



Connect: Mainstreaming biodiversity into the heart of government decision-making

Global Up-scaling Strategy



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1. Introduction

The Connect project 2016-2020 will help governments to achieve their sustainable development objectives by bringing biodiversity and ecosystem services to the heart of government decision-making using actionable environmental information. Connect focuses on in depth development of proofs of concept with Ghana, Uganda and Mozambique. The **project goal** is:

To ensure biodiversity is taken into account in decision making across government sectors by improving end-users' access to and use of biodiversity information and embedding biodiversity information within national development decision making processes.

The **global objectives** of the project are:

1. Biodiversity data, information, and knowledge products, proof-of-concept models, good practices, lessons and tools, developed iteratively and through active showcasing and facilitated interaction with the three demonstration countries
2. Improved global understanding of and capacity to use and generate biodiversity information to influence development outcomes
3. Revision and development of project theory of change through practice and applied research.

The **national objectives** in each project country are to:

1. Clearly understand the in-country demands for, and the barriers to using, biodiversity information within government decision-making including clarifying the format, timing and packaging required
2. Mobilise and repackage existing biodiversity data and information from a range of national and international sources to meet a number of the above demands; and
3. Strengthen the connection between government decision makers and biodiversity and ecosystem services data providers in order to sustainably provide policy-relevant, spatially explicit information to meet ongoing national needs

This Global Up-scaling Strategy covers how project lessons, experiences and good practice will be shared with stakeholders external to the project across scales. Each national project team will produce a complementary National Up-scaling Plan/Strategy, found in Annex 1.

The National Up-scaling Strategies have a related, but distinct aim of demonstrating how the national project teams intend to share lessons, experiences and good practice to across national and sub-national government stakeholders. This includes discussing how the external stakeholders are engaged by the project, how project lessons are shared with those stakeholders and by what methods, and how the project approach can be replicated in other sectors.

2. Purpose of the Global Up-scaling Strategy

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility notes that *"Few project results [from mainstreaming projects] have been published in peer-reviewed journals, but an intuitive sense suggests that significant progress has been made in developing*

the evidence base on successful interventions."¹ The majority of mainstreaming projects to date have therefore not been designed satisfactorily for lesson sharing of project successes and failures. This has led to an obvious and important need for the practitioners of mainstreaming to publish in the peer-reviewed literature to enable lessons to be shared from project teams to the global level, and vice versa. The Connect project will address this need through applied research questions and this dedicated up-scaling strategy.

The focus of the Connect project is on developing and testing proofs of concept and sharing lessons regionally and globally in order to provide an enabling platform for scaling up the direct national benefits of the project more broadly. Within this, the creation of national biodiversity information products such as spatially explicit land cover change maps or aggregate population abundance measures from global data sources or the collation of widely distributed local data can provide quick win opportunities for other countries to adopt. The purpose of the project is to explicitly increase the chances of replication or broader adoption of successful intervention strategies by others.

Scaling up can be looked at in several ways, for example (i) Designing interventions that have the potential to be grown or taken up more widely within the country of initial investment. This is handled through project Component 3. (ii) Sharing the project's process and intervention lessons to encourage broader adoption by others (outside the initial GEF investment). This is achieved through making scale and scalability explicit considerations in intervention design. Whereas most mainstreaming projects have confined themselves to addressing the former (i), this project's up-scaling strategy also deals with the latter (ii).

3. Aims and objectives of the Global Up-scaling Strategy

The aim of the Global Up-Scaling Strategy is to:

- Provide an overarching up-scaling approach through which the project will share experiences, lessons, good practices, tools, among others, between countries and globally

The objectives of the Global Up-Scaling Strategy are to enable other countries to:

1. improve their approach to identification of entry points for biodiversity information in government decision making (Project output 1.5)
2. improve their capacity to respond to information demands with appropriate information that is improved iteratively by replication and transfer of innovative mechanisms (Project output 2.4)
3. improve their capacity to embed biodiversity information into national planning systems, and reporting processes (Project output 3.3)

4. Who is involved in the Global Up-scaling Strategy?

Development and implementation of the Global Up-scaling Strategy will be led by the Global Project Management Unit with support from Work Package Four partners. The National Up-scaling Strategies will be developed and implemented by the National Project Implementation Units. Implementation at all levels will be guided by expert input and advice

¹ Huntley, B.J. & Redford, K.H. (2014). *Mainstreaming biodiversity in Practice: a STAP advisory document*. Global Environment Facility, Washington, DC.

from the Connect project International Technical Advisory and Up-scaling Group (ITAUG). The three main functions of the ITAUG are:

1. The technical/scientific review of outputs for strength and validity of scientific foundations,
2. To contribute to the up-scaling of project lessons,
3. Undertake horizon-scanning and highlight links with other emerging initiatives and new related areas of study or approaches

The ITAUG members include representatives from key drivers of south-south cooperation (see Annex 2 ITAUG Membership). The knowledge and experience of the ITAUG members in the use of biodiversity information within their countries will also be fed back into the project countries in order to guide efficient project implementation. The Global Up-scaling Strategy will be implemented subject to the approval of the Global Project Steering Committee (GPSC).

While the barriers to mainstreaming biodiversity information are common globally, it is expected that lessons drawn from the project will be most relevant to those countries within the African and Sub-Saharan African region. However, the project will address scaling up through external communications, directed at two key communities:

A community of potential user countries, i.e. other developing countries that may learn from and adopt similar practices as those showcased by the project. Up-scaling can also be achieved through sharing experiences and lessons with developed countries e.g. via the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its Development Assistance Committee (DAC), or through international fora such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties, the United Nations Development Programme, among others. This will be achieved through linking the project into UN Environment and UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)'s normal operations, as well as those of other project partners.

A community of potential implementing partners, i.e. biodiversity data-holding organisations that may learn from the project approach and outcomes, and seek to replicate the approach to improve their information products. This also includes organisations providing financing and/or capacity building for biodiversity information. The project will engage with technical partners such as the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP; Global), Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON), National Geomatics Centre (China), Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO, Mexico), INBio (Costa Rica), Instituto Humboldt (Colombia) in Latin America, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI, South Africa), the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (with 23 country members in East and Southern Africa), ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, NatureServe, and Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC, Africa), IUCN etc.

5. Up-scaling activities and ways of working

Activities

Up-Scaling Strategy

The ITAUG will meet remotely at regular intervals to advise on the development and implementation of the Global Up-scaling Strategy. The Global Project Management Unit will monitor implementation progress and report back to the ITAUG and GPSC.

Active communication and engagement with similar initiatives

The Connect project, through the ITAUG and other project partners, will actively look for similar initiatives (i.e. that promote access to and use of biodiversity information for decision making). Proactive communication will be established in order to share lessons learnt, to find potential synergies and to build a network. This includes maintaining pre-existing links with initiatives that provided project co-financing such as the CBD, GBIF (e.g. through the Biodiversity Information for Development project and beyond), GEO BON and other project partners named in the Connect project documentation.

Peer-reviewed Literature

Through applied research the project will seek to gain an understanding of the process by which biodiversity information and knowledge can be effectively used to influence outcomes in decision making in three project countries. At least three peer-reviewed journal papers will be developed on the use of biodiversity information in decision making processes, including (paper 1) a review of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) biodiversity mainstreaming portfolio (Project activity 1.3b). The focus of the papers will be decided with input from the ITAUG and other project partners, and approved by the GPSC. These papers will be produced through a collective effort of the project partners, with exact authorship and input determined on a case-by-case basis.

Reports and publications

Meeting and workshop reports and other project publications will be made available via the project website to inform both internal project stakeholders and external audiences.

Replication of project interventions

The Connect project budget includes funds for replication of project activities within countries outside of the three project countries. The selection process for replication activities will be the subject of a dedicated ITAUG meeting. As a first step it is proposed that selection criteria be drafted through advice from the ITAUG, for approval by the GPSC. The amount of budget identified is \$250,000 for activities in at least three other regions of the world.

Regional and International meetings and conferences

The Connect project lessons will be disseminated through presentations, posters and/or side events at selected meetings and conferences within the African region and beyond as deemed appropriate. The Connect project will also seek opportunities to share expertise, experience and lessons through attendance to workshops and meetings of similar initiatives (e.g. [GBIF Biodiversity Information for Development](#) project and the [CEBioS calls](#)).

Project Communication Strategy

The Connect project global Communication Strategy provides the methods by which the project is communicated to both internal and external stakeholders. This includes communication of the key project lessons and as a means to draw on the experiences of others for effective project implementation.

Website

The Connect project website is a key communication tool for the project. A highly informative and dynamic website will provide an essential link between the project partners and the wider community. The project website will describe the Connect project, provide up-to-date information about the project's progress and act as a repository for the technical products that are produced by the project. The website address is

www.connectbiodiversity.com

Ways of working

ITAUG members bring a wealth of diverse experience and expertise to the project, and each member will be able to add value in specific contexts. In order to streamline activities and allow for logical time and budget management it is envisaged that ITAUG members will be able to self-nominate for input and engagement in various project activities so that an appropriate sub-set of members can apply themselves where their strengths can generate the greatest impact. This will be facilitated initially through a live Google doc matrix whereby activities are listed alongside expertise required, time required and outputs etc.

If there is a specific requirement in expertise, or if it is deemed that there is a gap in knowledge and/or experience in a particular geographical area, then further members of the ITAUG may be sought to fill these gaps on an ad-hoc basis.

Annex 1. National Up-scaling Strategies

TBA

Annex 2. ITAUG Membership

Chair: Fiona Danks, Science Programme UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Global scale

Institution	Name	Job title
Conservation International	Alice Ruhweza	Executive Director of Vital Signs
IUCN SSC Species Monitoring Specialist Group	PJ Stevenson	Chair
GEO BON and NatureServe	Mike Gill	Co-Chair
Global Biodiversity Information Facility	Tim Hirsch	Deputy Director
BirdLife International	Melanie Heath	Director of Science, Policy and Information
Joint Research Council	Bastian Bertsy	Africa Regional Coordinator, BioPAMA project
World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)	Ravi Prabhu	Deputy Director - Research
Convention on Biological Diversity	Nico Van Der Werf	

Regional

Institution	Name	Job title
UN Environment Regional Office Africa	Cecilia Kinuthia-Njenga	Head, UN Environment Regional Office in South Africa
African Biodiversity Centre	Lucy Waruingi	Executive Director
South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)	Deshnay Pillay	Director - Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring
ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation	Sheila Vergara	
Conservation International	Rowan Braybrook	
CONABIO	Tania Urquiza-Haas	Sub-coordinator of Ecosystems Evaluation
CEBioS - Capacities for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development	Anne-Julie Rochette	Programme Coordinator

National

Institution	Name	Job title
University of Ghana	Alfred Oteng-Yeboah	Associate Professor
MITADER	Anselmina Liphola	CBD Focal Point
NatureUganda	Achilles Byaruhanga	Director

