

10th EbA Knowledge Day Summary Report

Hosted by
IUCN & UNEP, under the FEBA & GAN Networks
6th June 2024, Hybrid
View the full recording [here](#)



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Background

Protecting and restoring nature has been broadly acknowledged as a transversal way to address the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation contributing to human well-being and development. Nature as an enabler of integrated action to achieve the implementation of the 3 Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD) is highlighted in multiple decisions as well as joint statements, such as the one made under the Rio Conventions Pavilion Initiative and its [Restoring Balance with Nature campaign](#).

Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) is a nature-based approach that harnesses biodiversity and ecosystem services to reduce vulnerability and build resilience of human communities to climate change. EbA is defined as the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change (CBD, [2009](#) & [2010](#)).

EbA encompasses a broad set of approaches that include the management of ecosystems and their services that help to address climate change impacts, biodiversity loss and land degradation together in a coherent, synergetic and holistic manner.

The 10th EbA Knowledge Day illuminated EbA action and illustrated its inherent benefits in supporting the synergistic attainment of goals under the Rio Conventions. Several sessions centred on cross-cutting topics of the Conventions were held during the EbA Knowledge Day. The purpose of these sessions was to examine current collaborative actions, identify gaps that exist, and hold an open forum to identify improvement areas. The event convened representatives from across the Rio Conventions, national policymakers, and practitioners to foster collective discourse and spur the advancement of the EbA agenda to achieve integrated climate and nature goals.

Opening & Welcome

Ali Raza Rizvi, Global Head for Climate Change and Energy Transition at IUCN, opened the 10th Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Knowledge Day by celebrating a decade of achievements in EbA. Mr. Rizvi highlighted that EbA strategies are now embedded in major international environmental agreements, including the UNFCCC, CBD, and CCD. Mr Rizvi articulated the day's objective as exploring how EbA can effectively bridge the three Rio Conventions, fostering synergies that move beyond silos. He stressed that a more integrated approach is essential for maximizing investments in biodiversity and climate resilience, and he expressed the benefit of developing high-quality EbA initiatives to this end. He also pointed out that while much of the focus has been on the theoretical benefits of EbA, there is a critical need to translate these ideas into actionable, standardized practices. Mr Rizvi concluded by introducing the day's structure, including two panel discussions with representatives from convention bodies, international organizations and national policymakers, and five breakout sessions led by FEBA & GAN Members designed to dive deeper into both the policy and practical aspects of EbA.

Nina Alsen, Senior Policy Officer, "European and International Adaptation to Climate Change", BMUV, provided an insightful overview of the role of EbA within Germany's international climate finance commitments. Ms Alsen highlighted the German government's dedication to EbA through the International Climate Initiative (IKI), which was established in 2008 to support climate and biodiversity projects in developing and transitioning countries. She noted that IKI has funded over 60 EbA projects with a substantial financial commitment of approximately €450 million. Ms Alsen emphasized that EbA measures are not just about immediate climate adaptation but also about offering long-term benefits such as improving livelihoods, generating income, and maintaining ecosystem services. She spoke about the increasing urgency of addressing climate change as extreme weather events become more frequent and severe, citing recent floods in Brazil and droughts in Southern Africa as examples. Ms Alsen praised the EbA Knowledge Day as a significant event in advancing the EbA agenda and urged participants to build on this momentum to strengthen resilience and integrate EbA into national and international policy frameworks. She also pointed out that EbA approaches are vital for achieving the objectives of the three Rio Conventions.

Mirey Atallah, Head of the Adaptation and Resilience Branch, Climate Change Division, UNEP, delivered a thought-provoking address that reflected on a decade of EbA efforts. Ms Atallah began by acknowledging the long journey of the EbA community, emphasizing that the lessons learned from both successes and failures are invaluable. She encouraged a candid examination of past experiences, arguing that failures should be seen as sources of critical lessons rather than merely setbacks. Ms Atallah highlighted UNEP's unique position in promoting community-based EbA projects through the Global Ecosystem-Based Adaptation Fund, which, with support from the Norwegian government, has funded around 40 projects with a goal of reaching 200. She stressed that the real aim of these projects is not only to provide immediate funding but also to scale up successful approaches and integrate them into broader policy frameworks at local, national, and global levels. Ms Atallah proposed that the future of EbA should focus on preparing ecosystems for forthcoming climate scenarios rather than simply restoring past conditions. She urged the community to think about how to incorporate ecosystem services into urban planning and explore how these services can mitigate climate impacts. Ms Atallah also addressed the need for innovative, forward-looking strategies that recognize the limitations of traditional restoration efforts and advocate for a holistic view of ecosystem functionality and resilience.

In his follow-up remarks, Mr Rizvi reflected on the interventions and reiterated the importance of both acknowledging successes and learning from failures in the field of EbA. He acknowledged the substantial investments made in EbA initiatives, citing that over \$1.5

billion has been committed by GEF, GCF, and other donors to support these efforts. Mr Rizvi underlined that the community's responsibility extends beyond celebrating achievements to also addressing the dynamic and evolving nature of climate change. Mr Rizvi advocated for a rigorous approach to evaluating EbA projects, suggesting that a formal "post-mortem" analysis of both successes and failures could lead to more effective future strategies. He highlighted that while no single solution will be perfect, there is significant value in understanding trade-offs and adapting to a constantly changing climate. Mr Rizvi concluded by wishing participants a fruitful and rewarding day ahead.



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Panel Discussions

High-Level Panel

The Panel discussed on-going efforts across the Conventions as well as by Member States and high-level initiatives to bring together the work on climate, biodiversity and land degradation in an integrated manner through nature.

*Moderator: Ali Raza Rizvi, Head, Climate Change and Energy Transition, IUCN
Rojina Manandhar, Team Lead, Nairobi Work Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat
Tristan Tyrrell, Programme Officer, Biodiversity and Climate Change, SCBD
Satu Ravola, Head of the UNCCD Evaluation Office
Tamer Abogharara, Advisor to the Minister of the Environment of the Arab Republic of Egypt (ENACT Partnership)
Marcia Toledo, Director, Adaptation and Resilience, High-Level Climate Champions*



Ali Raza Rizvi opened the session by posing a critical question to the group: How can we ensure integrated action across policy, partnerships and beyond to tackle the intertwined challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, and land degradation? He emphasized that the traditional siloed approaches have often failed to address these issues comprehensively. Mr Rizvi highlighted the need for concurrent strategies that not only address these environmental challenges but also enhance the resilience of both natural ecosystems and

human communities. Mr Rizvi encouraged the Speakers to discuss how we can shift from isolated efforts to a more cohesive and integrated approach.

Rojina Manandhar provided a detailed reflection on her experiences from the UNFCCC perspective. She began by expressing her pleasure to be part of the panel and to learn from the experts present. Ms Manandhar shared her insights from the recent mountain expert dialogue on climate change, convened under the UNFCCC's chair, where discussions underscored the importance of local solutions, including NbS and EbA, for enhancing ecosystem health and resilience. Ms Manandhar highlighted that the UNFCCC's historical work, such as the Nairobi Work Programme, has been instrumental in developing technical frameworks for implementing NbS and EbA in national adaptation plans, particularly for small island developing states and less developed countries. Ms Manandhar stressed the need for political commitment from governments to integrate ecosystems, biodiversity, and forest considerations into national actions, supported by historical successes like the COP outcomes that have driven high-level ambitions for climate resilience.

Satu Ravola offered a comprehensive overview of the UNCCD's approach to land management and degradation. Ms Ravola began by briefly explaining the UNCCD's role in transforming land management practices to meet climate change and biodiversity goals. Ms Ravola discussed the current state of global land degradation, noting that estimates indicate a loss of 100 million hectares of land per year, which is equivalent to three times the size of Germany annually. This stark statistic underscores the urgency of addressing land degradation. Ms Ravola described the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) framework, which includes a hierarchical approach to avoid, reduce, and restore land degradation respectively. Ms Ravola highlighted several global initiatives such as the Bonn Challenge and the G20's commitment to restore 1.5 billion hectares of land by 2030, and pointed out that while the LDN targets are ambitious, they are achievable and supported by a global trend towards land restoration. Ms Ravola emphasized that transforming land management practices is essential for meeting climate and biodiversity targets and called for continued commitment and action to achieve LDN goals.

Tristan Tyrrell addressed the role of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in promoting EbA as a bridge between the UNFCCC and CBD. He acknowledged that while EbA has been a significant point of convergence between these conventions, its practical implementation remains challenging. Mr Tyrrell discussed the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), particularly the 30x30 target which aims equitably conserve at least 30% of the Earth by 2030. Mr Tyrrell noted that while this target is crucial, it alone will not fully address the biodiversity crisis. Mr Tyrrell argued that EbA offers a practical approach to achieve both adaptation and mitigation goals and is a means to engage a wide range of stakeholders in conservation efforts. He also discussed the importance of integrating EbA into national policies and the need for effective implementation of these strategies at the local level. Mr Tyrrell highlighted that the updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), along with the upcoming revision of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) target renewal process, present opportunities for aligning and scaling up efforts to address climate change and biodiversity loss. He also underscored that while there are many successful local projects, scaling these efforts and achieving coherence across different levels and sectors remains a challenge.

Marcia Toledo provided an overview of the role and activities of the UN High-Level Climate Champions. Ms Toledo explained that the Champions were established as part of the Paris Agreement in 2015 with a mandate to engage non-party stakeholders such as cities, regions, businesses, and civil society in climate action. Ms Toledo detailed the work of the High-Level Champions, including the "Race to Resilience" campaign, which tracks adaptation commitments from various actors and aims to increase resilience for 4 billion people by 2030. She highlighted the Sharm el-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, launched in 2022, which seeks to drive the convergence of adaptation solutions and mobilize investment for

proven approaches. Ms Toledo explained that the agenda focuses on key areas ('impact systems') such as oceans, water systems, and human settlements, aiming to bridge gaps between scientific knowledge and practical application. Ms Toledo stressed the importance of ensuring that these solutions are scalable and effective, and that the challenges of adaptation are addressed through a collaborative approach involving a broad range of stakeholders.

Tamer Abogharara opened by providing a synopsis of the ENACT Partnership. Mr Abogharara explained ENACT was launched at COP27 by Egypt and Germany with IUCN as the secretariat, the ENACT Partnership represents a bold initiative aimed at leveraging NbS to address the intertwined global challenges of climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity loss. ENACT was established with a vision to not only tackle these crises but also to integrate and connect the three Rio Conventions through a cohesive NbS framework. Mr Abogharara informed participants that, in its first year, ENACT made significant strides by expanding its network to over 15 global actors, including 8 major donor countries, UN bodies, and representatives from every continent. A notable achievement was the release of the inaugural *State of ENACT NbS Goals* report at UNEA-6, which outlined current capacities for tracking ENACT's NbS Goals and showcased successful implementations. ENACT also played a pivotal role in global policy dialogues, including contributing to the COP28 Joint Statement on Climate, Nature & People, which calls for integrated solutions across climate, biodiversity, and human well-being. Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, Mr Abogharara stated ENACT's focus will be on broadening its network to include more low- and middle-income countries and private sector partners, refining the *NbS Goals Report* with enhanced metrics, and establishing thematic workstreams to provide technical support for policy development, financial mechanisms, and data management. Central to ENACT's mission is its ambition to create synergies among the Rio Conventions through NbS, aiming for an integrated approach that harmonizes efforts across climate action, biodiversity conservation, and land degradation. Mr Abogharara concluded by urging states and non-state actors to join forces to advance this integrated NbS agenda, emphasizing the need for collective and inclusive action to meet the Rio Conventions' targets and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Technical Panel

The Panel explored existing trends, knowledge and action at the climate, biodiversity and land nexus, particularly at the national level, and set the scene for interactive discussion in the breakout sessions.

Moderator: Jessica Troni, Chief Climate Change Adaptation Unit, UNEP
Adriana Bonilla, Head of the Directorate for Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica
Antwi-Boasiako Amoah, Ag. Director, Climate Vulnerability and Adaptation, NAP Project Coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana
Jeffrey Jianfeng Qi, Policy Advisor, Resilience Programme, IISD
Karina Salinas, Coordinator of the Adaptation Unit, Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, Ecuador
Kathryn Bimson, Programme Officer, Water, Wetlands and Nature-based Solutions for Climate, Asia Regional Office, IUCN

Jessica Troni set the stage for the discussion by outlining the session's objective: to explore how national strategies for climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity can be

integrated and implemented effectively. Ms Troni explained that the current state of climate adaptation efforts is fragmented, with public funding being scarce and often directed towards competing agendas rather than coordinated action. Ms Troni also shared practical experiences from UNEP, such as the challenges of balancing agricultural and conservation goals, citing an example where the Forestry Service in one project planted monocultures of teak for conservation, which failed to support biodiversity or manage climate extremes effectively. Ms Troni concluded her introduction by presenting the panellists and outlining the discussion's focus on exploring these issues through their diverse experiences.

Jeffrey Qi provided a comprehensive overview of current trends and opportunities in Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA). Mr Qi emphasized that while the significance of biodiversity in climate adaptation is widely recognized, there is a notable gap between acknowledging this importance and implementing concrete EbA actions. Mr Qi highlighted that 74% of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) submitted to the UNFCCC mention EbA, but only 56% include specific, actionable measures. Mr Qi identified four key ecosystems where EbA actions are most frequently implemented: forests, freshwater systems, coastal and marine environments, and grasslands. For each ecosystem, he provided examples of common EbA actions such as reforestation, river basin management, and mangrove restoration. Mr Qi also discussed the potential for greater alignment between NAPs and other international agreements like the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and the UNCCD. Mr Qi advocated for leveraging these synergies to avoid duplication of efforts and optimize the use of limited resources, calling for a strategic update in how EbA actions are integrated into national adaptation planning processes.

Karina Salinas shared insights into Ecuador's approach to integrating EbA into national policies. Ms Salinas discussed the complexities of adapting EbA concepts within the context of a developing country, emphasizing that effective adaptation requires addressing diverse local conditions rather than applying a one-size-fits-all solution. Ms Salinas explained that Ecuador's National Adaptation Plan encompasses six sectors: Water Heritage; Food Sovereignty, Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries; Natural Heritage; Health; Productive and Strategic Sectors; and Human Settlements, as well as new or ongoing programs and projects in those sectors. Ms Salinas highlighted the importance of integrating EbA into broader adaptation strategies rather than focusing on isolated issues. She shared how Ecuador combines various activities such as irrigation systems and natural resource management into a cohesive approach to tackle climate change. Ms Salinas stressed that successful policy development must involve understanding local realities and engaging with communities to ensure that national policies translate into effective local actions.

Adriana Bonilla offered a comprehensive overview of how her country has successfully transitioned from a period of severe deforestation to becoming a leader in EbA. Ms Bonilla began by highlighting Costa Rica's 1987 status as the country with the highest deforestation rate in the world, largely driven by an economy heavily dependent on livestock production. Ms Bonilla explained that Costa Rica's approach to reversing this trend began with a strategic shift towards preserving and managing ecosystems, which was initially motivated by the recognition of the environmental damage caused by unsustainable practices. Over the years, Costa Rica has embraced a model that integrates nature conservation with economic development through nature-based tourism. She emphasized that although Costa Rica's land area is relatively small—51,000 square kilometres, making it just twice the size of Central America's smallest country, El Salvador—it encompasses a rich tapestry of micro-regions with diverse climates and biodiversity. This complexity necessitates tailored adaptation strategies for different regions, balancing environmental protection with local livelihoods. Ms Bonilla illustrated how the country has implemented successful policies such as the Payment for Ecosystem Services program, established in 1997, which has been instrumental in preserving biological corridors and reducing deforestation. She stressed that such policies are not without costs and require public support and understanding to be effective. Ms Bonilla also discussed the role of laws and institutions in maintaining long-term

adaptation efforts, emphasizing that for adaptation measures to be sustainable, they must be embedded in a robust legal and policy framework and involve local communities in the process. Through the example of the Scaling Up Ecosystem-based Adaptation Measures in rural Latin America (EbA LAC) project and other initiatives, Ms Bonilla demonstrated how Costa Rica's approach to EbA has evolved into a permanent and adaptive program that continues to address both current and future climate challenges.

Antwi-Boasiako Amoah provided insights into Ghana's approach to integrating ecosystem-EbA into national policy frameworks. Dr Amoah began by connecting the current discourse on EbA to historical contexts, noting that the concept of EbA was introduced over a decade ago in Europe and has since evolved to address climate adaptation in various countries. Dr Amoah shared his experiences from being a pioneer in the EbA Task Force and the Adaptation Knowledge Network, where he worked on promoting EbA initiatives in Ghana. Dr Amoah described Ghana's multi-faceted policy landscape, which includes frameworks addressing biodiversity, climate change, and desertification through unified approaches. He detailed the role of the Ministry of Environment in coordinating efforts across these three conventions and the challenges of translating these global frameworks into effective national and local strategies. Dr Amoah emphasized that successful EbA policies in Ghana are based on the principle of connecting ecological health with human livelihoods, illustrating this with examples of how degraded lands affect both the environment and community well-being. He stressed the need for a coherent and practical national adaptation plan that not only meets international requirements but also delivers tangible benefits to communities. Dr Amoah outlined Ghana's approach to developing a national adaptation plan that includes diverse ecosystems and sub-national districts, aiming to address climate challenges through a structured and inclusive process. Dr. Amoah also discussed the importance of urban resilience, using the example of flooding in Accra to highlight the role of natural systems in managing climate risks and the need for effective urban planning and adaptation measures.

Kathryn Bimson shared her experiences with nature-based solutions and EbA in Southeast Asia. Ms Bimson's presentation focused on the practical aspects of implementing EbA measures in the region, drawing on lessons learned from projects in Thailand and Vietnam. Ms Bimson highlighted that while there is increasing awareness and interest in EbA, there remains a significant gap between understanding the concept and applying it effectively in practice. In Thailand, Ms Bimson discussed how the Office of the National Water Resources, together with IUCN and GIZ developed a guidebook for designing and implementing EbA measures in river basins. This guidebook offers both theoretical background and practical steps for creating EbA interventions, covering activities such as floodplain restoration and mangrove conservation. She emphasized the guidebook's role in providing sector-specific guidance and tools for local stakeholders to implement EbA strategies. Ms Bimson also shared a successful example from Vietnam's Mekong Delta, where the government shifted from a policy of flood exclusion to one that embraces natural flood cycles to enhance agricultural productivity and disaster resilience. This shift was supported by a cost-benefit analysis that demonstrated the financial and ecological advantages of restoring natural floodplains. Ms Bimson underscored the importance of using such case studies to inform future EbA projects and to advocate for nature-based solutions as effective alternatives to traditional engineering approaches. She concluded by discussing ongoing efforts to apply these lessons across the Greater Mekong sub-region, aiming to develop and scale successful EbA practices in diverse contexts.

Breakout Groups

Session One: Target Interlinkages and Policy Synergies between the Conventions merged with Inclusive and Cohesive Policy and Planning.

Leads: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Climate and Development Knowledge Network and Food and Agriculture Organization

Introduction

The session sought to consider the opportunities and challenges in using EbA as a means to drive inclusive and cohesive policy setting and implementation across the associated frameworks under the Rio Conventions.

The key questions to be explored were:

- What are the challenges?
- What are the opportunities for EbA to overcome challenges in this policy space, under CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD?
- What are the opportunities to integrate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)/rights-based approaches?
- What other means are available and/or necessary for the effective use of EbA?

Discussion Summary

The session opened with an overview of relevant global frameworks under the Rio Conventions, in particular noting the roles of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) under the CBD and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) under the UNFCCC. The recognition of the impacts on biodiversity loss and climate change on people was emphasised and therefore the necessity for ecosystem-based adaptation. The cross-cutting principles of the GBF – that include a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, the need for gender equality and intergenerational equity, and the use of human rights-based approaches – and the evolving bottom-up approach being put forward under the GGA all provide for people-centred action that leaves no-one behind.

A summary of the FEBA Working Group on Targets 8 & 11 was also provided, highlighting the role of EbA in both achieving those specific targets and the GBF as a whole, as well as the relevance to respective objectives under both UNFCCC and UNCCD.

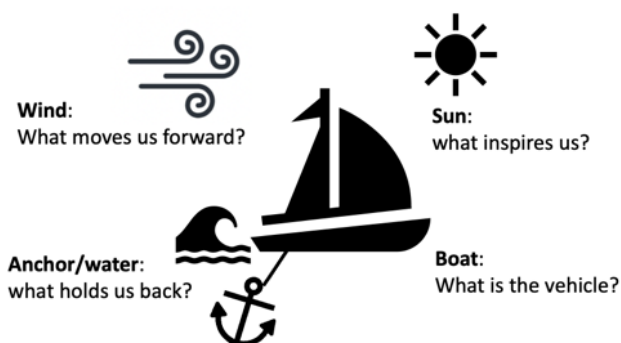


Figure 1: EbA action sailboat

The group then split into three discussion groups, each considering the opportunities, hindrances, entry points and inspiration to increase the recognition and use of EbA in both policies and their implementation, using the metaphor of a sailboat (figure 1) to capture participant perceptions. The conclusions are summarised in the table below:

<p>Entry points (vehicle)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBF and current revision processes • GGA development • NDC revision and NAP development processes - joint • CBD Voluntary Guidelines on EbA and Eco-DRR • 3 COPS in 2024- holding joint events • Locally led action 	<p>Hindrances (anchor/water)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sufficient understanding and recognition, both for the value of EbA and its limitations • Unnecessary jargon • Timescales for effectiveness & short-term thinking • Lack of political will • Vested interests to maintain the status quo • Fragmented/siloed and competitive sectors • Socio-political context of extreme inequality
<p>Opportunities (wind)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Adaptation Fund • NBSAP Accelerator Partnership & NDC Partnership • NAP Global Network • Nairobi Work Programme • Right-based approaches, including human-rights based approach • Co-designed and co-produced process for developing indicators that can be useful across conventions- role of EbA and its beneficial impacts • Increased finance and joint investment planning for all three Rio conventions. Quality and long-term funding • Locally led action & knowledge 	<p>Inspiration (sun)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of multiple values and diverse valuation processes (e.g. indigenous ontologies) • Global catalytic agendas (High-Level Champions, etc.) • Effective communication • Good practices & lessons learnt • Fostering imagination • Collective power

Recommendations & Follow-up Activities

- Continued work of the FEBA Working Group on Targets 8 & 11 to support the uptake of EbA in the implementation of the GBF.
 - Currently producing evidence-based knowledge product which synthesises current EbA knowledge and provides guidance for Parties on good practices for implementation.
- Actor mapping exercise to inform how the FEBA working group on Targets 8 & 11 can best communicate the outcomes of the work, across sectors, scales, conventions and associated actors needs and interests
- Submission of joint side-events at COP16 (CBD and UNCCD) & COP29 and look for opportunities at other events e.g. Summit of the Future, World Urban Forum to communicate the work

Links or references to relevant reports or other resources, and list any upcoming events, workshops, or opportunities for participation that are relevant to the themes discussed in the session:

- <https://friendsofeba.com/targets-8-11-of-the-kunming-montreal-global-biodiversity-framework/>
- [FAO-UNDP briefing note: National Adaptation Plans – An entry point for ecosystem-based adaptation](#)



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Session Two: Design and Access to Finance and Investment

Leads: United Nations Environment Programme, Adaptation Fund, International Climate Initiative

Introduction

The session opened with two lightening presentations covering the work of IKI and AF, delivered by representatives from the two financing entities:

- The International Climate Initiative (IKI) funds diverse mitigation and adaptation projects, focusing on advising policymakers, capacity building, technology partnerships, and innovative financial instruments for risk management. Key areas include mobilizing private finance for climate and biodiversity, providing financial support for loss and damage, and reducing harmful subsidies. For IKI-funded EbA projects, efforts aim to improve business models, support ecosystem health through payments for ecosystem services, establish public-private partnerships, and develop financing instruments, financial governance frameworks, and insurance solutions.
- Adaptation Fund (AF) provides 100% grant financing and offers several funding opportunities, such as the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) and a financing window for locally led adaptation initiatives. These opportunities can support innovative and community-driven projects, fostering local resilience and capacity building.

Discussion Summary

Following these presentations, five issues regarding finances EbA Projects were discussed among the group. These are summarized as follows:

1. **Weak Climate Rationale:** Many projects struggle to clearly articulate the specific adaptation benefits they provide to the community. Projects need to improve their communication, justification and rationale of how they address climate risks and enhance community resilience.
2. **Cost Effectiveness of Financing:** Adaptation solutions often rely on qualitative data, making it difficult to build a strong case for their cost-effectiveness. Projects need to incorporate more quantitative data to substantiate their cost-effectiveness.
3. **Sustainability:** While projects demonstrate effective nature-based solutions, there is a need to consider a broader range of solutions including integrate hybrid approaches that combine natural and engineered solutions e.g. green-grey infrastructure to enhance resilience and address evolving climate challenges.
4. **Failing Fast:** Rapid testing of solutions, or "failing fast," is crucial for innovation but can be difficult to secure funding for due to the perceived risks. It is essential to communicate the value of rapid iteration and learning from failures. Emphasizing the potential for accelerated innovation and the ability to quickly pivot and improve solutions can help attract funding.
5. **Limited public Financing:** There is a need for increased public financing and investment for early-stage adaptation interventions to support proof of concept, de-risk private sector investments, and ensure proper documentation and quantification.

A prime conversation theme was the potential of artificial intelligence in EbA projects. Participants discussed the following factors:

- *Reporting* - AI can enhance reporting by translating information into local or national languages, overcoming language barriers, and improving accuracy.
- *Decision Support Systems* - AI can aid in visualizing and understanding risks through data modeling, helping stakeholders make informed decisions.
- *Research* - AI can be used to analyze and model data, providing deeper insights into climate impacts and the effectiveness of adaptation strategies.
- *Community Engagement* - AI can help frame issues and facilitate engagement by presenting information in accessible formats and fostering interactive discussions.
- However, the use of AI raises concerns about *safeguards and intellectual property rights*. Clear guidelines and frameworks to ensure the ethical use of AI need to be established to protect community interests and intellectual property while maximizing the benefits of technological advancements in adaptation projects.

Recommendations & Follow-up Activities

- Artificial Intelligence can significantly enhance various aspects of EbA projects, including reporting accuracy, decision support, data analysis, and community engagement, while also addressing concerns about safeguards and intellectual property rights.
- EbA projects need to clearly articulate their specific adaptation benefits to the community, providing tangible examples and emphasizing how they address climate risks and enhance resilience. There is a crucial need for projects to incorporate more quantitative data to substantiate their cost-effectiveness, drawing on sources like local climate data, economic assessments, and historical project outcomes.
- Multisectoral collaboration from local to national levels is essential for designing effective adaptation projects. Embrace the "fail fast" approach to quickly find and implement innovative solutions, while addressing barriers to entry by ensuring local and national entities have access to finance. Promoting ownership and direct involvement in co-design can enhance project success and sustainability.

Links or references to relevant reports or other resources, and list any upcoming events, workshops, or opportunities for participation that are relevant to the themes discussed in the session:



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- <https://globalebafund.org/>
- <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/>
- <https://www.bezosearthfund.org/ai-climate-nature>
- <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/>

Session Three: EbA - Integrated action on the ground

Lead: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Introduction

The focus of the session was on cross-cutting entry points for integrated implementation across the Rio Conventions – illustrating EbA as an approach for integrated action, showcase practical examples of implementing integrated approaches in different ecosystems and socio-economic settings, highlighting best practices, challenges, and opportunities.

Discussion Summary

Synergies between the Rio Conventions have been presented as follows:

CBD: Healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are fundamental for climate regulation and combating desertification. Biodiversity provides resilience to climate change impacts, supports soil health and water cycles, crucial for preventing land degradation.

UNFCCC: Climate change impacts ecosystems and biodiversity. Preserving and restoring ecosystems (through reforestation, wetland restoration, etc.) can sequester carbon and mitigate climate change. Climate adaptation strategies benefit from integrating ecosystem conservation to enhance resilience.

UNCCD: Land degradation is exacerbated by climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Sustainable land management practices, such as agroforestry and sustainable agriculture, help conserve biodiversity and enhance climate resilience.

Participant discussions regarding the role of EbA centered on the following areas:

a) Enhancing Resilience

Ecosystems and human communities resilient to climate change impacts, reducing vulnerability to extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and changing climate patterns. Restoring wetlands to buffer against floods, maintaining mangroves for coastal protection, and conserving forests to stabilize soils and regulate water cycles.

b) Biodiversity Conservation

Promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, EbA supports the objectives of the CBD. It ensures that adaptation strategies do not compromise biodiversity but instead leverage it for greater effectiveness. Creating protected areas that serve as refuges for species while also providing ecosystem services like carbon sequestration and water purification.

c) Combating Desertification

EbA strategies contribute to sustainable land management practices that prevent and reverse land degradation, supporting the goals of the UNCCD. Agroforestry practices that improve soil health, increase water retention, and enhance agricultural productivity in drylands.

d) Climate Mitigation

While primarily focused on adaptation, many EbA strategies also contribute to climate mitigation by sequestering carbon in ecosystems. Reforestation and afforestation projects that absorb CO₂ and restore degraded lands. Provide a summary of the interventions, findings, and insights that emerged during the session.

Participants then express the following gaps and challenges:

- In general, adaptation efforts are too slow and not on track with the demands.
- Financial constraints impact on the ground implementation.
- Local governance (municipalities) for adaptation is weak.
- Lack of capacities on the ground.
- Temporal and geographical scale necessities in conflict with local administration.
- Measuring and monitoring of local EbA measures badly needed.
- Broader context versus local intervention.
- Risk of maladaptation.

Recommendations & Follow-up Activities

- Empowering constituencies and local leadership.
- Create more awareness around EbA.
- Promote successful EbA solutions.
- Showcase successful approaches to technical levels of governments.
- Building up capacities for local governance.
- Longer timeframes for financing efforts necessary.
- Ability to learn from bad experiences.
- More funding for community partners.
- Communication strategies at local level.

Those specifically related to FEBA actions were as follows:

- Publish more lessons learned.
- “Atlas” of member institutions activities.
- Connecting people around successful solutions.
- Strengthen Communities of Practice.
- Communicate EbA to different audiences.



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Links or references to relevant reports or other resources, and list any upcoming events, workshops, or opportunities for participation that are relevant to the themes discussed in the session:

- <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/37322.html>
- https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/download/ME-Guidebook_EbA.pdf

Session Four: Monitoring and impact evaluation (online only breakout group)

Lead: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Introduction

This session focused on monitoring integrated on-the-ground Ecosystem-based Adaptation actions, measuring and evaluating the outcomes and impacts of those actions. It highlighted the importance of bringing effective monitoring processes and frameworks, informed by evidence and best practices for enhancing resilience, to international policy dialogues.

Discussion questions shared:

1. How are you aligning your M&E practices with global frameworks? Are there any challenges?
2. Do you think that there are gaps between existing frameworks for impact evaluation and frameworks for bringing impact evaluations to the policy level?
3. How can we, as practitioners, address these gaps? What are some activities or recommendations?

Discussion Summary

Participants shared the various ways they incorporate existing frameworks and global mechanisms to their M&E practices. These included EbA Quality Criteria and Standard from the FEBA framework, action learning methodology and participatory analysis (involving all relevant stakeholders), IIED's EbA Effectiveness, international indicators (SDGs and Cap4EV). Some that were familiar with the Global EbA Fund also referenced its reporting framework.

The session then discussed gaps and challenges with aligning M&E practices and indicators to global frameworks. Participants shared that the overall lack of awareness around and mainstreaming of EbA indicators at the at all levels, especially the national and local level, is a severe limitation for designing M&E systems and implementing EbA projects. This opens the path from siloed approaches across sectors, overlooking key indicators, and challenges with time, resources and coordination with other actors. Limited knowledge of indicators and frameworks has also limited the mainstreaming of indicators at the institutional level, impacting work with partner organisations.

Recommendations & Follow-up Activities

Discussion summarized via Mural: [link here](#).

1. Impact evaluations should also be done by implementing and coordination teams: To address the key challenges of mainstreaming indicators at the institutional, national and local levels, project teams should self-evaluate their projects, allowing greater opportunities for learning amongst the actual implementing agency and their partners.
2. Develop indicators that reflect realities on the ground: Oftentimes, indicators from global frameworks are difficult to adapt to local contexts, creating gaps within project

M&E designs and difficulty contributing to discussions, such as the three Rio Conventions. Developing indicators at the global level that allow space for differing realities would address this challenge.

3. Adoption and customisation of existing indicators/frameworks to local contexts: Similar to the second recommendation, global frameworks should consider local contexts more heavily, as it can be difficult to apply, for instance the SDG indicators, to project contexts in a meaningful way.

Links or references to relevant reports or other resources, and list any upcoming events, workshops, or opportunities for participation that are relevant to the themes discussed in the session:

Existing frameworks discussed:

- [ME-Guidebook EbA.pdf \(adaptationcommunity.net\)](#)
- [Evaluating the impact of Nature-based Solutions: a handbook for practitioners - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(cbd.int\)](#)
- [Global goal on adaptation | UNFCCC](#)

Closing and Way Forward

In closing remarks, Ali Raza Rizvi expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the participation and contributions of all attendees throughout the 10th EbA Knowledge Day. Mr Rizvi began by acknowledging the rich exchange of experiences, challenges, and recommendations that had emerged during the discussions, and he emphasized the importance of taking these insights forward into actionable outcomes. Mr Rizvi extended an open invitation for participants to engage in FEBA working groups, proposing that these groups could be instrumental in advancing the recommendations from the day's discussions into concrete initiatives. Mr Rizvi suggested that participants consider leading efforts to develop knowledge briefs, issue briefs, technical briefs, or policy briefs that could be showcased at upcoming COPs. Mr Rizvi assured that FEBA is prepared to facilitate these efforts, with a focus on ensuring that the work conducted extends beyond a single event to have lasting impact. Reflecting on past experiences, Mr Rizvi advised participants to commit to initiatives that align with their own work programs and objectives, as these are more likely to yield successful outcomes and create meaningful, lasting impacts. He highlighted that over the past decade, the most effective knowledge products and projects have emerged from efforts that were driven by genuine interest and primary objectives of the involved stakeholders. Mr Rizvi also acknowledged that while FEBA will provide support and facilitate connections, the success of future endeavours will depend on the leadership and initiative of the participants. He emphasized that adaptation is a continuous process rather than a static goal, cautioning against the misconception of "sustainable adaptation" as an end state. Instead, he urged a focus on the 'moving target' of adaptation, where flexibility and iterative improvements are essential.

Mr Rizvi stressed that EbA is not just about terminology but about achieving concrete objectives across economic, ecological, and social dimensions. He encouraged a holistic approach that goes beyond mere checklists and safeguards, advocating for the concurrent investment in all aspects of adaptation to achieve cost-effective and replicable solutions. Mr Rizvi shared success stories from Uganda and Nepal as examples where local initiatives led to significant advancements, such as the incorporation of green road policies into national transportation strategies and community-driven riverbank management projects. Mr Rizvi concluded by reinforcing the importance of building strong partnerships at the local level to ensure that project outcomes are sustainable and impactful beyond the project's lifecycle. Mr Rizvi reiterated that FEBA is ready to support any new initiatives and collaborations aimed at producing valuable contributions for COP 29 or future international conferences, and he expressed his gratitude for the collective efforts and insights shared during the 10th EbA Knowledge Day.

To express interest in establishing a FEBA expert working group, or to find out more about the Network at large, please contact Gregory Davies-Jones, gregory.daviesjones@iucn.org or Ali Raza Rizvi, ali.raza@iucn.org.