paris Agreement and European and National Climate legislation. The climate and energy challenges for agriculture and land use require special attention, given the interconnection of agricultural challenges and other challenges such as water management, nature conservation, nitrogen, manure, and animal welfare. Innovations in stables, management, feed, breeding, manure and food production will be encouraged and will provide sustainable economic prospects for the sector, and contribute to thriving rural areas (GBF targets 7, 8, 10 and 20). Reliable and accessible information plays an important role in stimulating innovation. For this reason, the Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna will be made public in 2025, collaborations between the business community, government, civil society organisations and knowledge institutions will be encouraged through biodiversity-related Knowledge and Innovation Agendas, and investments will be made in green education and knowledge sharing (GBF target 21).

Besides the commitment to innovation, the government will work in other ways to achieve the climate and energy goals. The Climate Plan 2025-2035 will form the basis of climate policy in the coming years with measures to meet the climate goals and take steps towards climate neutrality by 2050 (GBF target 8). The continuation of the 'National Programme for Sustainable Manufacturing' and the 'Covenant for the Energy Transition in Glasshouse Horticulture 2022-2030' will contribute to a healthy environment and the competitiveness of the Netherlands. At the European level, the intention is to phase out fossil subsidies aimed at the energy provision, so that climate impacts associated with the use of fossil fuels are priced throughout Europe (GBF target 18). Subsidies for low-grade applications of bio-based raw materials will also be discontinued as soon as possible, in line with the previously agreed phase-out pathways in the Sustainable Bio-based Raw Materials Framework. Climate adaptation measures will be elaborated in the government-wide Heat action plan (2025), the Flood Protection Programme (2025), the new National Climate Adaptation Strategy (2026), and the 'Soil, Subsoil and Groundwater' policy programme (2026).

Based on the overview of actions above, it is not yet fully clear whether all targets will be achieved. Where later reports indicate gaps, the government will explore what additional steps are possible to achieve the targets, always in alignment with other policy objectives, and while maintaining flexibility and minimising the regulatory burden. The government also explicitly reserves the right not to take additional measures if they would impose excessive societal or economic impacts on a small and densely populated country like the Netherlands.

Conclusion

Strengthening nature protection and restoration is not only beneficial for the environment, but also of great importance for other sectors. By taking steps to improve nature, the government contributes to the stability of natural systems, creates economic opportunities and increases the resilience of agriculture and other sectors. The various societal interests will be taken into account when measures are taken to protect and restore nature. Strengthening the cooperation between the various ministries and sectors is an important step towards achieving thriving rural areas with a future-proof food production system, strong agriculture and fisheries sectors, and flourishing and robust nature. As such, the nature objectives will be integrated with the challenges of the energy transition, housing, mobility, and water and climate issues. In 2026, the Netherlands must submit its first report to the UN Convention on

Biological Diversity that summarises its progress in implementing the GBF targets. This report will reveal whether the current policies are adequate to achieve the targets. The government will consider whether, and which, measures are desirable and feasible based on the starting point of maximum resilience.

Annexes

Annex 1.I
Stakeholder contributions per target

In line with the agreements in the GBF, businesses, financial and knowledge institutions, interest groups and youth organisations were all involved in the development of the biodiversity plan. These businesses and organisations wrote a contribution to each GBF target. Various regional authorities were also involved in preparing the plan. We are proud of all the parties in the Netherlands who are actively contributing to these 23 global targets for biodiversity restoration, and are confident that this cooperation will continue in the future.

Target 1. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to this target?

A lot is already being done. The key to the success of the next step lies in cooperating and finding common ground. It can also contribute to uniting the goals of biodiversity restoration through an integrated approach to various objectives, for example in the areas of health, quality of life and climate.

Municipalities

Municipalities have an important role by including biodiversity goals in the design and management of public spaces. Biodiversity restoration is increasingly embedded in environmental plans and implementation programmes, focusing on ecological management, strengthening the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features and connecting to Natura 2000 and the National Ecological Network (NEN). Municipalities encourage residents and other managers of non-municipal land (such as farmers and businesses) to improve nature on their own land. Municipalities set the right example and encourage support for their plans by organising campaigns, information evenings and events. In addition, they make funding available for greening projects on private land.

Nature and environmental organisations

These organisations represent the interests of nature and draw attention to areas where biodiversity is threatened based on clearly substantiated information. They typically have a lot of expertise in-house and so are well placed to bring this information to the attention of the public. They not only point out bottlenecks; more importantly, they identify opportunities to include biodiversity in spatial planning. These organisations help public authorities, businesses and private individuals to make the right choices in the design of the living environment, with respect for the interests of nature, and they hold the government to account. Where necessary, they push for additional laws and regulations and call public authorities to account for failing to comply with obligations arising from existing laws and regulations.

Businesses

Businesses are harnessing their innovative strength, and demonstrating how economic and ecological goals can be achieved simultaneously. More and more businesses (including banks) are taking responsibility, because they recognise that sustainability is necessary and inevitable for future-proofing their business model. They are working to reduce their contribution to pressure factors impacting on biodiversity, for instance by using circular materials and aiming for zero emissions. A number of companies are working on a CSRD Supply Chain Plan in which each manufacturer is required to identify the impact of their supply chain on the biodiversity and climate goals and ensure they do not contribute to biodiversity loss. They are also working on greening their properties and rewarding suppliers for sustainable practices.

Knowledge institutions

The core task of knowledge institutions is to increase our knowledge about biodiversity in the physical living environment. They help to address the existing knowledge gaps on species and species monitoring, conditions outside nature areas, and effective measures and management systems. Land managers can apply the knowledge in practice by translating it into practical instruments and actively sharing it with stakeholders. In addition, knowledge institutions are increasingly involving the public and professionals in monitoring biodiversity through citizen science projects. This will increase society's knowledge about biodiversity.

What do non-state actors need to achieve this?

All parties need the national government to establish clear and feasible laws and regulations, clear goals and a long-term vision. They also call on the government to enforce its own laws and regulations. These parties are motivated to cooperate more among themselves and provide transparency.

Municipalities
Municipalities need a long-term vision and perspective that is independent of the current political climate to be able to take steps towards biodiversity restoration. Clear and, if possible, simplified regulations and clear goals provide the fundamental basis for this. Nationwide media attention for the importance of biodiversity is needed to increase support among all stakeholders in public spaces. Municipalities have an interest in a clear standard for green spaces with qualitative and quantitative agreements to ensure biodiversity in various spatial development plans. Knowledge parties will need to provide support to develop this green standard.

Nature and environmental organisations
Nature and environmental organisations require more transparency from and cooperation with businesses. They also have a strong need for the government to establish unambiguous policies and ensure compliance with, and the enforcement of, its own regulations. The provision of structural funding and clarity by the government is necessary for nature and environmental organisations to continue and strengthen their commitment to biodiversity. This will also allow them to provide better support to other parties, such as businesses

Businesses
Clear and feasible government regulations are needed to accelerate the green transition in business. Many companies are lagging behind in this transition, because greening and sustainability are voluntary and also expensive to implement. The government can steer companies towards this transition by providing incentives, for example, by offering tax breaks to sustainable and biodiversity-friendly businesses. In addition, businesses themselves can also contribute, for example by paying sustainable farmers more for their products. It is also crucial to provide businesses with more education and knowledge about the importance and value of greening. Businesses wish to cooperate more with knowledge parties and nature organisations to this end.

Knowledge institutions
Knowledge institutions want to focus more on producing knowledge for society and translating knowledge into practical tools. Amongst other things, this will require changing the Dutch Research Council's incentive strategy, which currently often focuses on developing niche knowledge. More funding should be available for public-private studies (such as pilot programmes) involving knowledge institutions as partners. It is also important to establish a knowledge hub on biodiversity where the public and professionals can go for information.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II). This section does not describe government policy.

Target 2. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to target 2?
Currently, public authorities are the main contributors to GBF target 2: these are the national government and, more in particular, the provinces, who have been delegated responsibility for nature restoration. Specific non-state actors who manage large areas and have a strong interest in a healthy and natural ecosystem also need to be involved, such as agricultural businesses, land management organisations and water companies. All non-state actors are already contributing to ecosystem restoration in one way or the other, for example by putting nature on the agenda, conducting research, developing visions and knowledge, nature-based designing, or fostering public support.

Many non-state actors are involved in the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery,[181] an initiative in which nature organisations, farmers, citizens, knowledge institutions, public authorities and companies are working together to restore biodiversity in the Netherlands. The objective of the Delta Plan is for a Green Blue Network of Landscape Features to cover 10% of the Netherlands. In addition to agricultural land, this includes land without an agricultural function owned by public authorities and private parties.

Important in this respect is the identification of 'drivers' for ecosystem restoration. This can be done by conducting a thorough system analysis before intervening in an area. Non-listed companies also need to make corporate social responsibility the basis of their activities, and incorporate clear objectives for ecosystem conservation and restoration.

The research institutions involved also have a social responsibility to contribute to ecosystem conservation and restoration. This may require research proposals to be rejected if they will lead to ecosystem degradation. Research into further agricultural intensification, or the construction and replacement of large infrastructure projects (in the Netherlands or elsewhere in the world) must be critically examined for potential ecosystem degradation.

The starting points must be nature inclusivity, nature positivity and in any case the prevention of damage to ecosystems. Many sites under government management that do not have a nature function also offer opportunities for nature recovery. In total, about 350,000 hectares owned by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management are situated in or near sites that fall under the Birds and Habitats Directives. Excluding water, this includes 50,000 hectares near Natura 2000 sites[182] that, with the help of effective restoration measures, could contribute to the 30% target.

The goal of current and future projects must be to restore one hectare of nature for every hectare of built-up area. An inspiring example is provided by the Ecomunitypark business park,[183] where a large part of the acquired terrain has been set aside for nature. A municipality, knowledge institution, research institution, railway company, company with its own land, or any citizen with a garden can implement nature-based designs or restore nature on 50% of their land. This will also provide benefits, for example in the form of water buffers and improved climate adaptation. This must be encouraged with inspiring publicity campaigns, for example linked to the national garden bird count, the campaign to reduce garden paving, or other public campaigns that tie in to this theme.

Another inspiring example is *Land van Ons* ('Our land'), a cooperative with 23,000 members. The cooperative buys agricultural land with nature restoration potential through crowdfunding and subcontracts this land to sustainable farmers (mostly focussed on circular or ecological farming). At around 300 hectares, the current total area is relatively

[181] Joining forces for biodiversity (n.d.) Deltaplan Biodiversiteitsherstel.
[182] Van der Sluis & Pedroli (2017) Kansen voor natuur binnen RWS-terreinen: een eerste verkenning - Rijkswaterstaat Publicatie Platform.
[183] Ecomunitypark (n.d.) Bedrijventerrein Ecomunitypark.

small, but the initiative has important value as a demonstration and awareness-raising project. This is partly because the 23,000 members have a say in the purchases, and also thanks to the transparent communication.

Youth organisations have active networks and so can help the government to involve today's young people and future generations in policies related to target 2. They can also mobilise young people to participate in local campaigns and projects related to GBF target 2, for example the campaign to reduce garden paving and wildlife counts. Universities of applied sciences and research universities need to include student awareness-raising in their curricula, and focus the programmes on finding new solution pathways for preventing environmental degradation and restoring degraded ecosystems.

What do non-state actors need to achieve this?

Various enabling conditions have been suggested that the government could facilitate

- Strengthen the role of nature organisations in the implementation of projects by providing them with funding.
- Involve civil society in policy discussions. Involve all parties from the beginning, including those who will only play an active role later in the process.
- Commission NGOs to calculate the expected effects of visions and proposals.
- Enforce environmental rules more effectively and prevent ecosystem degradation.
- Apply 'true pricing' by calculating the expected environmental costs to encourage more sustainable land use.
- Impose obligations to set aside land for nature restoration, particularly in the spatial planning of new projects and building sites (biodiversity compensation instead of 'green compensation'?).
- Put more pressure on companies and sectors to actively invest in nature restoration (see the Climate Panels).
- Reject grant applications if ecosystem restoration and/or conservation is not included and this is not made explicit in the application.
- Keep our promises!
- Include specific nature objectives in tender procedures so that consulting and engineering firms can include more room for nature in their projects

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II). This section does not describe government policy.

Target 3. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to target 3 and what do they need to do so?
Non-state actors' contributions range from the creation of nature areas, knowledge development and dissemination, and engaging the general public, to providing funding, developing qualitative assessments, and contributing facts and figures.

Contribution to knowledge development and dissemination and engaging the general public
Knowledge institutions such as Statistics Netherlands, PBL and WUR collect facts and figures related to the protection, management and conservation of areas and their effects on nature quality and biodiversity. Facts and figures are presented and published in the form of indicators, including on the website of the Environmental Data Compendium (CLO). The objective of the CLO is to make scientific facts and figures available to facilitate the public debate and decision-making on the environment, nature and spatial planning. For example, data on the area of protected nature in the Netherlands.[184]

The effectiveness of protection and management measures is often expressed in terms of nature restoration, or improvements in biodiversity.

Biodiversity data, mostly collected by tens of thousands of voluntary observers, are used to produce biodiversity indicators that provide insights into the current state, and changes in, nature and biodiversity. Biodiversity indicators are essential for assessing nature management and policy, and they are used in international reports for the European Birds and Habitats Directives and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.[185]

Contribution to the creation of nature areas
Non-state actors also actively contribute to the protection and management of nature areas. For example, more than a third of forests in the Netherlands are privately owned and most of these fall under the National Ecological Network.[186]

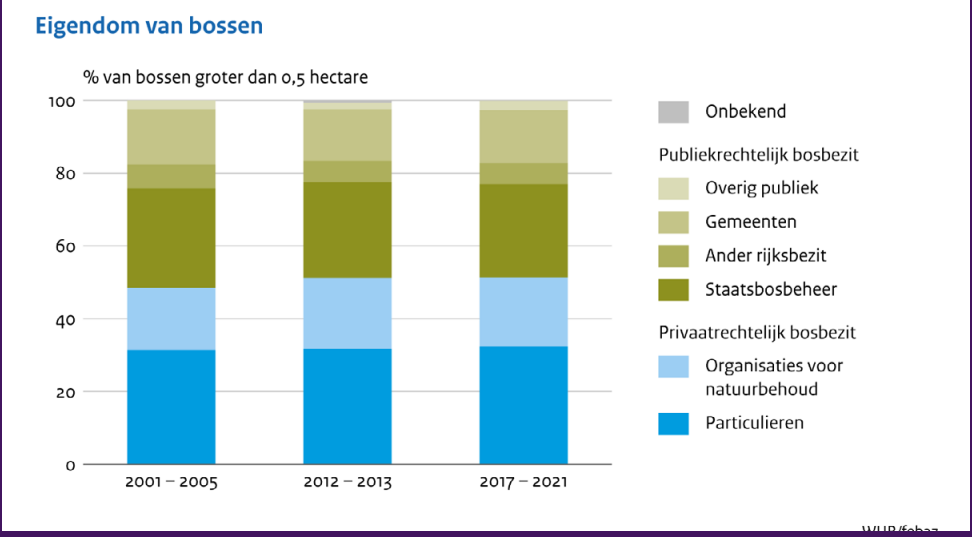


Figure 1. Forest ownership in the Netherlands. Green shaded areas are publicly owned, blue areas are private forest and grey areas are unknown. Source: WEnR, 2023

[184] Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO Indicator 142505. Aandeel beschermde natuurgebieden in Nederland, 2022.
[185] For further information, see: Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO indicator 062501, Citizen Science voor Natuur and Environmental Data Compendium (2022) CLO indicator 162401, Burgerbetrokkenheid bij Natuur.
[186] Environmental Data Compendium (2023) CLO indicator 126206, Eigendom van Bossen, 1975-2021.

Non-state actors are generally willing to continue this contribution, but they also suggest increasing the impact of their activities by adopting the recommendations below. Other private parties could also be sought who are willing to contribute to nature creation and conservation.

Non-state actors also emphasise that there are two important enabling conditions to achieve target 3

1. **Actual and demonstrable effectiveness** of protection and management measures. The current system of self-regulation does not adequately meet this need. Parties have warned that the government insufficiently coordinates the decision-making required to achieve effective management and protection. Moreover, nature protection is not only a responsibility of the national government, but also of a variety of other parties, such as municipalities, water boards, provinces and the National Forest Service. However, these parties have insufficient capacity to implement this effectively, nor is it given sufficient priority. There is also insufficient openness regarding the task at hand. The implementation of the measures is self-regulated by the local authorities, which can be to the detriment of quality. However, the actual percentages achieved are less important than the manner in which nature protection is implemented. Of course, the larger the area of nature, the more likely it is that a certain percentage will achieve a higher quality, while this may not apply to 100% of all areas. However, the qualitative outcomes should be pivotal. Without a guaranteed qualitative achievement, the percentage achieved will only be a guarantee of the *minimum* effort required, i.e. a baseline. So, targets must also be set for effective implementation, quality assurance, and monitoring and enforcement of actual implementation, and the results thereof. Achieving truly 'effective' management and protection of nature requires making ecology the foundation of decision making and a starting point. Ecology cannot be a secondary goal. Various stakeholders believe that we could potentially achieve the 30% target based on the current system, if only the government were to apply the current laws and regulations effectively.
2. **Efficiently connected network.** This is an important goal for achieving real effectiveness. Connectivity does not only involve creating ecological corridors, but also involves the actual embedding of the network in the landscape. The regional national parks of France and England are cited as examples.

Support for achieving enabling conditions 1 and 2 will require new plans. For example, monitoring by volunteers can help increase support for interventions. In addition, effective management and protection of nature should benefit those parties who pay the costs. Ecological added value should also be given more equal consideration in, for example, social cost/benefit analyses and environmental impact assessments.

The non-state actors submitted the following recommendations:

1. It is urgently recommended to place responsibility for integrated spatial planning back in the hands of the national government.
2. This should go hand in hand with a logical translation of national planning to the level of the provinces and municipalities.
3. Ecological principles should be embedded in policy assessment processes (e.g. when assessing permit applications or zoning plans).
4. Policy choices must be assessed based on scientific ecological data.
5. Assessments must always be carried out by an independent body, or a counter assessment must be conducted

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II). This section does not describe government policy.

Target 4. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to this target?

Representatives of land management organisations, municipalities, training institutes and knowledge institutions discussed how to achieve GBF target 4 during the stakeholder consultation on 22 November 2023

The actors

They established that non-state actors in the Netherlands can make an important contribution to halting, or at least slowing down, human-induced extinction of endangered species. The following actors are involved (this list is not exhaustive):

- **Land management organisations** contribute to the target by carefully managing nature areas and establishing new nature, often as part of the National Ecological Network (NEN). This helps to prevent habitats of endangered and vulnerable species from becoming isolated. Examples include 30 hectares of new nature in the Maashorst region (Province of Noord-Brabant)[187] and 15 hectares of new nature on the Gulpenerberg (Province of Limburg).[188] Land managers also play a role in education. For example, the National Forest Service has developed NatuurWijs, a nature experience and education programme for primary schools.[189]
- **Provinces** contribute to this GBF target by working to conserve habitats and populations of species both actively and passively (by complying with the protection regulations). The emphases of the activities vary from province to province. For example, the Province of Overijssel encourages private nature management and is committed to promoting nature-based construction. The Province of Noord-Brabant has implemented a habitat-based approach and associated grants. The province also has additional provincial ambitions to maintain the Brabant Ecological Network.
- **Municipalities** contribute to developing and maintaining ecological corridors and other parts of the green network. For example, the municipalities of Breda and Tilburg have created more than 200 hectares of nature in recent years. In addition, municipalities draw up rules to ensure that endangered species are taken into account in spatial planning. Species management plans (SMPs) also contribute to this. For example, the municipality of Breda has drawn up green standards with quantitative and qualitative goals for species conservation, and it is investing in species-based measures for farmland birds, the European tree frog and the spiked rampion, for example. The municipality also helps encourage public participation, For example in the 'Green neighbourhoods' project, where the residents work together to make their neighbourhood greener.[190]
- The **educational institutions** (vocational colleges, universities of applied sciences, research universities) contribute to this GBF target by training the nature managers and monitors of the future, and ensuring that the required knowledge is retained for society. They also conduct research, in particular applied research. Such research reveals which measures work most effectively to achieve target 4.
- **Knowledge institutions and monitoring organisations** such as Sovon Dutch Centre For Field Ornithology and the *Vlinderstichting* (for butterflies) contribute to this target by providing information on the conservation status of all species and the underlying mechanisms. With their national flora and fauna monitoring networks, they also develop the knowledge required to predict when species become at risk of extinction.
- **Businesses** can inspire other businesses to contribute to preventing the extinction of endangered species. The 'Green Circles' are a good example,[191] involving partners from the business community, agriculture, the

[187] Staatsbosbeheer (2022), 30 hectare nieuwe Natuur in Maashorst.
[188] Natuurmonumenten (2024), Nieuwe natuur in het Land van Serlé.
[189] NatuurWijs (n.d.) NatuurWijs.
[190] Municipality of Breda (n.d.), Groene Buurtjes.
[191] Groene Cirkels (n.d.), https://www.groenecirkels.nl/.

knowledge sector, banking public authorities and civil society. They work together on transition themes such as nitrogen and CO_2 emissions, a more sustainable food system, biodiversity conservation, health, climate adaptation and the energy transition. For example, there is a 'Green Circle circular sugar beet supply chain' in which Cosun Beet Company, Naturalis and the Province of Noord-Brabant are working together to foster a circular economy, an attractive living environment, robust nature and future-proof agriculture. They jointly conduct projects, pilot programmes, research and share their knowledge. In addition, businesses can play a role in protecting species on their own properties. Business parks are not nature areas, but they can be rich in species.
The opportunities for this form of nature management are not yet being fully exploited.

What do non-state actors need to help achieve this target?

This question can be broken down into foundations and instruments. The foundations are the enabling conditions that are essential for achieving target 4 by 2030. The instruments are the resources that non-state actors can deploy to contribute to this target. Without the foundations, the instruments are unlikely to find fertile ground

Foundations

1. First, **reducing external threats to nature**, such as fragmentation, water depletion, acidification and eutrophication, is key. Groundwater levels must rise. If the enabling conditions are not met, species will be unable to recover, and nor will non-state actors be able to make an effective contribution to preventing species from becoming extinct in the Netherlands.
2. The second foundation is the commissioning of an **early warning system** for predicting the loss of endangered species. By applying so-called 'alert limits', the Netherlands can apply a more targeted approach to prevent or limit the loss of species. This can be achieved by applying the available knowledge more efficiently.

Instruments

1. A first instrument is to **expand impact monitoring**. Instead of monitoring before measures have even been taken, it is better to implement measures based on the existing knowledge, and then continue to monitor their impact through field studies. This is also known as 'learning-based management'.
2. A second instrument is to call in the **government as a knowledge broker**. The non-state actors all endorse the importance of the government's role as a bridge-builder between knowledge institutions and the business community, and between the businesses themselves. This should enable tailor-made solutions to make a more targeted contribution to restoration. For example, a service desk could be opened where businesses can go with questions and where they can be referred to knowledge institutions or leading businesses. This service desk would need to be fed with knowledge by the knowledge institutions so that it can advise on targeted measures that businesses can take to prevent species loss.
3. A third instrument is **more focus on educating the public**. It is vital that the government provides the public with information about how their behaviour influences the loss of biodiversity and, more specifically, endangered species. The government can also help the institutions and organisations that have this knowledge in-house to make sure it is understood by the public. This will help to foster broader support for this theme.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 5. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to this target?

Trade flow analyses
Policymakers and law enforcement agencies can be provided with valuable information in the form of trade flow analyses, which reveal data about the economic value and the key stakeholders in trade. These analyses can help identify risks, expected trade patterns (of both legal and illegal trade) and develop targeted measures to encourage sustainability. Examples: IFAW report in response to the trade analysis of shark products[192] and Shark safeguards: Elevating EU controls on shark trade.[193] The Netherlands as a trading country has a crucial role to play in stopping global deforestation and other destruction of nature. That is revealed in the new WWF-NL report 'The impact of Dutch imports on nature loss worldwide'.[194]

Assisting with seizures
Non-state actors contribute expertise to law enforcement, such as by identifying endangered species, analysing market trends and providing legal and practical advice. This cooperation will increase the effectiveness of seizures and discourage illegal trafficking practices. Examples: IFAW trains enforcement authorities at the request of governments in Asia and Latin America.[195] In the Forest Foresight programme,[196] WWF-NL deploys artificial intelligence to predict deforestation and provide a warning before illegal deforestation takes place. The Forest Foresight programme helps local communities to protect their environment, for example by preventing illegal deforestation in their community forests.

Training for a 'safe outdoors'
Non-state actors can help reduce the risks of overexploitation by providing training to farmers, hunters, municipalities, police and firefighters, but also local communities, nature conservation organisations and water boards who work with nature on a daily basis. These training programmes could focus on the sustainable management of natural resources, recognising endangered species and reporting suspicious activities. Increasing communities' awareness and providing them with tools to improve sustainability will reduce the risk of overexploitation and pollution. For example, the Royal Dutch Hunters' Association (KNJV) is working towards the common goal of a safe outdoors through the 'Safe Business Platform' (PVO). This includes warning of environmental and wildlife crime.

Awareness campaigns for tourists and other travellers
Non-state actors can launch awareness campaigns to inform tourists and other travellers about the consequences of wildlife trade. By raising the public's awareness of ecological impacts, health risks and animal welfare concerns, these actors can help to reduce the demand for illegal products and encourage sustainable tourism. Examples: IFAW's campaign in Iceland targeting tourists (Meet Us Don't Eat Us),[197] and the Think Twice campaign.[198] The KNJV continuously reminds its members that they must operate within the constraints of a management plan approved by the local authorities

[192] IFAW (2022). The EU's role in the global shark trade.
[193] IFAW (2023). Shark safeguards: Elevating EU controls on shark trade.
[194] WWF (2022). wwf-nl-report-risky-business.pdf.
[195] IFAW (2023). Officers train to handle animals seized from wildlife trafficking.
[196] WWF (n.d.) Forest Foresight | WWF | Ontbossing voorspellen.
[197] Whales Watching Iceland (n.d.) Meet Us Don't Eat Us - Whale Watching in Iceland.
[198] The Guardian (2006). Wildlife threatened by tourist souvenirs | UK news | The Guardian.

Wildlife monitoring and counts
Non-state actors such as nature conservation organisations, animal protection groups, hunters, fishers, volunteers and scientific institutions can all contribute to data collection. This data is used to identify and monitor endangered species and plays a crucial role in shaping policy and implementing conservation measures. By providing scientific data, non-state actors can help identify priority species in need of protection. Examples: IFAW is a member of the End Wildlife Trafficking Online[199] coalition, which conducts research, shares data and provides support through training programmes. The hunters of the KNJV actively contribute to monitoring those species for which they share responsibility. Nationwide counts are organised together with the 'fauna management units'.

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve the target for 2030?

Awareness raising
Non-state actors require financial support to tailor awareness-raising campaigns to the general public and to specific sectors or professions. For example, the Dutch Mammal Society publishes articles and newsletters on alien species to inform the public about them. WWF-NL also works to raise the awareness of the general public through its social media channels, and specifically targets its supporters through its newsletters.

Government regulation and enforcement
- Financial support for providing training and organising educational programmes for law enforcement agencies aimed at recognising and preventing illegal trade practices and identifying endangered species during seizures. Examples: IFAW's shark fin identification programme (Workshop in Colombia, Dec. 2023[200] and the CITES training in Panama, Sept. 2023).[201]
- Collaborating with law enforcement agencies to share expertise and build capacity for more effective enforcement.
- Developing international partnerships to track down and prosecute illegal traffickers. Example of a partnership of non-state actors: United for Wildlife.[202]

Plans/preparations for zoonotic outbreaks based on Action Plans
- Financial support for the development of national and international action plans for preventing and controlling zoonoses. Example: IFAW Report Beyond Rescue,[203] pages 9-11.
- Capacity building for rapid response and coordination in the event of a potential zoonotic outbreak, including training of health workers, veterinary professionals and meat processors. Examples: the IFAW workshop in cooperation with the World Organisation for Animal Health[204] and the IFAW report Beyond Rescue 2022 training programme,[205] pages 32-33.

Sheltering seized animals
- Establishing and supporting shelters for seized animals, focusing on their welfare and possible rehabilitation.
- Collaboration with animal protection organisations and public authorities to implement effective shelter programmes.
- Financial support to develop and provide online and offline training for authorities when seizing live wildlife.

[199] The Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online (n.d.) Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online.
[200] Barbara Slee (2024) Barbara Slee on LinkedIn: Colombia: hijo de capo del cartel de Cali envuelto en tráfico de aletas de.
[201] Barbara Slee (2024) Barbara Slee op LinkedIn: #panama #shark #trade #panama #oceans #conservation #limittradesavesharks.
[202] United for Wildlife (n.d.) About United for Wildlife - United for Wildlife.
[203] IFAW (2022) IFAW_AnimalsinDisastersEurope_ENG_LR_DIGITAL.pdf.
[204] Staci Putney (2024) Staci Putney McLennan op LinkedIn: #animalwelfare #disastermanagement.
[205] 206 IFAW (2022) IFAW_AnimalsinDisastersEurope_ENG_LR_DIGITAL.pdf.

Monitoring van onder andere handelsstromen en dierziekten

- Sufficient financial support for trade data analyses and for the development and implementation of trade flow and disease monitoring systems and/or the improvement of existing monitoring systems.
- Collaboration with scientific institutions and technology companies to develop innovative monitoring solutions.

Sustainability labels on products

- Non-state actors can encourage public authorities and businesses to implement product sustainability labels. Commercial actors can also hold other businesses accountable for claims made regarding sustainable, animal-friendly and/or healthy product sourcing.
- Collaboration with businesses to establish sustainability standards and encourage consumers to deliberately choose products that meet these standards.
- Provide support in the development of transparent product traceability systems.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 6. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to this target?
Many non-state parties in the Netherlands are involved in alien species issues. For example, they have their own specific organisational objectives related to protecting native biodiversity, possibly targeting specific species or the management of nature areas. In addition, non-state actors are involved in the import, trade, breeding and use of species. They are involved in potential or already existing pathways of alien species and, based on their social responsibility, are gradually reshaping their operational processes to manage the risks. Finally, there are many parties who were not interviewed for this report and are not consciously involved and have no clear intrinsic motivation (such as contractors, dredgers and road construction companies), but who feel a societal or legal pressure to change the way they work due to alien species issues.

1. Current role of stakeholders
Outside the role of the government (but with partial government support), the following campaigns have been energetically taken up (or to a degree): the early identification of existing and new alien species (partly with the help of volunteers and partly supported by innovative methods); the collection of this data in the Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna; risk assessments and horizon scanning; improved access to information (amongst other things, the websites nederlandsesoorten.nl and verspreidingsatlas.nl); campaigns to inform citizens (amongst other things through Nature Today), consumers (amongst other things through the promotion of native alternatives at points of sale, tuinernietin.nl), supporter groups and sectors (amongst others garden centres) about policy on invasive alien species, legislation and species at risk; and encouraging native or non-invasive alternatives.

The nature conservation organisations often respond to warnings of new introductions of alien species, or the competent authorities are informed so they can organise the response. These responses have resulted in several successful eradications of alien species following their initial introduction in the Netherlands. Alien species are controlled using proven and innovative control methods. For more widespread and hard to control species that cannot be controlled at the local level, measures to make ecosystems more resilient are increasingly being deployed (where promising and affordable). While this method does not always successfully eradicate alien species, it does often limit their impact. As of 2024, larger businesses (for example breeders and traders) are required to submit sustainability reports under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). These reports must also pay attention to the businesses' impact on biodiversity and ecosystems (and potentially also alien species).

2. Stakeholder requirements
Stakeholders expressed various requirements and contributed suggestions that could contribute to the subgoals of target 6, both to support the independent role of stakeholders (and the cooperation between them) and regarding the expected role of the government itself. These requirements and suggestions are mainly in the areas of prevention, identification, mitigation, impact, policy and legislation.

Prevention
The government is expected to provide more information and clarity. More active sharing of information between species conservation organisations and traders and breeders is also desirable. This includes the question of which species not covered by the current legal frameworks are expected to be, or may become, problematic in the near future. Breeders and traders will then be able to respond in good time (also for their own economic interests). This could involve more standard warnings to control accidental alien imports (for example of seeds attached to other species), or preventing prohibited species from being replaced with a presumably equally invasive alternative. With more clarity about high-risk species, garden centres and growers can in turn provide clearer information to their customers.

Much of the data is currently fragmented (e.g. across the websites nederlandsesoorten.nl, tuinernietin.nl and on Horizonscan), without a clear status, or sometimes not up to date. More connected data is desirable.

Opportunities should be explored to exempt non-invasive breeds and variants of species (e.g. sterile plants) from containment in current and future legal frameworks. Such an exploration should be made part of the procedure before an entire species is included in the List of Union Concern.

In addition, it is important to make it easier to surrender live animals (for example for a fee, as in the electronics disposal fee) and encourage the centralised collection of alien plant material to prevent unwanted dumping.

In agriculture, it is difficult to find affordable herb-rich seed mixtures (for example for field margins) that are not contaminated with potentially invasive alien species. Herein lies an opportunity to work with the floriculture sector to make such mixtures widely available. Finally, also involve non-related sectors such as construction companies, dredgers, and soil and sludge processors in the prevention of alien species.

Detection and early-warning systems
The budget for monitoring (through the Ecological Monitoring Network (NEM)) for the purpose of early warning in its current form is under pressure, but must be increased to enable a rapid follow-up. This will also allow more public sightings of alien species to be collected. This applies not only to species on the List of Union Concern, but also to other potentially invasive species

Limiting the impact
All provinces should be required to address at least those species with an eradication obligation in a similar, timely and correct manner. An infection must be treated as a calamity. An emergency response or species plan may be required for more species to minimise the time between detection and the intervention. Avoid the situation where an intervention is unnecessarily delayed by even more investigation into the problem.

Policy and legislation
Strengthen the national approach. Decentralisation of part of government policy (from the central government to the provinces and partly to the municipalities) will result in undesirable situations regarding alien species, such as mobile species targeted for eradication that in the current situation are uncontrolled in the one province while they are controlled in another. This makes a cross-provincial approach almost impossible at present. Nor are hygiene protocols enforced in all provinces.

The time is ripe for a more integrated system of alien species control, in which the Water Framework Directive, nitrogen issues and certainly also a river basin approach must play an important role both nationally and internationally. This includes ensuring that economically dependent parties (for example traders and breeders) are better prepared for policy changes that will affect them, and not be caught off guard.

The concept of 'species' in the existing regulations prevents addressing native species obtained from elsewhere. From the conservation perspective of 'native biodiversity', non-local native species pose a risk and are therefore often undesirable.

Breeders and traders urgently suggest further regionalisation of policy on invasive alien species within Europe, for example based on climate zones, so that species that are not a problem in the Netherlands can continue to be used in this country. As far as these organisations are concerned, such species can be taken off the List of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern and included in the national lists of countries where they do cause problems. This suggestion is not supported by nature conservation organisations, because it ignores the side effects of a continued supply of these species on the European market. More invasive species should be placed on the national list of the Netherlands, including invasive species of European origin.

The positive list of approved animals list (Pets and Hobby Animals List) should be expanded to include other animal groups in which the invasion risk has been included. Currently, a

'climate match' is in fact a condition for approval.

The enforcement of existing legislation is said to be minimal. More costs of clean-ups and the like could be recovered from offenders. Moreover, targeted enforcement measures would appear to be more effective. For example, instead of energetically prosecuting yet another release of goldfish, instead focus enforcement on unique events such as the release of a species appearing on the List of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern that will have a major impact. Enforcement measures could then serve as a warning, for example to certain groups of animal keepers, dredgers or growers. A trial like this circulates quickly in such groups

Regulations (in particular the Environment and Planning Act and Fisheries Act) make a rapid response to newly arrived invasive species expensive, difficult, or even unfeasible, particularly for invasive species not on the List of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern. Often, the survival of protected species or habitats is at stake if an environmental infection continues, so such regulations are sometimes seen as counterproductive. Species protocols and plans for responding to alien species based on legal and policy measures could help here. Although the many combinations of species, laws and appropriate measures make it difficult to formulate a generic plan, it would be very desirable to have a solution to the obvious bottlenecks.

The control of alien species can conflict with ethical principles, especially when it comes to killing animals. Effective rules for holding and killing animals are important in this regard, while it is also important to ensure that conscientious objections of staff and volunteers do not impede the holding facilities or lead to unlawful actions. A system for surrendering alien species would be desirable, but this will be difficult to create due to the risk of disease.

Final note: Stakeholders advise that the existing bilateral contacts could be further strengthened. Moreover, a centrally organised thematic consultation with bilateral partners would be a valuable addition to improve the response to, and gain broader support for, alien species issues in the Netherlands. The development of an alien species action plan would be a good way for the Ministry of LVVN to build on this in the coming period.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 7. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to this GBF target?

Quick steps for immediate gains
An example with regard to plastic pollution is the loss of plastic pellets during loading for transport. Currently, this is considered acceptable, but these losses could be reduced to zero, as is already the practice for loading hazardous materials.

A potential quick step to reduce the risk of very hazardous substances in existing processes and/or products is to ramp up efforts to find less harmful alternatives, as has been done successfully in the past for substances such as carbon tetrachloride and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

New projects to prevent pollution
It is also important to aim for zero emissions, rather than fewer emissions, when developing new industrial processes. This is easier to achieve for new processes than for existing ones, when it often requires a much greater investment. This is another area where progress is already being made by the industry. These goals also lead to more demand for the technical innovations that are indispensable for achieving them.

Converting non-recyclable, multilayer drink containers into recyclable single-layer containers is another example of an important programme. There are also gains to be made in this recycling chain through the mechanical or chemical recovery of raw materials. This will make this chain more sustainable, compared to the current practice of incinerating this waste, where only energy is recovered and thus CO_2 is emitted. There are examples of such quick steps to be found in every industry.

What do non-state actors need to achieve this?

Knowledge sharing to heighten the sense of urgency
It is essential to develop widespread agreement that biodiversity must be our first concern. The focus in pollution is often on human health, but biodiversity should be considered just as important. One tool that could be developed to this end is the Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA). Monitoring through the Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring and methods such as the 'Farmers monitoring insects' (BIMAG) programme help to track biodiversity losses and gains. In addition, it is also important to establish a knowledge centre on the impact of pollution on biodiversity. Pooling and sharing the already existing (but mostly fragmented) knowledge helps to remove barriers, but also to identify knowledge gaps for further research.

But a change in consumption behaviour is also required. For example, raw materials are used very inefficiently in the meat production sector. Consumers can be encouraged to buy less meat by increasing the tax on meat products and making alternative plant-based products more attractive. If every industry in the country seriously considers the negative impacts of its processes on biodiversity, and adapts these processes to avoid these impacts, this will result in huge gains for biodiversity and for ecosystem functions and services.

Future-proof legislation
Legislation will be key to achieving the goals. Legislation also ensures that innovations are encouraged. However, it is important for this legislation to be focussed on the future. Legislation focusing on current standards is already outdated when it comes into force, and has to be amended after only a short time. This is frustrating for the industry, as they do not know where they stand. Embedding future-proof standards to be met by 2030 in the legislation of today will encourage innovative processes and make it clear to everyone that they must act now ('doing nothing is not an option')

Tightening the goals
Existing pollution in the soil, water and air is generally difficult to remove. Despite the considerable effort required, it should be a goal to clean up polluted areas. The first step is to avoid creating new pollution. It follows that the goal to 'Reduce pollution to levels that are not harmful, taking into account the cumulative effects' in reality means:

'In any case avoid creating new pollution.' So, to meet the target, measures must focus on 'Preventing pollution emissions from all sources (hazardous chemicals and pesticides, nutrients and plastics)'. Non-state actors can contribute by gaining more insight into what industries discharge to water or emit to air. Preventing emissions of non-biodegradable and persistent chemicals should be a top priority here. However, decontamination programmes will also be required, particularly where there is a risk that these chemicals could migrate from groundwater to surface water.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 8. Contributions of non-state actors

Non-state actors in the Netherlands play a crucial role in promoting and implementing nature-based solutions. Civil society organisations are the main initiators, as they actively bring together public and private parties to develop multi-sectoral solutions. The motivation is often the wish to take an integrated approach to biodiversity restoration and climate adaptation. Private companies often contribute individually and as part of sector partnerships, while NGOs focus on a broader landscape level. Awareness of the scale and footprint of nature-based solutions is crucial, and fostering partnerships at different levels (the business, sector and landscape scale) is a key to success. Time is a critical factor, given the need to restore ecosystems and restore vital ecosystem functions such as freshwater stores, water quality, protection against flooding, and climate mitigation and adaptation. Nature-based solutions must be deployed with urgency in the Netherlands, because in the face of climate change, delaying choices to restore climate-robust and resilient ecosystems will force us to take more infrastructural and technical measures that have fewer societal benefits than solutions that harness the power of nature.

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to target 8?

Knowledge sharing and innovation
Active knowledge sharing on nature-based solutions between educational institutions has revealed that there is already a lot of experience on this theme in the Netherlands (and beyond) at various scales and with various landscape types. Initiatives such as 'Room for the River', the 'Climate Buffer Programme' of the Coalition for Natural Climate Buffers, and 'Building with Nature' demonstrate the potential that nature-based solutions have to help achieve a climate-proof and nature-inclusive Netherlands. There are plenty of inspiring pilot projects, but they are not being scaled up and mainstreamed fast enough, and so they are not being considered as the preferred alternative in many implementation programmes, including the Flood Protection Programme, the National Programme for Rural Areas, and the Supplemental National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment (NOVEX). The aforementioned NL2120 knowledge and innovation programme, funded by the National Growth Fund and implemented by 25 partners, aims to develop the knowledge needed to make a leap of scale. This programme includes active knowledge sharing on nature-based climate solutions and biodiversity restoration.

Working together towards a nature-inclusive society
Nature-positive initiatives are almost always undertaken in partnerships between public authorities, businesses, institutions and citizens. One example is the Agenda Nature Inclusive, which aims to set out a vision, course and schedule for achieving a nature-inclusive Dutch society by 2050. The Agenda Nature Inclusive contributes to GBF target 8 by integrating nature, water and climate goals across the domains, and so will help to achieve climate adaptation and mitigation through ecosystem restoration.

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve target 8 by 2030?

Integrated spatial planning vision
To achieve the 2030 target, non-state actors need various essential elements to be in place. First, there is the need for an integrated long-term vision on spatial planning in the Netherlands. Situated in a densely populated and low-lying delta, the Netherlands faces major challenges in terms of climate change impacts and biodiversity loss. Scaling up and accelerating the development of nature-based solutions will require government and provincial initiatives to create room for these developments while safeguarding the various interests as part of a progressive nature-inclusive and climate-resilient vision.

Green Deal for the Netherlands
Frans Timmermans' (leader of the main opposition party) proposed 'Green Deal for the Netherlands' (based on the 'Netherlands 2120' vision document) and the PBL exploratory report entitled 'Natuurverkenning 2050 - Scenario Natuurinclusief' provide a vision for the future in which the natural system plays a leading role in spatial decision-making. It is crucial to further substantiate, concretise, and formalise this nature-inclusive vision in government policy. A widely supported Green Deal for climate adaptation in the Netherlands could serve as a framework to this end.

The value of nature-based solutions
To promote the value of nature-based solutions, it will be necessary to increase the share of nature-based measures in all sectors, with specific attention for the domains of water, agriculture, construction and infrastructure. The cost-effectiveness of nature-based solutions compared to civil engineering solutions justifies the additional investment. This cost-effectiveness lies in the social value provided by benefits such as climate adaptation, clean drinking water and recreational opportunities.

Mainstreaming nature-based solutions through procurement policy
The mainstreaming of nature-based solutions requires the implementation of procurement criteria and frameworks. For example, nature-based design could always be described as the preferred alternative in tender procedures. Civil engineering solutions would only be considered where the need for and relevance of nature-based solutions cannot be sufficiently justified

Towards a Dutch nature-based solutions incubation facility
It is crucial for private sector investment in green and nature-based solutions to be encouraged by the public authorities. Currently, insufficient funding is provided by philanthropic organisations and other non-state actors.
The scale of currently small-scale pilot projects can be increased if initial private investors can fall back on a guarantee scheme for the mobilisation of additional public investment.
The Growth Fund and the underlying NL2120 knowledge and innovation programme is an example of a broad programme where non-state actors and public authorities join forces to accelerate and scale-up the development of nature-based solutions in the Netherlands. One idea that could be taken further is the development of a 'Dutch nature-based solutions incubation facility', which could offer technical assistance and grants to help develop initiatives to sufficient maturity (nature-inclusive growth projects) to become applicable for regular funding. The funding of such projects should focus on supporting leader initiatives and scalable projects.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 10 - Agriculture. Contributions of non-state actors

The Netherlands has a great diversity of unique agricultural and other man-made landscapes, such as the peat grasslands, the *essen* and *enken* (former communal lands), hedgerow landscapes, the clay polders, the high-lying sandy soils and the coastal peatlands. Farmers play a crucial role in the management of rural areas. Given the urgent societal challenges facing rural areas, it is important that the care of, and attention for, biodiversity, the landscape, soil, water and the climate become a structural and inseparable part of every farmer's operations. Farmers must be fairly compensated for the valuable green and blue services they provide to society in doing so. Only then can they effectively fulfil this crucial role.

Boerennatuur ('Farmers and nature') is the umbrella organisation of the 40 agricultural collectives that – together with more than 12,000 participating farmers – are responsible for implementing the system of agri-environment and climate measures (AECM). Our shared vision of the future is future-proof and nature-based agriculture where biodiversity, the landscape, soil, water and the climate are a structural and inseparable part of every farmer's operations. Our agricultural collectives are aware of the particular challenges their region faces and what is needed to achieve more nature-based agriculture. The collectives support and advise farmers in taking steps that answer the challenges *and* the needs of their farm. AECM are an indispensable instrument for this purpose.

The strength of these collectives is that they:

- implement agri-environment and climate measures together with their members (mainly farmers, but also private landowners) based on a shared sense of responsibility and intrinsic motivation (i.e., there is a strong support base);
- are SNL-certified, so the quality of the practices is assured;
- have access to an extensive network of farmers, landowners, public authorities, market parties, nature organisations, regional LTO representatives, water boards and municipalities;
- jointly operate as a nationwide body with access to specific regional knowledge (because each region is unique in terms of characteristics, goals and the people who live there);
- have long-established knowledge and experience.

The collectives are thus ideally placed to translate European, national and provincial goals into area-specific goals, and to build bridges between these policy goals and agricultural practice. To contribute as much as possible to all goals, it is important that agri-environment and climate measures increase in both scope and intensity. It is essential to provide farmers with a future-proof business model that allows them to combine food production with the enhancement of biodiversity, the landscape, soil, water and the climate. The additional €500 million that will be made available annually from 2026 will allow this to be further developed.

This section was written by BoerenNatuur, the national association of agricultural collectives.
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 10 – Aquaculture and fisheries. Contributions of non-state actors

North Sea Agreement

In 2020, the North Sea Agreement was adopted for the period up until 2030, with agreements on three major transitions in the North Sea: the energy, food and nature transitions. The North Sea Consultation, with participants from the energy, fisheries and maritime sectors, nature organisations and the national government, monitors the implementation of the agreements made. Amongst other things, the North Sea Agreement has established that 15% of the Dutch part of the North Sea must be closed to bottom trawling by 2030. The procedure for closing areas to fishing follows Article 11 of the CFP. Currently, 5% of the North Sea is closed to bottom trawling.

Example project for reducing bycatch: CIBBRiNA project

Regarding the bycatch of sensitive species, the Ministry of LVVN cooperated with ministries, fisheries organisations, scientific institutions and NGOs from 12 other European countries to initiate an EU LIFE project entitled 'Coordinated Development and Implementation of Best Practice in Bycatch Reduction in the North Atlantic, Baltic and Mediterranean Regions' (CIBBRiNA). CIBBRiNA focuses specifically on the incidental bycatch of marine mammals, birds, turtles, sharks and rays by fisheries. Efforts at both the European and international level to minimise bycatch have so far shown insufficient results. In the CIBBRiNA project, the Ministry of LVVN aims to work with European partners to come up with concrete solutions for minimising bycatch. The project comprises two pathways to potential solutions: close cooperation and involvement of the fishing industry and other stakeholders, and long-term implementation of proven and promising technical solutions.
The consortium consists of 45 partners, with a Stakeholder Advisory Board consisting of some 30 organisations. CIBBRiNA was launched in September 2023 and will run for six years.

Transition to sustainable IJsselmeer fisheries

In 2019, the Action Plan for Sustainable IJsselmeer Fisheries was agreed together with all public authorities and stakeholders involved in fisheries policy for the IJsselmeer. This action plan provides for a transition of IJsselmeer fisheries in the period up to 2026, so that catches are brought into equilibrium with the carrying capacity of fish stocks. Good progress has since been made in this regard. Stocks of most fish species show a positive trend and are in balance in relation to the fisheries. To safeguard this for the future, the Action Plan involves developing a new system of management such that fish harvests remain in equilibrium with the growth of fish stocks for the long term.

Mussel covenant

In 2008, agreements were reached between the mussel sector, NGOs and the Ministry of LVVN to make the mussel sector more sustainable and achieve its transition, and to improve nature in the Wadden Sea. As part of the mussel transition, the bottom mussel seed fishery in the Wadden Sea will be phased out, with the mussel seed capture from 'mussel seed capture installations' being allowed in exchange. In 2020, these agreements were renewed, with a target of 100% closure of bottom mussel seed fishery in the Wadden Sea by 2029.

Declaration of Intent on Oysters

In 2023, seven parties signed a declaration of intent on 'Oyster Farming, Sustainability and Nature'. In this declaration, the Dutch Oyster Association, Zeeuwse Milieufederatie, Vereniging Natuurmonumenten (both nature conservation organisations), the Ministry of LVVN, Rijkswaterstaat, Oosterschelde National Park and the Province of Zeeland agreed to work together between 2023 to 2027 to promote sustainable oyster farming and more resilient nature in the Zeeland Delta.

This social section describes partnerships between the national government and organisations and companies from society.

Target 10 – Forestry. Contributions of non-state actors

Private forest owners

Private forest owners own about 30% of the Dutch forest area. Most want to manage their forest sustainably, both in terms of the forest area and its function. Many forests are multifunctional and allow limited timber harvesting. Forests with an emphasis on timber production occur much less often. Consequently, almost all owners manage their forests to achieve natural resilience and enhanced biodiversity. Owners who do harvest timber are likewise focused on forest resilience and conservation. Moreover, some of these forests fall under specific requirements for sustainable forest management because they are FSC- or PEFC-certified.

There have been some improvements in biodiversity in Dutch forests (e.g. increase in dead wood, population of forest birds). However, there are four important negative trends: water depletion caused by water extraction, climate change (in particular periodic droughts and heat), insect damage, and nitrogen precipitation. This means that most forest ecosystems of the Netherlands, and especially those on sandy soils, are in poor condition. The management of existing forest focuses on encouraging more mixed forest, with broadleaf species instead of conifers (including more climate-robust tree species), and hydrological restoration.

Forest data

Probos is a knowledge institution that bridges the gap between science and practice and contributes to improving the biodiversity and sustainability of forests and forest management in the Netherlands and abroad. Probos is an authority on forest data and contributes to both national and private forest surveys. This wealth of objective data, combined with expertise on sustainable and climate-smart forest management and an extensive network in the sector, forms the basis for all activities in the area of forest management. In recent years, Probos has actively contributed to both national and provincial forest strategies, provided input to forest expansion schemes, and fleshed out provincial forest revitalisation plans.Probos provides insight into the status and development of forests in relation to themes such as biodiversity, vitality and forestry management. It also offers practical instruments and provides advisory services to forest managers. Probos is also exploring how to optimally combine the various functions that the forest performs and the ecosystem services it provides (e.g. biodiversity, sustainable timber harvesting, CO_2 storage). The aim is to encourage the transition to small-scale, climate-smart forest management with a focus on biodiversity.

Climate-smart forest and nature management

WUR has been leading a research programme into climate-smart forest and nature management in the Netherlands since 2018. This programme is divided into sub-projects that are studying how Dutch forests and other natural areas can be made climate-proof. There are already more than 60 field sites where measures have been implemented and which have been monitored over the past five years.

The results and experiences are uploaded to the 'Climate-Smart Forest and Nature Management Toolbox',[206] which is updated regularly. The state of Dutch forests is currently being assessed in the 8th Dutch Forest Survey (NBI-8) over the period 2022-2026. The NBI-8 is led by WUR and conducted in collaboration with partners the Probos Foundation, research bureau Van Nierop and Borgman Beheer advisory services. The surveys of over 3,600 sampling sites provide a picture of the state of Dutch forests, such as the standing stock of timber, tree mortality, and timber harvests in Dutch forests.

[206] Gereedschapskist Klimaatslim Bos- en Natuurbeheer (n.d.) Klimaatslim Bos- en Natuurbeheer.

What do non-state actors need to contribute to this target?

Investments in forest and hydrological restoration and reducing nitrogen deposition
Resources (including funding) must be available to achieve the desired ambitions and goals in regard to improving biodiversity and sustainably managed forests.

Support, transparency, clear guidelines and flexible management
The sustainable management and use of our forests requires the support of forest managers, policymakers and, not in the last place, society as a whole. European and national regulations must be transparent and set out clear guidelines, while also allowing for flexible forest management. A reliable monitoring programme is needed to be able to implement the policies and management guidelines.

The NBI-8 has revealed that forest owners have become less willing to cooperate with forest surveys. It is therefore all the more important to involve forest owners and managers in surveys and planning processes.

Commitment to innovative techniques
More and more innovative techniques are becoming available for monitoring forests. Technologies such as laser scanning and drone surveying are already being used successfully at the local level, but a strong commitment is required in the coming years to test and validate these techniques so they can be applied at the national scale. This is also required to be able to meet the more stringent monitoring requirements of the European Commission.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 11. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to target 11 and what do they need to do so?

Non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute in various ways to restoring, protecting and sustainably using ecosystem services (target 11). This is important, because ecosystem services (clean air and water, fertile soil and biodiversity conservation) are a foundation of our very existence. First, knowledge institutions contribute with research into ecosystem services, focusing on the planning, implementation, enhancement, monitoring, effectiveness and valuation of ecosystem services from different perspectives (social, economic, ecological and institutional). Concrete examples of knowledge development for ecosystem services and nature-based solutions are the Centre of Green Expertise, the Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP) and the lecturer's platform on biodiversity. Second, because ecosystem services are site-specific, local governments play an essential role in bringing together the various parties, such as businesses and local communities, and in enabling initiatives through regulation. Examples are the 'green visions' of various local governments. Third, it is crucial that the business community contributes to target 11 by integrating the value of ecosystem services into business models, and ensuring that the condition of the ecosystems affected by their business activities is improved. Financial institutions can contribute by adapting their funding conditions to facilitate activities that promote ecosystem services. Concrete examples include 'Factories as a Forest', biodiversity funds and the Open Soil Index. Finally, civil society organisations contribute by putting the value of ecosystem services on the agenda, implementing value-added projects, uniting stakeholders, and driving the implementation of the measures. Concrete examples include Tiny Forests, food forests, the Force of Nature, NL2120, Re-Ge-NL, Working Landscapes of the Future, and the Landscape Action Plan.

What do non-state actors need to help achieve this target?

Taking account of the social value of ecosystem services
The value and importance of ecosystem services is not currently factored into decisions affecting these services. To enable this to change, and better understand the positive impact of nature-based and similar solutions, it is essential for ecosystem services to be properly valued. This involves valuing nature's contribution to health, public safety, social cohesion and the economy. This will require experimentation. The valuation of ecosystem services can be implemented directly in tender procedures, for example, because interventions with positive effects on ecosystem services will be competitive in comparison with traditional solutions, amongst other things because they can benefit other user functions as well ('multiple value creation').

Changing regulations and/or enabling conditions
The health of an ecosystem in a given area must be taken as the starting point for decision-making about that area. A clear system of standardisation, valuation and pricing is required to this end. The costs of degradation of the health of an ecosystem (or ecosystem service) should be priced, while positive impacts on ecosystem services should be rewarded. Some existing regulations and financial incentives have a negative effect on ecosystem services. Initiatives that contribute to the health of ecosystem services should be easier to implement. This requires identifying and removing conflicting or harmful regulations for ecosystem services.

Sharing knowledge and engaging support
To achieve target 11, it is important to actively share knowledge on the value of ecosystem services and the potential for nature-based solutions with both regional and local governments, businesses and civil society organisations. The knowledge that already exists (e.g. at financial institutions[207] and

[207] PBAF (n.d.) The PBAF Standard enables financial institutions to assess and disclose impact and dependencies on biodiversity of loans and investments | PBAF - Partnership for Biodiversity Accounting Financials.

companies)[208] must be shared with the stakeholders through working groups, partnerships or 'communities of practice' so that all parties are aware of how ecosystem services affect and strengthen our society. This will help to activate and engage the communities in and around the relevant area, fostering a shared narrative, a sense of ownership, and ultimately encouraging more collective action to achieve healthy ecosystem services.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

[208] Natural Capital (n.d.) Natuurlijk Kapitaal | De natuur werkt. Ook met jou.

Target 12. The role of municipalities

The role of municipalities

The urban biodiversity objectives require an area-based strategy depending on the specific characteristics of the relevant city. Therefore, municipalities are the main actors working to expand green and blue spaces in urban areas. Below is a contribution from the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, the municipality of Leiden and the municipality of Arnhem.

Association of Netherlands Municipalities

The Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) is the interest group and networking platform for all Dutch municipalities. VNG supports the strengthening of urban green spaces, because in addition to nature restoration, green spaces help municipalities to achieve a pleasant and healthy working and living environment for all their inhabitants. To this end, VNG is involved in various national government-led projects that touch on urban Green Blue Networks of Landscape Features, such as the Basic Quality of Nature and the 'Interdepartmental programmatic approach to urban green spaces', for which VNG also participates in the focus group.

There are several partnerships and nature-positive initiatives that touch on target 12. The work of the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery and *Stadswerk* are good examples. VNG has a municipal network of stakeholders in nature and green spaces, in which issues related to the nature and biodiversity goals are made concrete. In cooperation with this network and other organisations, VNG is working to develop knowledge products that municipalities can use to help them integrate nature and green policy.

Strengthening nature in urban areas requires attention to a number of main issues, including:

- Coherency between goals: Municipalities respond to the challenges in their area based on societal needs. Interests at the regional, provincial and national level also play a role. It is becoming increasingly difficult for administrators to make the right choices due to a lack of clarity about roles, responsibilities and suitable action perspectives in relation to social issues.
- Freedom to set policy is required for responsible decision-making on public spaces because of the integral considerations that apply at the local level, where area-specific characteristics play a major role.
- Finance: Greening cities, towns and villages can be hugely expensive and funds are still lacking. In addition, if the challenges are allowed to accumulate this will result in increasing financial and capacity pressures on municipalities. The cost-benefit distribution of greening goals thus also becomes unbalanced.
- Custom solutions: Not every municipality is the same. The issues at stake regarding priorities, finances, capacity differences, area-specific contexts and local political leanings require custom solutions.

Examples from the municipalities of Leiden and Arnhem

There are plenty of good examples of municipalities that have developed their green and blue spaces. Examples from the municipalities of Leiden and Arnhem are provided below.

Figure 2. Greening Leiden's city rings: Singelpark. Source: Municipality of Leiden

The development of a green-blue network of landscape features in Leiden is described, amongst other things, in 1) Leiden's Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment 2040, 2) 'Living Together in Leiden' (a policy agreement) and 3) 'Biodiverse and climate resistant Leiden' (an implementation programme). One of the efforts Leiden is making is to create an extensive green-blue network in the city.

This network will be developed by greening the two city rings, i.e. Singelpark (see Figure 2) and a second green and blue zone around the edge of the city. Green corridors will also be established between these rings and the surrounding area. All neighbourhoods will also be made greener in combination with a major programme to replace the city's sewers as part of sustainable neighbourhood renewal projects (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Sustainability of districts in Leiden; current (top) and future (bottom). Source: Municipality of Leiden

Leiden has an integrated area-based approach, which means that other goals such as climate adaptation, circularity and the energy transition are also being addressed in addition to strengthening biodiversity. In addition, the new green and blue spaces in Leiden will result in more liveable neighbourhoods with more opportunities for recreation.

In Arnhem, the development of green and blue spaces is described in the Green Vision and the Biodiversity Agenda, amongst other things. The Tree Vision is also important. An important goal of the municipality of Arnhem is to connect rural nature with the inner city. Arnhem is also working with the 3-30-300 guideline, which recommends that residents should be able to see at least 3 trees from their home, that a

neighbourhood should have at least 30% foliage cover, and that every home should be a maximum of 300 metres from a park or green space. This guideline ensures that everyone has access to green spaces. The various neighbourhoods are also participating in the development of the green and blue spaces. Residents can contribute ideas for the development and layout of green and blue features in their neighbourhood. The municipality is also aiming to reduce the paved area by 10%, and so increase the cover of the green-blue network and improve climate adaptation.

This section was written by the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, the municipality of Leiden and the municipality of Arnhem.

Target 13. Contributions of non-state actors

Regular (1 to 3 times a year) stakeholder consultations are held with representatives of the identified groups of users of genetic resources.

1. Research Universities
2. Universities of Applied Sciences
3. Public research institutions
4. Commercial breeders
5. Private breeders
6. Plant breeding and propagation businesses
7. Private growers/breeders
8. Collection holders
9. Arborists and site managers
10. Food industry
11. Pharmaceutical industry (medical and veterinary)
12. Other industrial biotechnology and process technology
13. Botanical gardens
14. Zoos
15. Natural cosmetics and natural medicines sector
16. Organic pesticides sector

The purpose of the national ABS stakeholder consultation is to inform stakeholders about relevant new developments at the EU and global level (especially on CBD and FAO processes), And to seek input for these processes from the stakeholders and so contribute to workable solutions. The aim is to actively involve – and improve the position of – national stakeholders in both the negotiation process and informal international consultations in this area, based on a whole-of-society approach.

Plant breeding and propagation businesses

In the Biodiversity Factsheet, Plantum (a trade association for 300 companies that breed and propagate seeds and young plants) describes the importance of easy access to genetic variation.

To develop new plant varieties, breeders require genetic material for crossbreeding. To this end, they mainly use modern commercial varieties and proprietary genetic material.

They supplement this with genetic resources from nature or pre-modern agriculture. These include wild varieties of cultivated plants or old agricultural varieties. Genetic sources may have important characteristics for the future, such as resistance to pests and diseases, or characteristics that make the plant resilient to climate change. Biodiversity is at the heart of plant breeding. For a healthy future, it is essential that all breeders have access to the available genetic variation. The effects (and ambiguities) of international treaties and local and international legislation can hinder such access. Plantum is committed to the fair sharing of genetic material. Restricting access to this material inhibits innovation and so threatens food security and biodiversity.

Plantum is addressing the existing ABS legislation under the Nagoya Protocol and the ambiguities regarding access to and use of genetic resources in practice. The fact sheet also discusses the negotiations on the development of a multilateral system for DSI of genetic resources. Plantum believes that such a system should be workable and affordable, that there should be no exceptions to the system, and that the system should also be deployed for physical genetic resources (to avoid having too many different payment mechanisms and the accumulation of payment obligations).

Plantum considers FAO's ITPGRFA to be the best workable solution for access to genetic resources, despite a number of concerns (e.g. the limited availability of plants). Plantum therefore believes that this treaty should apply to all agricultural plants and their associated diseases and pests. However, the conditions are currently under review, so it is uncertain whether the FAO treaty will continue to be the best solution.

Breeders have long been aware of the importance of biodiversity. They are working together with gene banks to expand collections and secure genetic resources for the future. As such, breeders contribute directly to biodiversity conservation and food security.[209]

DSI and biodiversity monitoring

In addition to the aforementioned uses of DSI, 'environmental DNA' (or eDNA) is increasingly being used to monitor biodiversity.

All living organisms leave traces of their DNA in the living environment: eDNA. This DNA is extracted from soil, sediment, water and air samples. The pieces of DNA used are the 'DNA barcodes': short sequences of non-coding DNA that are unique to each species. These DNA species codes are stored in the Barcode of Life Database (BOLD).[210] The DNA barcodes from the eDNA samples are compared with the BOLD to arrive at a species list for monitoring. According to Naturalis, to further develop and continue using biodiversity monitoring via eDNA, it is important to keep DNA barcoding out of ABS regulation. Naturalis is developing these techniques through the ARISE infrastructure,[211] which will make it possible to identify all multicellular life in the Netherlands based on images obtained from camera traps, sound recordings and DNA/eDNA. To further accelerate biodiversity monitoring via eDNA, Naturalis recently received a grant for its eDentity infrastructure that will enable large-scale eDNA monitoring of soil, water and air samples. In addition, Naturalis is coordinator of the Biodiversity Genomics Europe (BGE)[212] project.

The section describes partnerships between the national government and organisations and companies in society.

[209] Plantum (2023) Genetische variatie moet breed beschikbaar zijn. https://www.plantum.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/FS-Biodiversiteit.pdf.
[210] Bold Systems (n.d.) BOLD – The Barcode of Life Data Systems.
[211] Arise (n.d.) Biodiversity | Arise Biodiversity | Leiden I The Netherlands.
[212] Biodiversity Genomics Europe (n.d.) BGE Home - Biodiversity Genomics Europe.

Target 15. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors in the Netherlands contribute to this target?

Disclaimer: The inputs below from non-state actors were contributed with a focus on the business community.

Methods, tools and data

- Collaborating on the development of methods and instruments, both from a business and scientific perspective.
- Widely publicising information about existing instruments (such as the TNFD Framework, the Natural Capital Protocol and the supplementary guidance and toolkit, the PBAF Standard, etc.).
- Non-state actors can play a role in sharing and/or interpreting data.
- Companies can deploy specific measures, but demonstrating a positive impact is often difficult due to the often complex supply chains. Cooperation in the supply chain and with external parties is important (business community, scientific community and NGOs).
- Prioritising impact areas by identifying specific themes and developing measurable indicators for measures that serve as proxies, for example for on-the-ground impact (business community, scientific community and NGOs).
- Focus on balanced monitoring and actual impact creation.

Communication and awareness raising

- Increase awareness, especially among businesses, for example by sharing best practices.
- Engagement of auditors: call attention to transparency in biodiversity goals, for example by focusing on existing instruments.
- Distribute and apply sectoral guidance documents, such as those produced by Business for Nature/WEF/WBCSD, and reach agreements with sector organisations (and their members) on which measures to take.

Learning and capacity building

- Translating reports into concrete plans, focusing on practical steps and feasibility, for example by consultants, NGOs, industry organisations, and platforms such as MVO Nederland, IUCN-NL and the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery.
- Scaling up practical initiatives at the sector level, such as COP CSRD (MVO Nederland). The TNFD and underlying frameworks (including the Natural Capital Protocol) show the way.
- Addressing the shortage of ecological expertise within the business community through recruitment policies.
- Connecting various learning processes: How can we connect the various platforms and networks? (Government support is desirable.)
- Pursue an integrated approach to material issues: connecting policy to existing and planned legislation, ambitions and initiatives. For example:
  - By connecting businesses' biodiversity strategies with climate agreements (nature and biodiversity are pivotal to these agreements), including to generate more support.
  - By connecting the Agenda Nature Inclusive, the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery, EUDR and other policies and legislation.
- Engage chartered accountants in this theme and the training programmes.

Reporting, regulation and the financial sector

- Correct implementation of CSRD in the area of biodiversity: there is a risk that companies may mistakenly ignore biodiversity because it is classified as non-material. Financial institutions, consultancies, NGOs, industry associations and accountants will have to challenge the idea behind this.
- Correct implementation of CSDDD and OECD guidelines: take the impact of business operations on biodiversity into account in the supply chain, and where material and relevant for the Dutch footprint in international supply chains (see also footprint document: TNFD/PBAF).
- Strategically redeploying financial resources to benefit biodiversity goals.
- Concrete plans such as the Finance for Biodiversity Pledge and loans to biodiversity-friendly plans.
- Banks can help customers become more sustainable, preferably with integrated themes (because only focusing on a single

theme each time is more energy and time-consuming).
- Follow the guidelines of the International Finance Corporation (a World Bank subsidiary).
- Backcasting for biodiversity following the example of the Roadmap for a Circular Economy (Platform for Sustainable Finance).
- Climate and environmental risks are integrated in DNB's standard prudential regulations. Regulated institutions are called upon to monitor biodiversity risks and share the results.

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve the target by 2030 at the latest?

Disclaimer: The inputs below from non-state actors were contributed with a focus on the business community.

Three concrete plans

Non-state actors assume that the Dutch government will implement target 15a under the CSRD, and later the CSDDD. The following matters must be addressed to ensure a practical and impactful implementation process, with an important role for the government:

1. **Encourage capacity building within sectors and value chains for transformative change.** The Sector guides[213] for the 'Road maps to nature-positivity' of the WBCSD, WEF and Business for Nature could be a good starting point for addressing the material themes. The government can ensure a coordinated approach and encourage parties like MVO Nederland, VNO-NCW (an employers' association), industry associations, the financial sector and knowledge institutions to join forces. This will aid the development of concrete action plans by the business community and prevent companies from wrongly labelling nature and biodiversity as immaterial. It is desirable to focus first on the 3 to 5 most impactful sectors and value chains. Scaling up the successful CSRD Communities of Practice approach[214] will generate best practices and can be carried out per sector. In addition to the sector approach, encouraging cross-sectoral connections between learning platforms will help accelerate change. Establishing or supporting a relevant award (as a follow-up to the Crystal Prize ('Kristalprijs')) will help raise awareness, as will sharing best practices and rewarding leaders, while also actively encouraging the businesses that are lagging behind.
2. **Encourage and organise data sharing:** It is crucial that companies have easy access to the data that is relevant to them, with specific location identification, links to data supply chains, and for free where possible (especially for SMEs). Currently, these elements of data sharing actually form obstacles. An efficient system of sharing reported data can help close this data gap.
3. **Define a dot on the horizon and establish an interim monitoring schedule:** Non-state actors need a dot on the horizon and measurable interim and final targets as clear guidelines for progress monitoring. This requires simplified goals, clear expectations and strong communication to implementing parties. Interim monitoring of the impact of measures on nature and biodiversity is a requirement for non-state actors so they can make well-founded decisions regarding the continuation and/or adjustment of their measures. The government is called on to establish and fund a programme for the biannual monitoring of biodiversity restoration measures, with explicit attention to the quality and depth of the reports, in line with the COP reports.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

[213] Business for Nature (n.d.) Sector actions for nature — Business For Nature.
[214] MVO Nederland (n.d.) Dit is de CSRD-richtlijn en zo ga je ermee aan de slag | MVO Nederland | MVO Nederland.

Target 16. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to target 16 and what do they need to do so?
Non-state actors have a crucial role to play in achieving target 16. They can help by encouraging sustainable consumption, supplying sustainable products and importing responsibly sourced raw materials. Herein lies a leading role for the retail trade, manufacturers, importers and traders, financiers and investors, consumer organisations, civil society organisations and knowledge institutions. The ecological footprint of the agri-food and material-intensive sectors have special priority.

Awareness raising and knowledge sharing
Consumers and producers need more and broader knowledge about our ecological footprint and alternative choices, and value chains need to be more transparent. Knowledge institutions and civil society organisations carry out research on the Dutch ecological footprint in collaboration with the business community, consumer organisations and public authorities. Industry associations, NGOs and consumer organisations are increasing awareness in the private sector, among consumers and also in government. New EU legal frameworks, including the Sustainability Reporting Directive and the EU Deforestation Regulation, require additional attention. Key national initiatives:

- The corporate networks of MVO NL: large companies, sector networks, leaders network.
- International Corporate Social Responsibility covenants, including Renewable Energy.

Assessing and measuring the international footprint
Several instruments have been developed and are available to measure biodiversity footprints, but these are not yet widely known and used. These instruments need to be developed further, and tailor-made versions are required for sector-specific approaches. Expert advice and assistance is provided by specialised companies, knowledge institutions and civil society organisations. Examples of currently available instruments:

- Life Cycle Analysis (not yet available for all product groups)
- Footprint working group: WUR and 25 stakeholders (mainly companies) are working on an Eco Rating label for all food in NL and the EU.
- Internationally, the Science Based Targets for Nature (SBTN) network is leading the way in measuring impacts on biodiversity.

Reducing consumption and overconsumption
Non-state actors can play a key role in encouraging sustainable consumption choices by end-users, producers and importers. More and more individual companies (leaders) and sectoral initiatives are actively engaged in reducing consumption and overconsumption. There is growing attention for the need to reduce food waste and the demand for raw materials (circular economy). However, much more is needed to bring Dutch overconsumption back within planetary limits. Various national initiatives are bringing together societal and commercial stakeholders and helping companies to achieve their ambitions. Examples:

- Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH): sector networks including Fruit & vegetables.

Sustainable and responsible products
Non-state actors have a key role to play in the innovation of sustainable products and business models. These products and business models of the future must and will be developed and tested in the coming years. Companies will invest in research, development and innovation. Brand new business models with a nature-positive impact are an essential part of this. An example of a national initiative is the Food Transition Coalition.

Investment in sustainable production landscapes
Non-state actors are key investors in the sustainable and responsible production of food and raw materials. This requires cross-sectoral cooperation between companies and other producers, landowners and civil society organisations in the production landscape. Various civil society organisations, companies and initiatives in the Netherlands are among the international leaders, with support from the Dutch government.

Examples of national initiatives:
- Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH)
- Collaborative Soy Initiative (CSI)

Advocacy for a smaller footprint
Civil society organisations play an important role in promoting transparency and change in sectoral and corporate strategies. In doing so, they can expose negative impacts on biodiversity and identify opportunities for improvement. Some industry associations play a leading role in their own sector, but there are still many gains to be made.
Examples of national initiatives:
- True Animal Protein Price Coalition (TAPP)

Trans-sectoral collaboration for transformative change
Achieving GBF target 16 requires 'out-of-the-box' collaboration and approaches. Non-state actors have already launched various initiatives. These are often public-private partnerships (between companies and civil society organisations) that develop and test innovative alternatives.

These platforms function as important accelerators, where best practices and successes can be shared, as well as lessons learned from failures. Examples of national initiatives:
- The 'True Price: from insight to action' public-private partnership
- Food Transition Coalition
- MVO NL platforms and sectoral platforms

New initiatives are still needed. Examples could be a pilot project with major retailers and catering companies to halve their footprint, or sector-wide initiatives to further develop true pricing, including its impact on biodiversity.

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve the target for 2030?
The national government has a crucial role to play in establishing framework and targeted policies for target 16. This includes:
- Raising awareness, such as informing companies and consumers about standards and regulations (including EU legislation and standards such as the Corporate Social Reporting Directive and the Corporate Due Diligence Directive).
- Laws, regulations and policies to ensure a level playing field for sustainable alternatives, amongst other things by setting hard targets in corporate reporting, true pricing and/or valorisation of nature-positive production, and guidelines for retailers' specifications.
- Financial support and advice on transitions and sustainable alternatives. Leaders are currently hampered by the higher costs. Support is required to develop measurement and data systems and ensure the availability of data to the various sectors.
- Support for public-private agreements and initiatives. The following must in any case be achieved in the coming years: a broad agreement on the agricultural transition (including the agricultural footprint) that provides certainty and guidance for producing companies; sustainability standards in the retail sector need to be tightened; scientifically substantiated objectives are required per sector, with corresponding accountability agreements.
- Setting a good example. The government has a key role to play and potential as a launching customer, and can lead by example in its own procurement practices

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 18. Contributions of non-state actors

How can the business community help to reverse harmful financial incentives?

Government surveys

- The government bears responsibility for identifying harmful financial incentives at the macro level, reforming these and scaling them up to become nature-positive subsidies and schemes.
- Although businesses are not primarily responsible for this, they can provide relevant input on opportunities for reforms, which will help build commitment and support

Internal surveys by businesses

- To prepare for the future, the business community can conduct its own analysis of the financial and other benefits that businesses derive from subsidies, schemes, charges and taxes with a negative impact on nature, and what opportunities it sees to reform these to get them in line with the nature ambitions.
- This will enable businesses to estimate the potential impact of future reforms of subsidies, schemes, changes and taxes to render them nature-positive. Indeed, the financial extent of these reforms and the related risks could be substantial, and therefore materially impact business.
- By identifying opportunities for the reform of schemes, regulations, changes and taxes as an input to government monitoring, the business community will help build commitment and support for the proposed reforms.

Financial sector and accountants

- The reform of harmful subsidies and schemes will impact entire sectors as well as individual companies and organisations. For these sectors, but certainly also for the financial sector as a whole, it is important to assess their impact and the risks, and take measures in good time, at both the sector and individual company level.
- Banks must help their customers to become more sustainable, through their own services or through other channels, both for their own continued viability and to fulfil their social role. Banks will preferably develop an integrated approach to their customers in this respect (see also target 15).
- Accountants must be involved to ensure correct and timely advice to clients who will potentially be affected by the reforms to nature-positive subsidies. Where relevant, this can also be included in activities following from the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Individual accountants must be informed appropriately and in good time, and where necessary provided with training on how to respond to future reforms.

What does business need in the next seven years to achieve this?

National public-private consultation for transition pathways and roadmaps

- Once the surveys have been carried out, plans should be made to abolish, phase out and/or reform all harmful subsidies, schemes, charges and taxes. This will have an impact on current standard practices within various sectors, and on the operations of individual companies and organisations. Given the urgency and economic importance of preventing and undoing biodiversity loss, it is important to develop roadmaps or transition pathways to achieve the phasing out and reform of harmful subsidies and schemes. This is essential for the transition to a nature-positive economy.
- The coordination of the reforms will require close cooperation between the government and the business community, including structural consultations. The business community will need access to a national consultation platform to this end, Including representatives of the following organisations and institutions:
  - all relevant ministries and other public authorities;
  - leader businesses (e.g. CSR Netherland's Biodiversity CEO Focus Group);
  - relevant industry associations (through or represented by employers' association VNO-NCW);
  - De Nederlandsche Bank;
  - accountants (via the Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants and the SRA, which is the association of

accountancy firms who specialise in the SME sector)
- Agenda Nature Inclusive
- relevant scientific and other experts
- a selection of civil society organisations, for example: *Natuur & Milieu*, WWF-NL and IUCN NL

- All participants will need to recognise the benefit and necessity of a nature-inclusive economy, based on a shared commitment to work together to reform regulations and incentives. If this condition cannot be met, participants will not be able to make a meaningful contribution to this national consultation platform.
- The national consultation platform will need to develop a specific sectoral approach for those sectors that face the largest reforms, such as food & agriculture, energy and the built environment.

Communication and awareness raising
- The elimination, phasing out and reform of harmful subsidies, schemes, charges and taxes will have an impact on various sectors and the operations of individual companies. The usefulness and necessity of the roadmaps and transition pathways for phasing out and/or reforming harmful schemes will need to be communicated clearly and in good time to the business community and society, in particular the affected sectors. This may generate some resistance. However, the transition to a nature-inclusive economy is unavoidable. Here, it is important to create a level playing field that encourages those companies with a sustainable and nature-inclusive business model.
- The consultation platform can play a proactive role in communicating and creating support among the business community, in particular by providing examples of nature-inclusive business models and the route to achieve them.

Encourage capacity building within sectors and value chains for transformative change
- Sectors and individual businesses affected by the phasing out and/or reform of harmful schemes are faced with a transition to nature-inclusive business models. Such changes and transitions require new insights, strategies, skills and change processes. Preparing companies for this transition will require support in the form of capacity building. The need for capacity building also applies to existing legislation in relation to the CSRD, CSDD, EUDR and the like. For their initial surveys, businesses can also be offered practical instruments to help them understand what the expected changes could mean for their operations.
- Restoring biodiversity takes time and the financial returns are relatively limited.[215]
- To encourage scaling up in relation to the reforms, it is highly desirable for the government to establish a blended finance instrument or fund for companies and financial institutions willing to invest in conservation and restoration.

This social section was prepared by MVO-Nederland's Biodiversity CEO Focus Group (see annex 1.II). This section does not describe government policy.

[215] ASN Bank (2022) Investeren in de natuur loont, óók voor de economie.

Target 19. Contributions of non-state actors

1. Enabling conditions for financing

1.1 What is already being done?
The Dutch financial sector is dependent on nature to the tune of more than €500 billion.[216]Financial institutions are developing financial instruments to invest in the conservation and restoration of nature, and greening existing financing instruments, both at home and abroad. Philanthropic investments, resources from the business community and public funding are being deployed to develop innovative financial instruments, such as blended finance, even where returns are only foreseen later. The aim is to develop the business case for private investment in these projects. Regulations such as the EU Taxonomy, Exclusion lists, legislation to end deforestation, and preconditions for high-risk investments provide important enabling conditions. Nature is currently often considered to have no economic value. However, it is increasingly recognised that the value of nature should be included in the prices of products and services.

1.2 What is needed?
This recognition helps improve the business case for nature conservation and restoration and the sustainable use of biodiversity, for example for the development of innovative financial products, such as insuring the risks of the transition. The relationships between financing and the economy mean that targets 15, 18 and 19 of the Global Biodiversity Framework are best implemented in conjunction. Pricing nature requires regulations and regulatory oversight. The government can contribute by developing more blended finance instruments.

A National Biodiversity Finance Plan is crucial for the identification of national and international financing needs. Overarching, science-based targets with clear key performance indicators can help financial institutions to end harmful investments.
All data on nature-related impacts and risks can be used by regulators and enforcers.

Pension funds can play an important role by developing more financing instruments with long maturities and lower returns.

2. A different way of measuring and valuing biodiversity

2.1 What is already being done?
Financial institutions are increasingly becoming aware of their impact and dependence on biodiversity and the risks of the loss of nature. These institutions collaborate in initiatives such as the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), the Science-Based Targets Network (SBTN), the Partnership for Biodiversity Accounting Financials (PBAF), the Finance for Biodiversity Pledge, the Working Group on Biodiversity of the DNB Sustainable Finance Platform, and the Network for Greening the Financial System. Recommendations have been developed so that investors can act on the identified nature-related impacts, risks and dependencies.

2.2 What is needed?
Regulating ecosystem services provide the conditions on which all life depends, such as a stable climate, clean soil and protection against flooding. Regulations and financial incentives are needed to ensure that any loss of nature is priced as additional costs for the responsible parties. These regulations and incentives will also make it more attractive for investors to invest in the protection, restoration and sustainable use of nature. So, the costs and benefits must be passed on to customers or users.

3. Valuing ecosystem services

3.1 What is already being done?
Methods for valuing ecosystem services are being studied, tested and implemented as part of many initiatives, including in the Caribbean Netherlands. The outcomes help impact (and other) investors to translate the value of nature into business cases. The valuation of ecosystem services is often part of financial mechanisms that help attract investment.

[216] DNB (2020) Biodiversiteit en de financiële sector: een kruisbestuiving? | De Nederlandsche Bank.

3.2 What is needed
Wider application of the valuation of ecosystem services by private and other non-state actors will require more knowledge on how to calculate and determine that value. The government can include biodiversity in its own procurement policy. There is much to be gained in this respect in tender procedures for housing, construction and infrastructure projects. The government should give preference to projects that are exemplary in the area of strengthening ecosystem services, based on the principle of 'green, unless': Infrastructure investments should always favour the green option, unless there are compelling reasons not to do so.

4. 4. Investing in nature and climate

4.1 What is already being done?
The need to address climate and nature issues with integrated measures is widely supported. The Netherlands has relevant experience with public-private initiatives and nature-based solutions. Examples include natural landscaping along rivers to prevent flooding and encourage water storage, peatland rewetting, and nature-based construction. Innovation is included in regional construction sector covenants. Provinces and water boards also sometimes opt for green solutions. Dutch companies invest in nature-based solutions abroad, including coastal protection, freshwater management, mangrove restoration, disaster relief and forest restoration. The valuation and marketing of ecosystem services can help improve business cases. Carbon credits, blue carbon and compensation for river basin protection also enable nature restoration and coastal protection.

4.2 What is needed
Nature-based solutions must be given priority in climate adaptation and green infrastructure projects, as part of area-based approaches. Nature and biodiversity are unique to each area and therefore also need area-specific solutions. All relevant stakeholders must commit to jointly defining an area-based vision with goals and a strategy to protect and restore nature in conjunction with other interests, with water and soil being the guiding elements.
The government can issue bonds for nature-based solutions. Ecosystem services and nature-based solutions will become more attractive if their value is made transparent and they are compensated. Biodiversity credits can provide additional opportunities for financing nature. This is a new concept where an asset is created based on investments in the protection and restoration of nature in a specific landscape.

Note: Where we talk about 'nature' in this document, we always mean 'nature and biodiversity'.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 20. Contributions of non-state actors

How do non-state actors contribute to target 20 and what do they need to do so?
This section contains input that was provided by Dutch non-state actors who are involved in biodiversity in an international context.
The two main questions answered in this section are:

1. How do non-state actors contribute to target 20?
2. What do non-state actors need to help achieve target 20?

The contributors to this section were scientific and knowledge institutions and NGOs. This overview lacks input from private sector actors and implementing government organisations. This was due in part to people not being available for interviews, but also the perception of private sector actors that their fields of work do not meaningfully contribute to target 20.

How do non-state actors contribute to target 20?
The resources and methods that contribute to GBF target 20 include a wide range of activities involving knowledge and capacity sharing and technological innovation. These usually take place in an international setting, characterised by cross-border cooperation and exchanges between the Global North and South.

The following overview describes the main approaches of non-state actors:

- National and international cooperation within collaborative research programmes with other science and knowledge institutions, civil society organisations and governments. Involvement in international networks, including IUCN, Ramsar, GEO BON, IPBES, WWQA, ISO and ESP.
- Collaboration with partner organisations, NGOs, environmental organisations, women's groups, local communities and networks. Financial support, knowledge sharing, policy development, joint advocacy and access to funding and networks.
- Joint development of projects and joint fundraising with partner organisations and NGOs.
- Providing education and training, courses, Master's degree programmes and PhD positions, both to local and international students, as well as special programmes for students from the Global South (particularly through the SAIL global capacity-building platform).
- Developing, co-creating and testing technologies for spatial planning, remote sensing, camera traps, eDNA, biodiversity monitoring, geo-citizen science, decision support systems, early warning systems and data visualisation.
- Knowledge sharing and institutional support to national governments through collaboration with partner civil society organisations.
- Analysing contradictions within and between various sectors and policies and creating awareness about these contradictions. Civil society partner organisations who work with local communities and indigenous people facilitate networks with local governments and local and national policymakers.
- Knowledge and capacity sharing and access to networks through alumni networks (e.g. SAIL institutions).

What do non-state actors need to jointly achieve GBF target 20?
The needs of Dutch non-state actors to jointly achieve target 20 are strongly focused on access to and the availability of funding, continued efforts and knowledge sharing in international networks, and a stronger recognition of the relevance of North-South cooperation in the areas of capacity-sharing, innovation and science.

The following overview describes the main needs of non-state actors:

- Stop government support for activities that destroy biodiversity.
- Continue donor funding for biodiversity (earmarked or otherwise) by the Dutch government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature, and Ministry of Education), NWO and/or the European Union.
- Coordination of themes and geographical focus between the ministries of Foreign Affairs, LVVN and Dutch embassies.
- Facilitate co-learning and effective cooperation between Dutch non-state actors in relation to GBF target 20, including on themes such as international power relations, ethics and justice.
- Access to funding for civil society organisations and networks to support local community campaigns and initiatives that contribute to the GBF goals. Partners working on GBF goals require access to funds, funding mechanisms and small grants that take into account the organisational (administration & finance) systems of local groups.
- Financial support to facilitate a long-term commitment and policy advice to international platforms and networks (IPBES, ESP, GEOBON, IUCN, Ramsar).
- Support and encourage cooperation with networks of indigenous people to foster mutual knowledge sharing.
- Ensure synergy between the three Rio Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC & UNCCD) in Dutch national and international policy.
- Prevent the loss of valuable knowledge and the outflow of researchers who work or study in the Netherlands.
- Remove barriers and political restrictions and make it easier for foreigners who come to the Netherlands for education to obtain visas.
- Innovative business models for knowledge institutions to continue research or to improve the eligibility of knowledge institutions for funding and subsidy schemes.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Target 21. Contributions of non-state actors

A great deal is happening in this area. A wide range of organisations and initiatives are involved in collecting data and sharing knowledge on biodiversity. Scientific knowledge and data form the foundation of plans that can lead to biodiversity restoration. With more understanding of the current state of affairs and opportunities for biodiversity comes more understanding of the pathways to improvement. Below is a list of organisations, projects and initiatives. It is emphatically not a complete list.

Science and practical and applied research
Collecting knowledge is the core business of knowledge and research institutions. Various initiatives facilitate scientific data collection, collaboration in the field of biodiversity, and the generation of practical applications for biodiversity restoration. Data are collected on various aspects of biodiversity, such as species, ecosystems and genetic resources, and research institutes also have the expertise in house to analyse and process this data into useful information. They produce reports and analyses that help policymakers, organisations and the public understand trends and patterns in biodiversity. They often manage databases and archives that store biodiversity data and are accessible to scientists and policymakers around the world. In addition, these institutions are often involved in developing new technologies and methods for collecting and analysing biodiversity and other data.

Examples of initiatives in this field
- LTER-LIFE
- ARISE
- Biodiversity XL
- Biodiversity Lecturers Platform and Centre of Green Expertise (universities of applied sciences)
- KANO research projects through LIFE All4Biodiversity
- Ecosystem Services Valuation Database
- Soil Valley
- Nature Positive Universities Initiative
- Netherlands 2120
- Dutch Network Ecological Monitoring

Business community
Companies play a crucial role in collecting, sharing and utilising information and knowledge on biodiversity. By investing in research and collecting data related to biodiversity in their areas of operation, companies help to identify biodiversity risks and opportunities and generate valuable data. This is enhanced when companies collaborate with scientific institutions and NGOs to jointly fund and conduct research.

The initiatives by the business community and their impact is increasing and is further stimulated by legislation in the CSRD. Better reporting on, and a greater commitment to, biodiversity restoration is expected to have an impact on the restoration of our living environment. This will contribute to the knowledge about the state of biodiversity and provide insight into the effectiveness of the measures taken. Businesses also contribute to knowledge sharing by sharing best practices within their industry and with the wider community. This encourages others to undertake similar biodiversity efforts. Publications, conferences and partnerships are all ways to encourage this knowledge sharing.

Civil society actors and initiatives
Initiatives by and partnerships of civil society actors encourage cooperation and knowledge development. Civil society organisations, such as nature conservation organisations and associations, monitor and increase knowledge about plants, animals and ecosystems.
They often involve volunteers in this ('citizen science'). Some organisations and initiatives are arguing for open data policies in the field of biodiversity.

Examples of initiatives in this field:
- Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery
  - Knowledge and Innovation Working Group
  - 'Joining forces for biodiversity' Innovation Fund
  - 'Joining forces for biodiversity' Toolbox for businesses and municipalities
- Foundation for Sustainable Development
  - Nature Today (website with the latest information about nature and nature policy)

- Ecosystem Services Partnership
- Association of Forest and Nature Owners (facilitates the continuous development of professionalism of forest and nature managers)
- Earthwatch

Public relations and nature education

Alongside all nature restoration measures, changes in human behaviour are necessary. Humans take from nature what they need and dump what they can no longer use, resulting in resources depletion and environmental pollution. This attitude needs to change to one of more respect for the world around us. Besides sharing facts and figures, public information campaigns should also focus on behavioural change. A large number of civil society actors contribute to this by providing information and education about nature.

These include:
- education in zoos
- the visitors' centres of the national parks
- educational activities and public information campaigns of nature and species monitoring organisations and NGOs
- Heimans and Thijsse Foundation
- GLOBE Netherlands Foundation
- Naturalis Biodiversity Center
- NEMO Science Museum

Dashboards, databases and planning tools

Several dashboards, databases and planning tools have been developed or are under construction to provide access to data and knowledge on biodiversity and so help its improvement.
Examples are:
- National Biodiversity Dashboard (IUCN NL)
- Biodiversity planner
- Basic Quality of Nature
- Biodiversity KPIs initiative (Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery)
- NL Green label
- Ecosystem Services Valuation Database (ESVD)
- Dutch National Database Flora and Fauna
- Waarneming.nl (nature observations)
- Verspreidingsatlas.nl (data on species distribution)
- BIOFIN
- EU Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (EU PoMS)

Local initiatives

Developing data and knowledge on biodiversity also requires the deployment of local knowledge and approaches. To make headway in the restoration of biodiversity, it is important to gain knowledge and experience about local situations and share knowledge about best practices. Local initiatives zoom in on an actual situations in practice and the exceptions that apply.

Examples of such initiatives are:
- Maasheggen UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and candidate Biosphere Reserve KempenBroek (global biodiversity science and knowledge network)
- Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery (working group on area-based cooperation)
- Living Labs
- agricultural collectives

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve the target for 2030?

Despite the many initiatives and ways in which non-state actors collect and share data, information and knowledge on biodiversity, there are also barriers that prevent important information from being shared. Non-state actors need:
1. Data and knowledge to be available
2. Cooperation between expertise groups
3. Widespread communication in a common language
4. Support for relevant research

1. It is essential to make the existing data and information on biodiversity available to facilitate the further development of biodiversity knowledge. The accessibility of the knowledge platforms is particularly a limiting factor here. In addition to improving access to existing data, it is also important to invest in collecting new data, especially in areas where there is currently a lack of information.
Examples are:
- data maps
- easily accessible data environments
- free availability of data (NDFF)
- data for companies for biodiversity reporting

Besides developing new knowledge, it is also important to understand the historical development of nature and nature conservation to be able to draw lessons from the past and so help us shape the future.

Collecting and sharing data and information is essential, but equally important is the knowledge required to process and interpret data so that it can be shared with a wider audience. More incentives are required to develop and maintain the expertise in this field.

2. Obtaining data on and sharing knowledge for biodiversity restoration requires an increasing degree of multidisciplinary cooperation. This means that organisations, institutions and companies with diverse backgrounds need to work together to find sustainable solutions. Cooperation and 'co-creation' can be encouraged by:

- Encouraging or requiring co-creation and multidisciplinary cooperation in applications for funding.
- Involving social science expertise can help to understand the social aspects of biodiversity restoration and how people can be involved.
- Provide support to volunteers who can play a crucial role in collecting data and promoting awareness.

3. For a sustainable transition and effective cooperation, it is also important that all stakeholders speak a common language. Speaking the same language does not only involve knowledge and understanding of what biodiversity is, but also being able to connect biodiversity knowledge to policy and implementation. This requires much more effective communication to embed the available knowledge deep in the core of social awareness. This requires engaging even more with various societal stakeholders about the importance of nature and its protection and restoration. Despite the fact that much is already being done, many organisations, businesses and governments are still not getting the message. This also requires:

- Incorporating biodiversity into education curricula, with teachers and lecturers who have sufficient knowledge.
- Knowledge sharing between policymakers at various policy levels and empowering experts.

4. Supporting relevant and effective research further requires:

- More cooperation between researchers and stakeholders to develop relevant and joint research agendas.
- Commitment and long-term funding to ensure continuity and stability of research programmes.
- Support for taxonomists, including providing job security, as their expertise is essential for species identification.
- Financial resources and support for monitoring activities, including hiring paid staff.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy.

Targets 22 & 23. Contributions of non-state actors

Non-state actors recognise the importance of an inclusive, just and gender-inclusive approach to the global biodiversity and climate challenges we are currently facing. There is a strong sense of urgency. Non-state actors are working hard to meet the Netherlands' biodiversity and climate goals. They are highly motivated and set high ambitions in relation to the challenges.

Public authorities and businesses have a social responsibility to achieve the goals. Civil society organisations make sure attention is called to the issues, warn of problems, and monitor whether the agreements and conventions are being met. For example, they expose violations or abuses of the agreements and conventions.

Non-state actors submit recommendations on governance, policy and implementation. The overarching advice of non-state actors in relation to the GBF targets is as follows

1. Targets 22 and 23 have intersecting themes. Considering Section C of the 'Considerations for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework', it is advised to consider all intersecting themes, and particularly in relation to the input and rights of indigenous people, gender and intergenerational equity. The advice is to address the biodiversity plan from an intersectional viewpoint to ensure that the perspectives of minority groups, gender, youth and older people are all represented.
2. *"Nothing about us, without us"*. Involve all parties who feel the impact of the policies and decisions. Participation should always be meaningful; avoid tokenism. To ensure that stakeholders have sufficient opportunity and influence, policymakers must be firmly committed to providing accountability, insight and feedback.
3. It is important to allow room to experiment and find the right form.

How do non-state actors contribute to targets 22 and 23?

Non-state actors in the Netherlands play a crucial role in implementing targets 22 and 23. They are rooted in civil society. They are, or they represent, a variety of majority and minority groups within society, such as women and girls in all their diversity, LGBTQ+ persons, indigenous people, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with migrant backgrounds, and refugees.

Non-state actors help to build awareness about inequalities in society and the impact of the colonial past, and they call attention to problems. They advise on appropriate solutions to protect the interests of marginalised groups. Non-state actors represent the voice of various population groups and stand up for their rights. They also promote representativeness, such as more women and diversity in Dutch politics. Non-state actors bring together and mobilise people from various groups. In 2023, more than 70,000 people joined the March for Climate and Justice to voice their concerns about climate policy.

Non-state actors play an important role by engaging and collaborating with groups within but also outside the nature and climate movement. They also cooperate with less obvious actors (the 'unusual suspects'), such as in the arts and culture sector. Non-state actors engage in knowledge development and knowledge sharing and, where relevant, exchange experiences and lessons learned with local and international actors, and they both coordinate and participate in these groups.

They advise and support involved organisations (government, municipalities, companies, etc.) who carry out gender impact assessments, provide Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) training, and facilitate cultural change processes. They also assess policies (for example to establish if laws are biodiversity and climate proof, or by conducting generational tests), and test them for coherence with other policies (such as the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan or Feminist Foreign Policy).

What do non-state actors need over the next seven years to collectively achieve this target?

There are a number of essential enabling conditions that need to be met for non-state actors to fulfil their role effectively and efficiently. First and foremost, the national government needs to recognise the importance of their role. There are two key enabling conditions: 'access' and 'administrative capacity'

Access

'Access' is an overarching theme and relates to several issues, some of which involve free, prior and informed consent:

- Timely access to information on biodiversity, climate policies and policies with indirect influence.
- Information about process flows and access to meaningful and active participation.
- Access to relevant networks and actors and access to justice in case of violations or abuses.
- Access to information is provided in understandable language, so that it is accessible to various groups.
- Access to flexible and institutional funding that enables civil society and grassroots organisations to fulfil their role. This also includes a standard budget for inclusive participation under all targets.

Administrative capacity

The second key enabling condition concerns administrative capacity. This includes the capacity to address structural inequalities (in all forms) and effectively remove them. Here, the government needs to take responsibility based on commitment and transparency. Clarity needs to be provided about roles and responsibilities, with a clear point of contact (with mandate) who advises interest groups, helps them navigate the process, and makes sure the theme stays on the agenda. For example, the City of Amsterdam has created a specific position in the organisation who is tasked with ensuring inclusive participation within the municipality (this was after they learned, during participation meetings, that the diversity of the population was not adequately represented).

A precondition here is a representative government with which the people can identify. An example of an instrument to this end is a platform with an overview of the involved parties, that both brings them together and allows them to seek each other out (without reinventing the wheel).

Processes have to be set up for the long term in order to meet the biodiversity targets. It is crucial to socially embed the theme with the help of participatory mechanisms based on respectful and reciprocal relationships. Parties may criticize each other's ideas, but must remain respectful to each other.Finally, those who stand up for human rights and environmental causes must be supported and protected from violence so they can do their work safely and independently.

This social section was prepared by experts from nature organisations, knowledge institutions and the business community at the meeting on the GBF targets (see Annex 1.II).
This section does not describe government policy..

Annex 1.II
Non-state actors and local public authorities consulted

More than 100 stakeholders were involved in the creation of this biodiversity plan. Two major stakeholder meetings took place: on 24 May 2023 in Utrecht, organised by the Ministry of LVVN, and on 22 November 2023 in cooperation with IUCN Netherlands and MVO-Nederland in Amersfoort. The stakeholders formed working groups to draft the social sections (see Annex 1.I).

The stakeholders who drafted the social sections in working groups represented the following organisations:

ABN AMRO
Action Aid
Agenda Nature Inclusive
Albert Heijn
Arcadis
Artemis Natuurlijk
Both Ends
Capitals Coalition
CRV
City of Amsterdam
Municipality of Arnhem
Municipality of Breda
Municipality of The Hague
Municipality of Leiden
Municipality of Zaanstad
HAS Green Academy
Port of Rotterdam Authority
Heijmans
De Nederlandsche Bank
DOW
Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery
Deltares
DIBEVO
DSM-Firmenich
Ecoshape / NL 2120
FLORON
Dutch Federation of Agricultural and Horticultural Organisations
Meststoffen NL
MVO NL
Dutch Mammal Society
FME Industrie
FSD
IFAW
Inholland University of Applied Sciences
Holland Bio
Interface
IUCN NL
IVN Natuureducatie
Royal Dutch Hunters Association
Youth Environmental Council of the Netherlands
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
Leiden University
Maastricht University
University of Twente
Utrecht University
Vereniging Kust & Zee
Dutch Butterfly Conservation
VNONCW
Nationale Denktank
Dutch National Youth Council
Naturalis
Nature and Environment Federations
Natuurmonumenten
Natuurverdubbelaars
Nature Domain
Inclusivity consultant
Afriflora
Nature Today
Natures Pride
Natuur & Milieu
NBA Accountants
NCV Cosmetica
NEC-E
Nederlands Cultuurlandschap
Dutch Banking Association
NWB Bank
NMF Noord-Holland
Netherlands Society for the Protection of Birds
Wadden Association
Oxfam Novib
PBAF
PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency
Plantum
Province of North Holland
Rabobank
RAVON
National Institute for Public Health and the Environment
Royal Haskoning
RVO/LVVN
Samen voor Biodiversiteit
Shell
Sovon Dutch Centre For Field Ornithology
Stichting Bargerveen
Stichting BoerenNatuur
Topigs Norvin
TNO
TU Delft
Tuinbranche Nederland
Unesco Delft Institute for Water Education
Wageningen University & Research
WECF
World Wide Fund for Nature
Witteveen & Bos
WO=MEN

The social section of target 10 (agriculture) was prepared by BoerenNatuur.

The social section of target 18 (redirect harmful subsidies) was prepared by the Business and Biodiversity focus group: Jelle Hannema, CEO of Vitens; Arie Koornneef, CEO of ASN Bank; Lidwin van Velden, CEO of NWB Bank; Volkert Engelsman, former CEO of Eosta; Geert van der Veer, founder of Caring Farmers; Onno Dwars, CEO of Ballast Nedam Development; Marlies Marten, CEO of Vitam; Michel Driessen, CEO of Verstegen; Jonne Velthuis, Domain Coordinator Finance of the Agenda Nature Inclusive; Martin Lok, Executive Director of the Capitals Coalition; and Erwin van Overbeek, Manager Large Companies of Network MVO Nederland.

The following parties were also consulted:
Association of Provincial Authorities (IPO)
Association of Regional Water Authorities (UvW)
Association of Dutch municipalities (VNG)
Nature Inclusive Collective

Annex 1.III
Table with national goals per target

Purpose	Source		Contribution to global goals	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																					
				T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
EU goals																									
Overarching goal to implement effective and area-based restoration measures in all areas and ecosystems within the scope of the regulation, with a goal to restore, at the European Union level, at least 20% of the land area and 20% of the sea area by 2030, and to restore all ecosystems requiring restoration by 2050.	EU Nature Restoration Regulation		Goal A	M	H	M																			
Prevent, minimise and mitigate the adverse impacts of the introduction and spread, both intentional and unintentional, of invasive alien species on biodiversity in the European Union.	EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation		Goal A						M																
Reduce the use of fertilisers by at least 20% by 2030.	EU Farm to Fork		Goal A							L															
Reduce the need for plant protection products through the use of more resilient plants and cropping systems by 2030.	EU UP 2030		Goal A							L															
Connecting agriculture and nature by 2030.	EU UP 2030		Goal A, Goal B	M	L					L							L								
Reduce both emissions to the environment and residues of plant protection products on food to almost zero by 2030.	EU UP 2030		Goal A							L															
No more water quality standard exceedances by 2027.	EU UP 2030		Goal A							L															
100% deforestation-free agricultural commodities (soy, palm oil, coffee, cocoa, rubber and beef) imported/exported in the Netherlands by the end of 2024 compared to the end of 2020.	EU deforestation regulation		Goal B										L						M						
National goals																									
Achieve a national favourable conservation status (FCS) for habitat types and species listed in the Birds and Habitats Directives that currently have an unfavourable conservation status.	Birds and Habitats Directives		Goal A	L	M	M	M																		
Establish 37,000 ha of new forest in 2030 and revitalise existing forests where necessary.	Forest Strategy		Goal A	L	M	H					L		L												
Establish 10% of the Green Blue Network of Landscape Features by 2050.	Forest Strategy		Goal A, Goal B	M	M						L				M		L								
The Nature Restoration Regulation has set the following goal: to prevent a national net decline in urban green spaces and urban tree canopy cover by 2030, and after 2030, to achieve a positive trend in urban green spaces and urban tree canopy cover in each urban ecosystem area.	Urban green spaces programme		Goal A, Goal B	H	M										H										
Create an additional 80,000 hectares of new nature in the Dutch National Ecological Network (NEN) by 2027 compared to 1 January 2011.	Nature Pact		Goal A	L		H																			
By 2030, 15% of the Dutch North Sea has been set aside for nature reserves where no bottom-fishing is permitted.	North Sea Programme; North Sea Agreement		Goal A, Goal B	L	L	L							H												
A stable and/or positive trend in populations of wild bees and other pollinator species has set in by 2030.	NL Pollinator Strategy		Goal A		L		M																		
Aim to expand the number of key areas for the black-tailed godwit from 14 in 2022 to around 35 in 2027.	Project Godwit Action Plan		Goal A				M																		
Non-native species introduced by human activities (alien species) occur at levels that do not alter the ecosystem.	Marine Strategy Framework Directive Parts 1 to 3		Goal A						H																
Further reduce the risks of the emergence and spread of zoonoses in the future and ensure preparedness in case of an outbreak.	National Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Zoonotic Disease Policy		Goal A					M																	
Increase the groundwater level in approximately 22,000 hectares of peatlands by 2028 (target) to benefit key areas for the black-tailed godwit.	Subsidy scheme: Cooperation in peat meadow areas in and around Natura 2000 sites		Goal A			L	L				L		M												
Historical contamination sites that require urgent soil decontamination have been controlled by 2030.	Soil Protection Legislation		Goal A							L															
Good chemical and ecological status of surface and groundwater by 2027.	Water Framework Directive		Goal A		L					H			L												
Achieve and/or maintain a Good Environmental Status in marine areas.	Marine Strategy Framework Directive; North Sea Programme		Goal A	L	M	M				M															

Purpose	Source		Contribution to global goals	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
				T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
A future-proof system of large waters in 2050 in which high-quality nature coexists with a strong economy.	Programmatic Approach to Great Waters		Goal A, Goal B	L	M	M				M				L			L									
Green-blue networks and local biodiversity are strengthened at all spatial levels by: 1. Preserving and creating valuable habitats and the Basic Quality of Nature. 2. Prioritizing green solutions based on natural processes and structures over technical solutions. 3. Maintaining and enhancing the percentage of green spaces at the neighbourhood level.	Benchmark for Green Climate Adaptive Built Environment		Goal A, Goal B	L											M											
By 2027, biodiversity conservation and restoration activities will be taking place on 60% of cultivated land.	CAP-NSP		Goal A, Goal B		M	M							M													
By 2027, management will have been improved in 45% of Natura 2000 sites.	CAP-NSP		Goal A			H																				
By 2027, 65,000 ha of landscape managed.	CAP-NSP		Goal A			H																				
By 2027, 1,250 farms will receive investment support for improving biodiversity and 650 investments will be made in rural areas to improve nature, the environment and the climate.	CAP-NSP		Goal A, Goal D		L								M				L				L	M				
Aim for 6.5% of the agricultural area to be under organic production or converting to organic in the Netherlands by 2027.	CAP-NSP		Goal B										M													
More land subject to agri-environment and climate measures. The target is around 50,000 ha by 2028.	Subsidy scheme: Cooperation in peat meadow areas in and around Natura 2000 sites		Goal B										M					L								
A nature-inclusive society in 2050.	Agenda Nature Inclusive		Goal B, Goal D	L										M			H	L	L		L	M				
15% of agricultural land under organic production by 2030.	Organic farming action plan		Goal B										M													
By 2030, all Dutch soils used for agricultural activities are managed sustainably.	Letter to the House of Representatives on the National Programme on Agriculture Soils		Goal B										M													
Concentrations of plant protection products meet legal standards.	Implementation Programme for the Vision for the Future of Plant Protection 2030; National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products 2022-2025		Goal B							M			M													
Three goals for plant protection products by 2030: resilient plants and cropping systems, connecting agriculture and nature, and virtually zero emissions and residues on products.	Implementation Programme for the Vision for the Future of Plant Protection 2030; National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products 2022-2025		Goal B							L			M													
By 2030, public authorities and land managers in nature areas are adequately prepared to sustainably and effectively manage the effects of climate change, including increased heat frequency, extreme precipitation, prolonged droughts, sea level rise and salinisation.	Actielijnen klimaatadaptatie natuur (Report describing perspectives for action for adapting nature to climate change)		Goal B								L															
50% health gains in 2030 compared to 2016.	Clean Air Accord		Goal B							L																
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from peatlands and wetlands by 1 Mtonne annually from 2030 onwards.	National Peatland Programme		Goal B								M															
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990; achieve climate neutrality by 2050.	The Climate Plan; Climate Challenge Programme		Goal B								H			L			L				L					
Halving of the use of primary abiotic raw materials by 2030; Achieve a circular economy where the impact of raw materials use is reduced to within planetary boundaries by 2050.	National Circular Economy Programme		Goal B, Goal D																H							
Halve food waste by 2030 compared to 2015.	Letter to the House of Representatives on the Evaluation of the 2016-2020 food agenda and food policy		Goal B																H							
Identify positive and negative impacts of government funding on the environment and biodiversity in 2025.	Letter to House of Representatives, LNV Quickscan (DGNV / 27398258)		Goal B, Goal D																		H	L				
By 2027, at least 1,000 business parks will have joined the National Growth Fund: Programme for Working Landscapes of the Future and will have been transformed into future-proof 'working landscapes'.	National Growth Fund: Programme for Working Landscapes of the Future		Goal B, Goal D	L											M		L	L								
Conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of these resources.	Sources of Existence		Goal C													H								L		
As much as possible, unrestricted access to, and the exchange of, genetic material, within and between countries, for the purposes of knowledge development and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	Sources of Existence		Goal C													H										
Users of genetic resources contribute to the transparent and international exchange of knowledge and information on genetic resources, with a particular focus on the origin of the genetic material.	Sources of Existence		Goal C, Goal D													M										
Equal rights for women and LHBTIQ+ persons.	Feminist Foreign Policy		Goal D																						L	L

PART 2

Biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands

1 Introduction: Context of the Biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands

This second part of the biodiversity plan describes the Netherlands' contribution for the Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius) to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

1.1 Background

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) asks the Parties to assess the extent to which their own biodiversity plans contribute to the new GBF.[1] The GBF is the successor to the 2020 Aichi targets. The GBF has established 23 targets for 2030 that contribute to the four overarching goals for biodiversity restoration by 2050. The assessments of the biodiversity plans must be completed in time for the Conference of Parties (COP16) in November 2024. The main item on the agenda of the COP16 is to discuss global progress on the 23 targets for 2030.

The Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) was adopted in 2020. The NEPP serves as the biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands. An analysis[2] of how the NEPP contributes to the GBF was carried out prior to adopting this biodiversity plan for the Netherlands. As the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands constitutes a biodiversity plan, the format of the analysis and report for this component differs to that of the European Netherlands (Part A). In line with the CBD's guidelines for existing biodiversity plans, the national targets have been taken as the starting point for the Caribbean Netherlands. The required funding is currently being sought for the implementation of the second phase of the NEPP CN. In light of the state of biodiversity, a proposal for funding will be presented in 2025.

1.2 Method of assessing the NEPP contribution to the GBF

The CBD's GBF Assessment Framework provides countries with an instrument for determining the degree of compliance between existing biodiversity plans (including other existing policies) and the latest CBD guidelines for biodiversity plans (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, December 2022). It requires a description of a) the extent to which national targets contribute to the GBF targets, b) what policies underpin these targets, c) the contribution of non-state actors, d) existing monitoring indicators, and e) the manner of implementation and the obstacles.

[1] In GBF Annex I: *"In order to minimize the time and resources required to revise or update NBSAPs, the alignment of existing NBSAPs and their targets with the new framework could be assessed. This exercise will allow the identification of those aspects or components of their NBSAPs that need to be revised or updated in the light of the new framework."*

[2] 2This analysis was carried out by consultancy firm TwynstraGudde.

1.3 Guide for readers of the Biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands

Section 2 provides a summary of the biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands and how this document and other existing policies contribute to the GBF. Section 3 describes how and to what extent the biodiversity plan of the CN objectives contribute to the GBF targets. Figure 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the existing documents that form part of the biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands and can be shared with the CBD secretariat in preparation for the COP16.

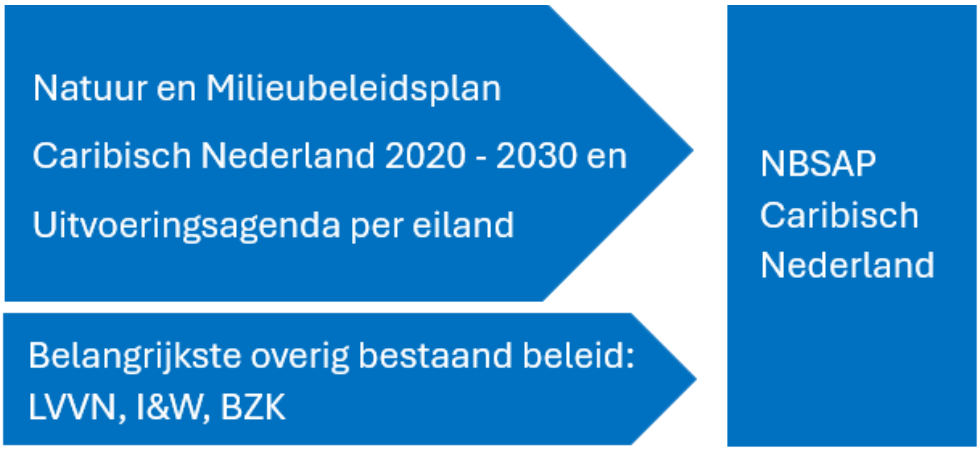


Figure 1. Relationship with existing policies

2 Summary of the Biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands

The Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) was adopted in 2020. The NEPP CN serves as the biodiversity plan for the islands of Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius. An assessment of the specific contribution of the biodiversity plan of the CN and other important existing policies to the 23 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was carried out prior to adopting the biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands (15/4. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (cbd.int)).

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) assessment framework was used for this assessment. This assessment framework requires a description of a) the extent to which national targets contribute to the targets, b) what policies underpin these targets, c) the contribution of non-state actors, d) existing monitoring indicators, and e) the manner of implementation and the obstacles. This summary describes the key results of this assessment. First a brief explanation is provided of the context of the NEPP CN.

2.1 Context of the Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030

The Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba) has a multitude of natural resources that provide numerous ecological, cultural and economic services to the local population – and to the region and the rest of the world. The well-being and prosperity of the islands and their inhabitants depend heavily on the quality of the natural environment (NEPP, 2020. p. 5). The islands all face the same challenges, albeit to varying degrees. Major challenges include the effects of extreme weather events, pressures from population growth and the increase in tourism (NEPP, 2020. p. 5).

In 2020, the NEPP CN 2020-2030 was adopted to address these challenges for nature and the environment. The vision of this policy plan is to pursue an equilibrium between a prosperous society and cultural identity, and a resilient and healthy natural environment. The NEPP CN builds on the Nature Policy Plan 2013-2017 and the report entitled 'State of Nature of the Caribbean Netherlands 2017'.[3] This report concludes that, without exception, the biodiversity of the Caribbean Netherlands is in a moderate to very unfavourable state (NEPP CN, 2020, p. 14).

The NEPP CN and related implementation plans aim to effectively manage the natural environment and so facilitate responsible and sustainable use of natural resources (NEPP, 2020, p. 6). The NEPP CN consists of four strategic goals, with twelve underlying subgoals. Figure 2 provides an overview. The islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba are drawing up separate implementation agendas under the NEPP CN 2020-2030, allowing for specific prioritisation per island. The implementation agendas for Sint Eustatius and Saba have since been adopted, that for Bonaire is pending. The implementation agendas identify for each strategic goal: a) the milestones and main activities, b) which organisation is in charge, c) the schedule and deadlines, and d) the required and/or allocated budget.

[3] Debrot, A.O., Henkens, R.J.H.G., Verweij, P.J.F.M. (ed.), 2018. *Staat van de natuur van Caribisch Nederland 2017: Een eerste beoordeling van de staat (van instandhouding), bedreigingen en managementimplicaties van habitats en soorten in Caribisch Nederland*. Wageningen Marine Research Wageningen UR (University & Research centre), Wageningen Marine Research rapport C086/17. 214 pp.

Vision A prosperous society and cultural identity in balance with a resilient and healthy natural environment.		
Strategic goal 1 Reverse coral reef degradation to enhance wellbeing in the CN	**Strategic goal 2** Restore and conserve the unique habitats and species in the CN	**Strategic goal 3** Sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy
1.1 Control erosion and runoff	2.1 Conservation and restoration of key habitats	3.1 Sustainable fisheries
1.2 Effective waste and wastewater management	2.2 Conservation of keystone and flagships species	3.2 Tourism industry in balance with nature conservation
1.3 Coral reef restoration	2.3 Prevent new and control established invasive species	3.3 Invest in sustainable local food production
Strategic goal 4 Create the local conditions to ensure sustainable results of nature policy in the CN		
4.1 Create awareness through education and training	4.2 Create employment through investments in nature	4.3 Develop a structural research agenda

Figure 2. Overview of strategic goals and subgoals of the NEPP CN 2020-2030. Source: NEPP CN.

2.2 Contribution of existing policies and national targets to the 23 GBF targets

To establish the Netherlands' biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands, an assessment was conducted of the contribution of existing policies and national targets of the Caribbean Netherlands to the 23 GBF targets. This assessment reveals that all 23 GBF targets are addressed in current policies. Most of the targets are addressed in the NEPP CN, and the remaining targets are covered by other policies of, in particular, the ministries of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) and of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W).

Contribution of NEPP CN to GBF targets

The NEPP CN was harmonised with the CBD at the time of writing and adopted as the biodiversity plan of the Caribbean Netherlands in 2020. With its strategic goals and implementation agendas, the NEPP contributes to 17 of the 23 GBF targets, and also helps to meet the challenges for local biodiversity, socio-economic development and nature ambitions.

The table in Annex 2.II provides an overview of how the four strategic goals and fourteen subgoals in the NEPP CN contribute to the 23 targets formulated for the GBF. For each of the GBF targets, various aspects are identified that are important for achieving the GBF's global targets. These aspects are reflected in both the NEPP CN and existing policies, and vary between a low, medium and high contribution.
To illustrate: aspects of target 21 are reflected in the NEPP and implementation agendas, distributed across seven subgoals of the NEPP CN.

The NEPP CN and implementation agendas are primarily focused on CBD targets 1 to 8, aimed at "*reducing threats to biodiversity*". The NEPP CN includes nature restoration measures, the protection of specific areas such as coral reefs, improved area management, and measures to reduce threats such as erosion and pollution, all intended to make a significant contribution to the targets aimed at "*reducing threats to biodiversity*". In addition, the NEPP CN and implementation agendas also address targets 9 to 13 (aimed at "*Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing*") and targets 14 to 23 (aimed at "*Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming*"). In some cases, the contribution is derived from nature policy, or is supplemented by the policies of other ministries. Examples include the Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands and plans for reforestation, fisheries and tourism.

Section 3 describes in more detail how the strategic goals and subgoals in the NEPP CN contribute to 17 of the GBF targets. The assessment revealed that six GBF targets are not addressed in the NEPP CN. A follow-up assessment was carried out to determine whether and to what extent other policies contribute to these six GBF targets.

Contribution of other policies to the remaining GBF targets

The follow-up assessment reveals that four of the remaining six targets are addressed in other policies. For targets 13 and 17, there is no current policy for the Caribbean Netherlands, but their implementation for the European Netherlands is regulated through the Nagoya and Cartagena protocols, respectively. This would also appear to be the best alternative for the Caribbean Netherlands.

Below is a brief explanation of which current policies contribute to each of the six targets. This assessment is based on the most important current policies for the Caribbean of the ministries of LNV, BZK and IenW. Section 3 contains a more detailed description of the contribution of these other policies.

- **Target 12. Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity**
  The Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands describes measures for 'greening and blueing' and for nature-based development in the urbanised areas of the Caribbean Netherlands. For example, the Dutch government draws up recommendations and/or guidelines for the level of facilities in residential areas, including green spaces, in consultation with public entities.
- **Target 13. Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge**
  This target is addressed in the 2002 policy document 'Sources of Existence', with as main objective "the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and the just sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources". In addition, the Netherlands has been a party to the Nagoya Protocol since 2016. However, the Nagoya Protocol is not yet specifically mentioned in the Principles of Nature Management and Protection (BES) Act. The extent to which adaptation of this Act is desirable to implement the Protocol on the islands will be investigated.
- **Target 15. Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts**
  The government encourages businesses and financial institutions to monitor, report and improve their biodiversity impacts, dependencies and risks. Amongst other things, the government actively contributes to this target with the Ministry of Finance's Policy Agenda for the Financial Sector to ensure that measurement and reporting methods are harmonised globally and made mandatory at the EU level. This policy also applies generally to the Caribbean Netherlands. However, further steps are required to fully meet target 15. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are a particularly important target group for the Caribbean Netherlands. In consultation with public entities, it will be identified what is needed to encourage and, where necessary, facilitate the business community in this transition.
- **Target 17. Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology**
  The Netherlands has fully implemented the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity in cooperation with the EU. The European Netherlands thus meets target 17. This is a good foundation for biosafety in the Caribbean Netherlands. The Cartagena Protocol does not currently apply to Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. The implementation of the Cartagena Protocol will be explored in consultation with public entities.
- **Target 18. Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity**
  (LNV) is taking the lead and has taken a first step with the 'Effects of LNV instruments on nature and biodiversity' quick scan (Letter to Parliament DGNV/27398258, 29 August 2023). After the ministries of LNV and BZK have conducted a preliminary survey, other public authorities will also be able to apply the developed assessment method. LNV and the Nature Inclusive Collective (*Collectief Natuurinclusief*) will encourage this and also engage with the public entities of the Caribbean Netherlands to deploy this assessment method.
- **Targets 22 & 23. Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all; Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action**
  The Netherlands is working towards more participation in decision-making, which is needed to enable the transition to a sustainable food system, within Earth's limits. This policy also applies generally to

the Caribbean Netherlands. Consultations with public entities will explore the extent to which additional steps are needed to meet this target.

2.3 Contribution of non-state actors to the development and implementation of the NEPP

In addition to a 'whole-of-government approach', the CBD also prescribes a 'whole-of-society approach' to drafting and implementing the biodiversity plan. This means that a wide range of civil society parties and groups integrate nature into their activities. The NEPP CN was drafted in collaboration with various parties, both from government and civil society actors. These included nature management organisations, the tourism industry and knowledge institutions. The implementation of the measures also involves close cooperation with the local population and other local actors. The implementation agendas specify which actor is responsible for which milestone **and** which actors have a role in the implementation. Examples of non-state actors who have a role in implementing the NEPP CN include local nature NGOs, schools, nature management organisations, researchers (WUR), fisheries associations and local farmers.

2.4 Existing monitoring indicators

The contribution of the NEPP and implementation agendas to the targets is currently mainly expressed in qualitative terms. A monitoring framework is proposed in the NEPP CN that is based on the criteria and principles established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (NMBP, p. 47). With support from the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), work is in progress to develop this framework, including indicators for the various result levels. A point for attention is that the framework is harmonised with the GBF monitoring framework in the future. It is also worth noting that each island (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba) has its own programme monitor which tracks the progress of the NEPP and implementation programmes and projects per island.

2.5 Manner of implementation and obstacles

The implementation agendas identify a) the milestones and main activities, b) which organisation is in charge, c) the schedule and deadlines, and d) the required and/or allocated budget. The CBD also provides room in the assessment framework to identify any obstacles to implementation. The 2020-2030 implementation agendas for the islands identify the following conditions and points of attention for successful implementation:

- Ensure local support for and involvement in the implementation of the measures (including the local community, the business community, the tourism industry, enforcement agencies, government officials, politicians and investors).
- Ensure adequate guidance and governance in the implementation of the NEPP and the implementation agendas, including from all relevant levels of government and societal stakeholders.
- Ensure sufficient capacity and qualified staff for the implementation.
- Develop a strategy and ensure sufficient capacity to enforce nature and environmental legislation. This includes addressing the fragmentation of authorities within government.
- Ensure structural funding of nature management activities. The implementation agendas mention that budgets are not yet available for several of the targets. Also, there is too little continuity in the implementation of nature policy by the national government, the public entity of Bonaire (OLB) and the direct stakeholders. Many activities depend on temporary funding that ceases after a number of years. A National Biodiversity Finance Plan is currently being developed. This plan will identify how much funding is needed for nature, how much funding is available, and ways to mobilise public and private financial resources. The plan also addresses the role of innovative funding mechanisms, such as blended finance.
- Ensure the establishment of a monitoring framework for nature quality and the development and implementation of a research agenda to fill the gaps in the data.

2.6 Conclusions and points of attention for the follow-up

Based on the CBD assessment framework, existing policies and targets of the Caribbean Netherlands were found to contribute to all 23 GBF targets. However, the extent to which existing policies contribute and the concreteness of the implementation measures and their impact varies by target. The conclusion is that the Caribbean Netherlands is making good progress in terms of the targets for 2030, but that there is certainly room for improvement. This room for improvement applies mainly to the targets to which only other existing policies contribute. The assessment reveals that a sound basis for these targets exists in general national and local policy. However, follow-up steps will be required to fully meet the targets, such as the implementation of protocols and the translation of policies to the specific context of the Caribbean Netherlands. This concerns targets 13, 15, 17, 18, 22 & 23 (score L in Annex 2.III).

3 Notes on the contribution of existing policies in the Caribbean Netherlands to the GBF

This section provides a more detailed description of the contribution of existing policies for the Caribbean Netherlands to the Global Biodiversity Framework. As mentioned, the NEPP CN makes the greatest contribution to the 23 targets. This is described below in part A. The targets to which the NEPP does not contribute are discussed separately in part B, including the relationships with other existing policies.

A NEPP

The table in Annex 2.II provides an overview of how the four strategic goals and fourteen subgoals in the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands contribute to the 23 targets formulated for the GBF. This section further explains the NEPP's contribution to the GBF. To assess whether or not an NEPP target contributes to a GBF target (and to what extent), in addition to the NEPP, the existing implementation agendas of Bonaire,[4] Sint Eustatius and Saba and the milestones described in them were also examined.

3.1 Reversing the trend of coral reef degradation to create healthy and resilient coral reefs to help ensure well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands (strategic goal 1)

> "Coral reefs are crucial for the well-being and prosperity of the islands in the Caribbean Netherlands and are highly valued both nationally and internationally as biodiversity hotspots. It is clear that immediate action is required to reverse the current trends of degradation and conserve these precious ecosystems. The aim is to invest in solutions to the most significant local pressures (i.e. erosion and pollution) and in active coral restoration to create the conditions needed for healthy reefs that are as resilient as possible to the effects of climate change and other global forces. Investing in coral reefs will contribute to a thriving tourism industry, the protection of shorelines, and will provide a wide range of other benefits for the local communities."
>
> *Extract from: Natuur- en Milieubeleidsplan, p. 20*

As quoted above, strategic goal 1 of the NEPP concerns reversing the trend of coral reef degradation to create healthy and resilient coral reefs and so help ensure well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands. Strategic goal 1 has been elaborated into three subgoals, with corresponding milestones elaborated in the implementation agendas:

- **1.1 Controlling erosion and run-off**
  Address threats to water quality, particularly free-roaming animals, poor stormwater management and uncontrolled coastal development.

[4] The 2020-2030 implementation agenda of the NEPP for Bonaire is a draft version. The document has not been officially adopted and has no formal status.

- **1.2 Effective waste and wastewater management**
  Reduce the level of nutrients in groundwater and coastal areas through the effective treatment of wastewater and the development of waste management strategies.
- **1.3 Coral reef restoration**
  Invest in reef restoration, including breeding and relocation of corals, reef monitoring and regional knowledge sharing on coral restoration methods.

The table below displays the degree to which strategic goal 1 of the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands contributes to the overarching goals (2050) and targets (2030) of the GBF. An explanation is provided below the table.

NEPP target	Source	Contribution NEPP target Source to global objective	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
			T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
1. Reverse the trend of coral reef degradation to create healthy and resilient coral reefs to help ensure well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas	Goal A, Goal B																							
1.1. Controlling erosion and run-off	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		H	M	L	M				M		M	M			M									
1.2. Waste and wastewater management to improve water quality	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			M		M			H							M		H					L		
1.3. Coral reef restoration	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		M	H		M							M									L			

Strategic goal 1 contributes specifically to the following GBF targets:

- Target 1: Revising spatial development plans for all areas (with attention for nature conservation), mandating EIAs and SEAs, buffer zones for construction in coastal areas, management of livestock, restoration of degraded reef areas and the development of water retention plans in all areas are examples of how strategic goal 1 of the NEPP contributes to target 1.
- Target 2: Restoring degraded reef areas and reducing threats (for example to water quality) contribute to this target that addresses the restoration of degraded ecosystems.
- Target 3: Including nature conservation in spatial development plans and establishing coral cover ambitions based on historical baseline levels contributes (albeit to a limited extent) to target 3, which aims for 30% of the world's land and water to be conserved.
- Target 4: All NEPP subgoals and milestones contribute to target 4, which aims to halt species extinction and minimise conflicts between humans and habitats/wildlife. The starting point here is that coral reefs are home to protected species.
- Target 7: The subgoals for adequate wastewater treatment (1.2.1.) and solid waste management (1.2.2), including, amongst other things, enforcement of waste management policies, reduced leaching of agricultural chemicals, regulation of waste discharge from ships, and banning of disposable plastics and litter management (on land and at sea) contribute significantly to this target that addresses the reduction of excess nutrients, pesticides, chemicals and plastics.
- Target 8: Regulating stormwater management (including rainwater retention plans and nature-based solutions for coastal protection) contributes to this target that addresses the negative impact of climate change on biodiversity (using nature-based measures), amongst other things.
- Target 10: Reducing the leaching of agrochemicals, encouraging the use of organic fertilisers, and investing in a sustainable livestock sector contribute to this target that addresses sustainability in agriculture.
- Target 11: Nature-based solutions for coastal protection, coral reef restoration and water retention (such as reforestation and afforestation) are described under strategic goal 1.1 and harmonise with GBF target 11 which addresses enhancing nature with nature-based measures for the benefit of the community.
- Target 14: Integrating nature conservation into spatial planning, mandating and enforcing the use of EIAs and SEAs, and the management of various threats all contribute to this target.

- Target 16: The ban on single-use plastic, regulation and enforcement of waste separation, and incentives for complying with waste management policy contribute to this target that addresses encouraging sustainable choices by consumers.
- GBF target 20: Establishing a community for sharing knowledge among the six Caribbean islands contributes to this target that addresses knowledge-building and implementation quality.
- Target 21: Implementing a monitoring programme for ground and seawater quality, including the necessary research facilities, contributes to the target that addresses data availability (amongst other things).

3.2 Restore and conserve the unique habitats and species in the Caribbean Netherlands for current and future generations (strategic goal 2)

"In addition to coral reefs, the islands are home to a wide range of other unique habitats and species. Many of these are impacted by the same threats and forces that are degrading the coral reefs. To conserve the key habitats for current and future generations, increased protection and restoration of degraded habitats is required. In addition, keystone and flagship species need to be targeted to ensure healthy populations. Furthermore, as small island ecosystems are exceptionally vulnerable to invasive species, increased preventive biocontrol measures are necessary, as well as increased efforts to control the established invasive species in both the terrestrial and marine environments."

Extract from: Natuur- en Milieubeleidsplan, p. 23

Strategic goal 2 of the NEPP addresses the restoration and conservation of the unique habitats and species in the Caribbean Netherlands for current and future generations. Currently, many of these are impacted by the same pressures and forces that are degrading the coral reefs. So, more protection and restoration efforts are required. These efforts should include a specific focus on keystone and flagship species. Strategic goal 2 has been elaborated into three subgoals, with corresponding milestones elaborated in the implementation agendas:

- **2.1 Conservation and restoration of key habitats**
  Some important habitats should be designated as protected areas (in addition to the current protected areas). In areas that are already protected, enforcement and management should be improved. Some areas will be designated as national parks. In addition, restoration operations will be carried out for dry and tropical forests and mangrove forests. Finally, the influx of sargassum must be addressed in the form of an action plan.
- **2.2 Conservation of keystone and flagship species**
  Many important species are already protected. To ensure healthy populations of these species, a coordinated monitoring strategy must be developed as part of the overall monitoring strategy. Conservation strategies must also be implemented and, where necessary, breeding and nursery programmes must be implemented to stimulate endemic populations.
- **2.3 Prevent new and control established invasive species**
  To control invasive species populations, management strategies will focus on effective removal (for example, of lionfish, rats, and feral cats and dogs), and also on a holistic ecosystem restoration approach (for example for corallita and seagrass). Alien species entering the ecosystems of the Caribbean Netherlands through marine and aerial transportation must also be controlled.

The table below displays the degree to which strategic goal 2 of the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands contributes to the overarching goals (2050) and targets (2030) of the GBF. An explanation is provided below the table.

NEPP target	Source	Contribution NEPP target Source to global objective	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
			T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
2. Restore and conserve the unique habitats and species in the Caribbean Netherlands for current and future generations	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas	Goal A, Goal B																							
2.1. Conservation and restoration of key habitats	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		H	H	H	M				M			M									L			
2.2. Conservation of keystone and flagship species	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas					H															M				
2.3. Prevent new and control established invasive species	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		H	M		M		H																	

Strategic goal 2 contributes specifically to the following GBF targets:

- Target 1: The designation of additional protected areas (as National Parks) and improved management of protected areas (including invasive species control) contributes to conserving, protecting and managing areas of significant biodiversity value.
- Target 2: The conservation and restoration of habitats and species contributes to ecosystem restoration and improves ecosystem functioning.
- Target 3: The designation of additional protected areas that contain crucial habitats and improved area management (through the creation of area-specific management plans) contributes to achieving the target of effectively managing at least 30% of important areas.
- Target 4: The designation of additional protected areas (as National Parks) and improved management of protected areas (including invasive species control) contributes to preventing endangered species from becoming extinct.
- Target 6: Management strategies focusing on the effective removal of invasive species (e.g. lionfish, rats, and feral cats and dogs) and a holistic ecosystem restoration approach.
- Target 8: The Sargassum Action Plan (cause: climate change/global warming and ocean pollution) and the structural reforestation and restoration of mangroves help prevent negative impacts on ecosystems and public health.
- Target 11: The improved management of protected areas and, in particular, structural reforestation and restoration of mangroves helps to maintain and improve the contribution of nature to human well-being (e.g. mangroves contribute to coastal protection and forests absorb CO_2).
- Target 19: Developing financial mechanisms for monitoring, conservation and emergency response programmes (2.2, d) contributes to increasing financial resources.
- GBF target 20: Capacity building culminating in a ministerial department for reforestation in the three islands contributes to capacity building in general.

3.3 Sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy (strategic goal 3)

"Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius depend heavily on the quality of local ecosystems. On all islands, tourism is a crucial industry that provides income and employment for a significant part of the population. However, the exploitation and use of natural resources leads to environmental degradation. By investing in sustainable tourism industries, fisheries and agricultural systems, the environmental impact is minimised, while at the same time economic development is stimulated."

Extract from: Natuur- en Milieubeleidsplan, p. 25

Strategic goal 3 of the NEPP addresses the sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy. Strategic goal 3 has been elaborated into three subgoals, with corresponding milestones elaborated in the implementation agendas:

- **3.1 Invest in sustainable fisheries**
  Fully sustainable exploitation of fish stocks by 2030, including stable fish stocks, the protection of endangered fish species, the establishment of fishing cooperatives and fixed incomes for fishermen and women.
- **3.2 Tourism industry in balance with nature conservation**
  Establishing the islands' carrying capacity for tourism, drawing up long-term tourism development strategies, and using income from tourism to sustainably finance nature management.
- **3.3 Invest in sustainable local food production**
  Invest in local food production to improve landscape quality whilst also stimulating local economic development and increasing food security.

The table below displays the degree to which strategic goal 3 of the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands contributes to the overarching goals (2050) and targets (2030) of the GBF. An explanation is provided below the table.

NEPP target	Source	Contribution NEPP target Source to global objective	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
			T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
3. Sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas	Goal A, Goal B																							
3.1. Invest in sustainable fisheries	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		M	H	M	H	H	M			M	H	M										L		
3.2. Tourism industry in balance with nature conservation	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		M	H					L				H								L				
3.3. Invest in sustainable local food production	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		M	M					L			M	M					L					L		

Strategic goal 3 contributes specifically to the following GBF targets:

- Target 1: Sustainable management of the fisheries, tourism, and agriculture sectors contributes to strengthening biodiversity while meeting the economic and other needs of the local community.
- Target 2: Increase no-fishing zones to at least 30% of the coastal waters. This contributes to the part of this target describing at least 30% protected marine and coastal areas. The targets for achieving equilibrium between the tourism industry and nature conservation also contribute to coastal restoration.
- Target 3: Introducing and enforcing fisheries legislation and regulations for a sustainable tourism industry and developing guidelines for sustainable agriculture all contribute to this target.
- Target 4: Protecting endangered and vulnerable apex predators and herbivores (sharks and groupers) through fisheries legislation harmonises with this target to protect endangered species.
- Target 5: The policy plan for sustainable fisheries and fisheries legislation includes expanding no-fishing zones to build a stable fish stock.
- Target 6: Developing innovative methods for capturing lionfish contributes to this target to reduce the impact of invasive species on biodiversity.
- Target 7: Regulating the number of tourism activities per site based on ecological carrying capacity and facilitating the sustainable use of wastewater and other waste streams for agricultural production contributes to this target.
- Target 9: Investing in sustainable fisheries aims to ensure stable fish stocks and a steady income for fishermen and women.
- Target 10: The targets for sustainable fisheries and agriculture (including local food production) contribute to this target that addresses the sustainable use of agriculture and fisheries. Biodiversity-friendly forms of agriculture are not specified.

- Target 11: The sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy contributes to this target that addresses the restoration, conservation and strengthening of nature and its contribution to human well-being. Specific objective 3.2 describes the equilibrium between the tourism industry and nature conservation.
- Target 16: Establishing a strategy to encourage circular production (in line with the EU Circular Economy Strategy) and the sustainable use of wastewater and other waste streams for agricultural production contributes (albeit to a small extent) to this GBF target that addresses halving food waste, sustainable consumption choices and waste reduction.
- Target 19: Developing and implementing tax instruments for the tourism industry to finance nature conservation investments harmonises with target 19 that addresses encouraging innovative solutions for paying for ecosystem services.
- Target 21: Promoting 'best practices' for sustainable agriculture, active monitoring of fish stocks for sustainable exploitation, and organising workshops contribute to this target that addresses strengthening education, knowledge and monitoring, amongst other things.

3.4 Create the local conditions required to ensure sustainable results of nature policy in the Caribbean Netherlands (strategic goal 4)

"To ensure that the results of the NEPP CN are embedded in society, enabling conditions need to be created. As the challenges for nature management in the Caribbean Netherlands require a joint effort and collective sense of urgency by a wide range of stakeholders, awareness needs to be raised through ambitious education and training programmes. Furthermore, employment opportunities need to be created to achieve sufficient capacity for the execution of the activities that will follow from this plan. Finally, studying the effects of climate change and formulating mitigation and adaptation strategies will be crucial to achieve the long-term strategic goals."

Extract from: Natuur- en Milieubeleidsplan, p. 26

The implementation of nature policy benefits from joint efforts and a collective sense of urgency. This strategic goal describes the creation of conditions to this end, with which the commitment to nature restoration and conservation can be socially embedded. Strategic goal 4 is elaborated in three subgoals:

- **4.1 Create awareness through education and training**
  Increased awareness among the local population and the local and national institutions, a broadly shared sense of urgency, and the integration of knowledge and education are conditions for achieving each of the goals.
- **4.2 Create high-quality employment opportunities through investments in nature management**
  Creating employment opportunities as part of the implementation of the NEPP and establishing a local workforce with sufficient capacity and expertise, thus ensuring that the commitment to nature conservation also has a socio-economic impact and enjoys wider support.
- **4.3 Develop a structural research agenda to build a permanent knowledge base for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature in the Caribbean Netherlands**

Collecting knowledge by developing a research agenda and monitoring and assessing nature and environmental policy, and filling gaps in knowledge, such as on the local effects of climate change on marine and terrestrial ecosystems in the Caribbean Netherlands. The latter sub-target will be addressed jointly by the islands and not further elaborated in the implementation agendas for each island.

The table below displays the degree to which strategic goal 4 of the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands contributes to the overarching goals (2050) and targets (2030) of the GBF. An explanation is provided below the table.

NEPP target	Source	Contribution NEPP target Source to global objective	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																					
			T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
4. Create the local conditions required to ensure sustainable results of nature policy in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas	Goal D																							
4.1. Create awareness through education and training	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas										H							M				L	L		
4.1.1 Education and training	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas																	M				L	L		
4.1.2 Awareness	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas										H							M				L	L		
4.2. Create high-quality employment opportunities through investments in nature management	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas										H		M									M			
4.3. Develop a structural research agenda to build a permanent knowledge base for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas																					L	L		
NEPP contribution to target yes/no																									

Strategic goal 4 contributes specifically to the following GBF targets:

- Target 9: By coupling the implementation of nature projects to the creation of local employment opportunities, including providing the required training (and possibly focusing on hard-to-employ people), nature conservation will also have socio-economic advantages.
- Target 16: Education and awareness-raising campaigns can help local people and tourists to make sustainable choices, for instance by educating them about the importance of a healthy water and soil system, or the circular economy, and how they can contribute to these, or by focusing on reducing litter or food waste. This includes education programmes on all NEPP themes at various levels (nursery, primary and secondary schools, youth in general, the local community in general), and specifically targeting policymakers and volunteers/guides working in nature areas, amongst others.
- GBF target 20: This particularly concerns strengthening capacity building through the development of education and knowledge (particularly sub-target 4.1) and a joint research agenda (4.3).
- Target 21: Education and training contributes to making data, knowledge and information available and strengthening awareness and education. The NEPP and the implementation programmes specifically address education programmes on all NEPP themes at various levels (nursery, primary and secondary schools), as well as specific target groups such as policymakers and tourists.

B Other GBF targets and existing policies

As mentioned earlier, the NEPP CN contributes to 17 of the 23 targets. This section assesses the extent to which the remaining six targets are addressed in other existing policies. It concerns the following targets:

- Target 12. Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity
- Target 13. Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge
- Target 15. Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts
- Target 17. Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology
- Target 18. Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity
- Targets 22 & 23. Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all; Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action.

The table below displays the degree to which other Dutch policies contribute to the overarching goals (2050) and targets (2030) of the GBF. An explanation is provided below the table.

NEPP target	Source	Contribution to global objectives	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
OTHER EXISTING POLICIES			T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs														M											
Policy document 'Sources of Existence', Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality															L										
Nagoya Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality															L										
Policy agenda for the financial sector, Ministry of Finance																	L								
Cartagena Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																			L						
Assessment methodology, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (Letter to Parliament DGNV/27398258, 29 August 2023)																				L					
Feminist Foreign Policy (government wide)																								L	L
TOTAL contribution of policy to targets yes/no																									

Target 12 *Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity*

The measures for 'greening and blueing' the urbanised areas of the Caribbean Netherlands are primarily described in the Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands. This programme states, amongst other things:

- That space on the islands in the Caribbean Netherlands is limited. To safeguard sustainable development, an important part of all spatial decision-making is to assess whether the available space (both above and below ground) is used efficiently and effectively. It is also important that all new projects are constructed using sustainable methods to minimise the impact on the living environment.
- To ensure a liveable and attractive environment for people of all ages, residential neighbourhoods must have accessible facilities, be accessible themselves, and must offer plenty of greenery. In addition, plenty of greenery in the built environment improves resilience against heat, floods and other effects of climate change.
- The Dutch government draws up recommendations and/or guidelines for the level of facilities in residential areas, including green spaces, in consultation with public entities. Spatial development plans that provide for the construction of new housing must justify the availability and accessibility of public utilities and other facilities for a healthy living environment in the immediate vicinity of the new housing.
- Due to climate change, the islands may increasingly face periods of drought or excessive rainfall, which could lead to a higher flood and erosion risk. The islands need to be made water resilient. Spatial development plans must therefore justify how they take account of the effects of rainfall on the risk of flooding and erosion and on water quality. The justification is based on a water management plan and wastewater management plan to be adopted by the relevant public entities. The justification indicates how the various water aspects (catchment, infiltration and drainage) are managed and what the intended results are.

The Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands provides the following guidelines for nature-based development:

- Nature is present or can develop in built-up areas. Good spatial plans provide for the creation of ecological corridors in these areas, helping to strengthen the island's ecological network. This subsequently reinforces natural values on the entire island and improves the functioning of the individual nature areas. In addition, developing natural or green areas in urban areas contributes to the quality of the living environment and climate resilience, for example by improving water management and preventing heat stress. The 'housing deals' and/or housing agreements pay specific attention to nature-based construction.
- For spatial development plans, this entails providing for new functions or the expansion of existing functions in built-up areas and justifying how existing and potential natural values are reinforced.

Target 13 *Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge*

In 2002, the Dutch government adopted the policy document 'Sources of Existence'. This policy memorandum serves as a guideline for government programmes and activities involving genetic resources. The main objective of the policy is formulated as "the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, and the just sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources".
As a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which came into force in 1993, the Netherlands recognises the national sovereignty of countries with regard to their genetic resources and fulfils its obligations under the Convention. At the same time, it seeks to ensure, as much as possible, unrestricted access to, and the exchange of, genetic material, within and between countries, for the purposes of knowledge development and to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
The 'Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the Convention on Biological Diversity' (Nagoya Protocol) came into force in 2014. The Netherlands has been Party to this Protocol since 2016. The CBD and the Nagoya Protocol are important international agreements on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) involving the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

The agreements under the Nagoya Protocol also apply to Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. Those islands are subject to the Principles of Nature Management and Protection (BES) Act. The Nagoya Protocol is not yet specifically mentioned in this Act. However, the Act does incorporate the rules for the implementation of the Biodiversity Convention. The Biodiversity Convention is the parent treaty of the Nagoya Protocol. The extent to which adaptation of this Act is desirable to implement the Protocol on the islands will be investigated. In addition, the islands can already benefit from the fact that the Netherlands promotes free access to genetic resources and freely shares materials from its own gene banks with users.

Target 15 *Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts*

The transition to a climate-neutral, circular and nature-based economy requires a new way of thinking about the role of business and the financial sector. The way they carry out their activities and provide funding can have a significant positive or negative impact on biodiversity. The transition to a nature-based economy offers opportunities to develop new revenue models and improve competitiveness.
To this end, the government encourages businesses and financial institutions to monitor, report and improve their biodiversity impacts, dependencies and risks. The government actively contributes to this target with the Ministry of Finance's Policy Agenda for the Financial Sector to ensure that measurement and reporting methods are harmonised globally and made mandatory at the EU level. The government's commitment is to ensure that such legislation is properly implemented, that a broad concept of sustainability is applied so that biodiversity can be improved in line with climate legislation, and that businesses and financial institutions take greater account of synergies and trade-offs between sustainability goals. It is also important that positive impacts on biodiversity offer greater rewards, while negative impacts become more unattractive.

This policy and commitment also applies generally to the Caribbean Netherlands. However, further steps are required to fully meet target 15. SMEs are a particularly important target group of the Caribbean Netherlands. In consultation with public entities, it will be identified what is needed to encourage and, where necessary, facilitate the business community in this transition.

Target 17 *Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology*

NThere are laws and regulations governing biotechnology to ensure human, animal and environmental safety. The government monitors whether researchers use biotechnology in accordance with the law.
The regulations for biotechnology (genetically modified organisms, or GMOs) safeguard human, animal and environmental safety.

The Netherlands has fully implemented the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity in cooperation with the EU. This Protocol aims to *"contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements."*

The European Netherlands thus meets target 17. This is a good foundation for biosafety in the Caribbean Netherlands. The Cartagena Protocol does not currently apply to Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. The implementation of the Cartagena Protocol will be explored in consultation with public entities.

Target 18 *Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity*
The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) is leading the way with the 'Effects of LNV instruments on nature and biodiversity' quick scan (Letter to Parliament DGNV/27398258, 29 August 2023). Together with other departments and knowledge institutions, the Ministry commissioned the development of a method to assess the biodiversity impact, both positive and negative, of public financial incentives. The intention is to start improving the sustainability of, and reforming and phasing out harmful elements of, the Ministry's financial incentives in 2025. This will involve close cooperation with the 'Nature Inclusive Collective'. After the ministries of LNV and BZK have conducted a preliminary survey, other public authorities will also be able to apply the developed assessment method. LNV and the Nature Inclusive Collective will encourage this and also engage with the public entities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba to deploy this assessment method.

Targets 22 & 23 *Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all; Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action*
The Netherlands is working towards more participation in decision-making, which is needed to enable the transition to a sustainable food system, within Earth's limits. This means continually checking whether the right parties are involved in decision-making, including women, young people and small businesses. Consultations with public entities will explore the extent to which additional steps are needed to meet this target.

Annexes

Annex 2.I Stakeholders consulted for the development of the NEPP of the Caribbean Netherlands

The following parties were involved in the development of the Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030:

Area	Organisation
Bonaire	STINAPA Bonaire
Bonaire	Ban Bonaire Bek
Bonaire	Blue destination
Bonaire	Bonaire Wild Bird Rehab
Bonaire	BonBerde
Bonaire	Boneiru Duradero
Bonaire	BONHATA
Bonaire	Cargill
Bonaire	CARIBSS
Bonaire	Clean Coast Bonaire
Bonaire	Coral Reef Foundation Bonaire
Bonaire	DCNA
Bonaire	Public Entity of Bonaire
Bonaire	Dive Friends
Bonaire	ULTRASOUND
Bonaire	ECHO Foundation
Bonaire	Kopibon (Fishermen cooperative)
Bonaire	Kriabon (food in general)
Bonaire	Mangazina di Rei Cultural Park & Learning Centre
Bonaire	OLB-DRO
Bonaire	Piskabon
Bonaire	Reef Renewal Bonaire
Bonaire	Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire
Bonaire	STCB
Bonaire	STINAPA
Bonaire	TCB
Bonaire	UNESCO National Committee Representative
Bonaire	WWF-NL
Sint Eustatius	Public Entity of Sint Eustatius

Area	Organisation
Sint Eustatius	Caribbean Measurements technology
Sint Eustatius	CMT
Sint Eustatius	CNSI
Sint Eustatius	ECPHF / STENAPA
Sint Eustatius	Golden Rock Divers
Sint Eustatius	Royal HaskoningDHV
Sint Eustatius	Knippenga
Sint Eustatius	Made in Statia
Sint Eustatius	NSI CN
Sint Eustatius	NuStar
Sint Eustatius	Scripps Institute of Oceanography
Sint Eustatius	Scubaqua
Sint Eustatius	Sint Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research
Sint Eustatius	Sint Eustatius Monuments Foundation
Sint Eustatius	Sint Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation
Sint Eustatius	Statia Harbour
Sint Eustatius	STENAPA
Saba	Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG)
Saba	Brigadoon
Saba	Juliana Hotel
Saba	Public entity of Saba
Saba	Public Works & Sanitation
Saba	Rock wind sun
Saba	Saba archaeological society
Saba	Saba Conservation Foundation
Saba	Saba Deep Dive Center
Saba	Saba Health Care Foundation
Saba	Saba Roads and Construction
Saba	Samford University
Saba	SCF - Saba Bank
Saba	Scouts place, Saba divers
Saba	Sea and Learn
Saba	Tourist Office
Saba	Windward Roads
Regional	CBS CN
Regional	CNSI
Regional	Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA)
Regional	Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences
Regional	IUCN and Reptiles and Aquarium at the Milwaukee County Zoo
Regional	Ministry of the Interior
Regional	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Area	Organisation
Regional	Ministry of Defence
Regional	Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management
Regional	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Regional	Naturalis Biodiversity Center
Regional	NIOZ - Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
Regional	Ravon
Regional	RCN
Regional	RCN Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment
Regional	RCN Ministry of Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality
Regional	RCN Ministry of Finance
Regional	TNO
Regional	University of Amsterdam
Regional	Utrecht University
Regional	VU Amsterdam
Regional	Wageningen University & Research
Regional	WWF

Annex 2.II
Overview of the relationship between NEPP targets and GBF targets

Purpose	Source		Contribution to global goals	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																					
				T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
1 Reverse the trend of coral reef degradation to create healthy and resilient coral reefs to help ensure well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		Goal A, Goal B																						
1.1 Controlling erosion and run-off	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			H	M	L	M				M		M	M			M								
1.2 Waste and wastewater management to improve water quality	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas				M		M			H							M		H				L		
1.3 Coral reef restoration	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			M	H		M							M								L			
2 Restore and conserve the unique habitats and species in the Caribbean Netherlands for current and future generations	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		Goal A, Goal B																						
2.1 Conservation and restoration of key habitats	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			H	H	H	M				M			M									L		
2.2 Conservation of keystone and flagship species	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas						H															M			
2.3 Prevent new and control established invasive species	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			H	M		M		H																
3 Sustainable use of land and water for the development of the local economy	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		Goal A, Goal B																						
3.1 Invest in sustainable fisheries	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			M	H	M	H	H	M			M	H	M										L		
3.1 Tourism industry in balance with nature conservation	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			M	H					L				H								L			
3.3 Invest in sustainable local food production	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas			M	M					L			M	M					L					L		
4 Create the enabling conditions for effective nature management and sustainable use of nature in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas		Goal D																						
4.1 Create awareness through education and training	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas											H							M				L	L	
4.1.1 Education and training	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas																		M				L	L	
4.1.2 Awareness	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas											H							M				L	L	
4.2 Create employment opportunities through investments in nature	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas											H											M		
4.3 Develop a structural research agenda to build a permanent knowledge base for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature in the Caribbean Netherlands	Nature and Environment Policy Plan of the Caribbean Netherlands 2020-2030 (NEPP CN) and the three implementation agendas																						L	L	

Purpose	Source		Contribution to global goals	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
				T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
Purpose	**Source**		**Contribution to global goals**	**Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)**																						
NEPP contribution to target yes/no																										
Other existing policies																										
Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs															M											
Policy document 'Sources of Existence', Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																L										
Nagoya Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																L										
Policy agenda for the financial sector, Ministry of Finance																		L								
Cartagena Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																				L						
Assessment methodology, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (Letter to House of Representatives DGNV/27398258, 29 August 2023)																					L					
Feminist Foreign Policy (government wide)																									L	L
TOTAL contribution of policy to targets yes/no																										

Annex 2.III
Overview of the relationship between other existing policies and GBF targets

Purpose	Source		Contribution to global goals	Contribution to global targets (high, medium, low)																						
				T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23
Other existing policies																										
Draft Spatial Development Programme of the Caribbean Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs															M											
Policy document 'Sources of Existence', Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																L										
Nagoya Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																L										
Policy agenda for the financial sector, Ministry of Finance																		L								
Cartagena Protocol, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality																				L						
Assessment methodology, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (Letter to House of Representatives DGNV/27398258, 29 August 2023)																					L					
Feminist Foreign Policy (government wide)																								L	L	
TOTAL contribution of policy to targets yes/no																										

Annex 2.IV NEPP and implementation agendas

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework comprises a detailed monitoring framework consisting of a set of indicators. These indicators are used to follow progress towards the framework's goals and targets. The monitoring framework includes 'headline' indicators that are recommended for use in national, regional and global monitoring, and more detailed 'component' indicators and 'complementary' indicators. The various indicators were still being negotiated in May 2024, so they are still subject to change.

This annex provides an overview of the headline indicators per target, as initially defined in the GBF. The component and complementary indicators5 are not included in this overview.

Table 1. Headline indicators per target, as initially defined in the GBF.

Target	Headline indicatoren
Target 1 Plan and Manage all Areas To Reduce Biodiversity Loss	A.1 A.1 Red List of Ecosystems A.2 Extent of natural ecosystems 1.1 Per cent of land and seas covered by biodiversity-inclusive spatial plans
Target 2 Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	2.2 Area under restoration
Target 3 Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	3.1 Coverage of protected areas and OECMs
Target 4 Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	A.3 Red list Index A.4 The proportion of populations within species with an effective population size > 500
Target 5 Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species	5.1 Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
Target 6 Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact	6.1 Rate of invasive alien species establishment
Target 7 Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity	7.1 Index of coastal eutrophication potential 7.2 Pesticide environment concentration
Target 8 Minimise the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience	-
Target 9 Manage Wild Species Sustainably To Benefit People	9.1 Benefits from the sustainable use of wild species 9.2 Percentage of the population in traditional occupations
Target 10 Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry	10.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture 10.2 Progress towards sustainable forest management
Target 11 Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People	B.1 Services provided by ecosystems
Target 12 Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity	12.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is green/blue space for public use for all
Target 13 Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge	C.1 Indicator on monetary benefits received C.2 Indicator on non-monetary benefits

Target	Headline indicatoren
Target 14 Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level	-
Target 15 Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts	15.1 Number of companies reporting on disclosures of risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity
Target 16 Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices To Reduce Waste and Overconsumption	-
Target 17 Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology	-
Target 18 Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity	18.1 Positive incentives in place to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use 18.2 Value of subsidies and other incentives harmful to biodiversity that have been eliminated, phased out or reformed
Target 19 Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity From all Sources, Including $30 Billion Through International Finance	D.1 International public funding, including official development assistance for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems D.2 Domestic public funding of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems D.3 Private funding (domestic and international) of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems
Target 20 Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity	-
Target 21 Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible To Guide Biodiversity Action	21.1 Indicator on biodiversity information for the monitoring the global biodiversity framework
Targets 22 & 23 Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all; Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action	-