



IMPLEMENT

STEP 7:

BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING INTO BUSINESS IN SOUTH AFRICA



Key questions to consider

For shareholders:

Do you know the main pro-biodiversity actions of the companies you have invested in?

For the CEO and the board:

What are the main pro-biodiversity activities undertaken by your business and its value chain? Are you adequately reporting to stakeholders?

For environmental and sustainability managers:

What are the biodiversity activities and associated resources and timeframe of your business?

For the financial sector:

Has your client adopted a biodiversity action plan that is commensurate to its strategy?

IMPLEMENTING THE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY OF YOUR BUSINESS

Key:
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for more information



Key messages

- Biodiversity action plans may be required for each business unit and key stakeholders in the value chain;
- These are better framed according to international biodiversity targets;
- Typical biodiversity activities include site management plans, supplier management plans, the cost-effective implementation of the mitigation hierarchy, and protected area creation/effective management;
- You need to ensure that all environmental activities support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, as there may be trade-offs between different sustainability goals

Once you have developed and agreed on a biodiversity strategy, it is time for the implementation phase. This step may vary according to your business context and might involve different business units and stakeholders. It may require contracting or employing biodiversity specialists, as some biodiversity dependencies and impacts require specific knowledge or expertise.

This step helps you identify the broad types of activities that are available for managing the material biodiversity dependencies and/or impacts of your business.

Step 7 precedes Steps 8 and 9, which deal with the disclosure and monitoring of the biodiversity mainstreaming strategy and action plan for your business.



Developing a biodiversity action plan commensurate to your strategy

If applicable or material, each target within the biodiversity strategy of your business should:

- Be applied or adapted to each business unit and/or value chain stakeholder;
- Be approved and monitored by management;
- Involve detailed stakeholder engagement, planning and budgeting;
- Involve the right staff members and potentially the contracting of the relevant biodiversity specialist(s);
- Involve regular progress monitoring, including with respect to any legal requirement.

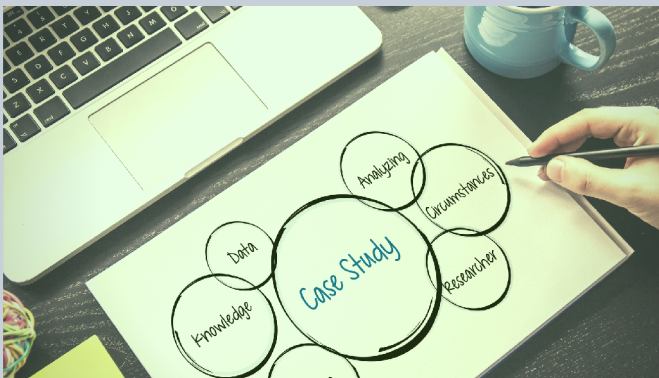
If you have framed your biodiversity strategy according to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) targets (see Step 6 of the biodiversity mainstreaming guidelines), this means that your biodiversity action plan needs to include activities which:

- Embed biodiversity stewardship into decision-making, production and performance management (Strategic Goal A);
- Help avoid or reduce and offset negative impacts on biodiversity (Strategic Goal B);

- Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and/or genetic diversity, as appropriate (Strategic Goal C);
- Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services (Strategic Goal D);
- Build participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building with all key stakeholders (Strategic Goal E).

Typical biodiversity-specific activities may include:

- **Site management plans**, including for alien invasive species control or eradication and through effective stakeholder partnerships in the surrounding landscape (e.g. to secure community access to key ecosystem services);
- **Supplier management plans**, including risk screening, biodiversity performance requirements and compliance monitoring;
- The cost-effective implementation of the **mitigation hierarchy** for projects subject to environmental permitting or approval, including the setting up and management of offset areas if required;
- The creation and effective management of protected areas and source areas for key ecosystem services.



Protecting biodiversity to secure the supply of ecosystem services - ZZ2

ZZ2 South African farming enterprise operating mainly in the Limpopo Province, as well as in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and North-West Provinces, as well as Namibia. They produce tomatoes, avocados, onions, dates, cherries, apples, pears, stone fruit, blueberries, stud cattle and weaners. ZZ2 has set aside 50% of the land it manages for conservation (about 25 000 ha of protected land) and the supply of key ecosystem services, such as clean water.



Biodiversity offset for Gamsberg mine, Vedanta

Vedanta Resources purchased Black Mountain Mine (Northern Cape, South Africa) and the associated rights in 2011 with a view to pursuing the Gamsberg zinc resources. To offset the residual impacts of the project (targeting no-net-loss), a biodiversity offset agreement was entered into with the Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation. It involved the purchase and management, for a period of 10 years, of 40 000 ha identified as a potential offset area, of which approximately 15 000 ha have been secured to date.



Ensuring that other environmental activities support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use

Many businesses implement environmental management activities for various reasons – from compliance, risk management, and securing the social licence, to growing their market share. These may include:

- Energy consumption and greenhouse emissions reduction initiatives;
- Waste management and recycling initiatives;
- Eco-design of products and services;
- Renewable energy investments.

In doing so, it is critical to ensure that there are no negative trade-offs with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. For instance, renewable energy investments may lead to significant biodiversity loss (e.g. freshwater systems destruction by dams, bird kills by wind turbines, mining impacts linked to minerals used in solar panels) while planting monocultures of (often exotic) trees to store carbon can transform natural habitats such as grasslands.



Eco-estate design and management – Simbithi

Simbithi, a 430 ha Eco-Estate, is situated 30 minutes north of South Africa's third largest city, Durban, on the KwaZulu-Natal coast. Biodiversity has been integrated throughout the life cycle of the eco-estate, from planning through to ongoing management. In terms of planning and construction, special care has been taken to strategically locate each site and property to protect critical habitats (e.g. wetlands) and to allow for free movement of wildlife. Every possible precaution has been taken to minimise environmental impact, ensuring a development that is in harmony with the natural surroundings. In terms of the management of the estate, many biodiversity supporting measures are being put in place, including the mandatory use of a minimum of 65 different plant species in all landscaped gardens, of which at least five must be edible by the local fauna.



Explore the biodiversity policies of some leading South African companies

Click on the logo to navigate to the company case study



National Biodiversity and Business Network

The National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN) recognises the importance of biodiversity to business and builds the capacity of business to act as a positive force for the conservation of biodiversity in South Africa. The natural environment plays an important role in the value chain of any business. We work with innovative business leaders to identify and manage the business risks and opportunities that result from their interactions with the natural world.

We provide a platform for businesses to proactively engage with each other and discover solutions that lead to sustainable business growth and many exciting business opportunities such as new sources of revenue and the opportunity to reduce production costs.

We achieve this through the following projects:

- Biodiversity Disclosure Project
- Biological Diversity Protocol
- Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Business Toolkit

