

# CALL TO ACTION: <sup>1</sup>

## Help make a real transition to Biodiversity Net Gain

In the 15 years since its founding, BBOP's principles, standards and guidance and the work of its members have been instrumental in raising the bar for biodiversity and ecosystem services in the context of residual losses associated with global development. Some 100 governments now have policies and laws that mainstream biodiversity in planning decisions and 94 Equator Principles Association financial institutions have loan conditions requiring no net loss of natural habitat and net gain in critical habitat. Corporate strategies and procedures that go beyond damage limitation increasingly commit businesses to tangible outcomes for biodiversity.

Strengthening measures to ensure that biodiversity is not lost to begin with is the top priority. Including a specific offset step at the end of the mitigation hierarchy offers a chance of redress when efforts to avoid or minimise impacts cannot achieve no net loss.

Through its efforts, BBOP has been at the forefront of a transition to a "new normal" in which explicit efforts are expected of developers and policy-makers to address residual impacts from development and improve the state of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Despite these positive changes, biodiversity is in crisis. Results in practice do not match advances in theory, government policy and companies' internal and public commitments. Important risks are too often ignored and the approaches taken by some companies and governments are haphazard and inadequate.

**CALL TO ACTION:** Members of the BBOP Community of Practice urge action by the international community, governments, companies and civil society. The world needs to step up efforts to reduce biodiversity loss and improve the standard of mitigation measures, including biodiversity offsets. Only this will achieve a more effective balance between truly needed, sustainable development and vital conservation of the planet's life support system.

**THIS IS OUR VISION:** Appropriate development in the right place planned to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, and undertaken with integrity to a high standard. Realising this vision will require a decisive step up from 'business as usual' but brings many advantages: public support, reduced risks and positive social, environmental and economic outcomes. These go beyond biodiversity and can be demonstrated in natural capital assessments.

➔ We urge a number of actions so that the vision can be achieved. Specifically:



**GOVERNMENTS** produce clear, well-governed national mitigation regulations that are feasible, properly monitored and enforced, and in line with ambitious biodiversity conservation targets.

**GOVERNMENTS** align conservation and development priorities through timely land-use planning. They provide licenses only to companies that adhere to standards of best practice for biodiversity and ecosystem services and apply these standards consistently, raising the bar for all development projects.



**COMPANIES** include biodiversity and ecosystems services early in the planning of projects and value chains so they can assess their impacts and there is still room to avoid and minimise them. They commit to achieve a net gain of biodiversity in line with the vision, develop a clear roadmap to achieve it and communicate their progress and biodiversity outcomes transparently.



**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS** develop, adopt, and then enforce safeguards policies and performance standards in line with the net gain vision. They work with their investee companies to apply these standards, and introduce greater transparency and disclosure requirements.

**MULTILATERAL BANKS** and other donors provide finance for governments to establish effective mitigation systems to achieve the net gain vision including support for capacity building for both public and private sector entities.



**CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS AND ACADEMIA** help establish the biodiversity targets, data, maps and metrics needed to underpin the net gain vision and offer support and independent evaluation to companies and governments.



**MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY** hold governments, companies and financial institutions to account, expecting high standards and transparency about the potential and actual achievements of the promises made.

<sup>1</sup> Membership of the BBOP Advisory Group and COP does not necessarily imply support for the Call to Action. A list of signatures can be found at <https://www.forest-trends.org/bbop/a-call-to-action>