



Biodiversity and Business Action Plan



NATIONAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

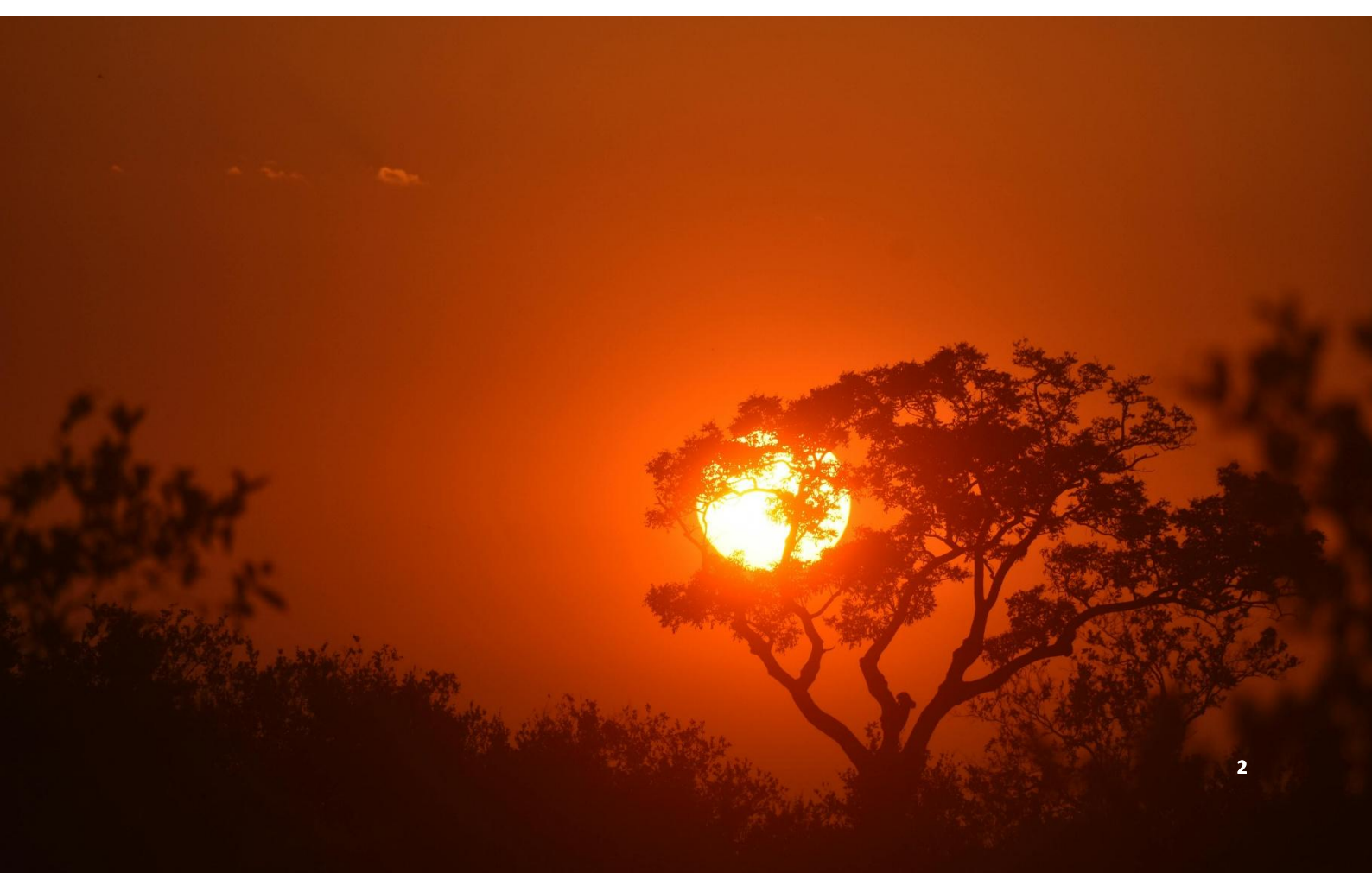


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Acronyms

ARB	South Africa’s Advertising Regulatory Board
BAAP	Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet
BAG	Business Advisory Group
BBAP	Biodiversity and Business Action Plan
BDP	Biodiversity Disclosure Project
BD Protocol	Biological Diversity Protocol
BfN	Business for Nature
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP16	The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in 2024, in Cali, Colombia.
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
EMS	Environmental Management System
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
EWT	Endangered Wildlife Trust
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
MBI	Market-Based Instruments
NBBN	National Biodiversity and Business Network
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECMs	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSC	Project steering committee
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TCFD	Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures
TNFD	Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures



Executive Summary

The Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet (BAAP) initiative, facilitated by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), has been an essential platform for advancing collaboration between business, government, and stakeholders. Over the past two years, the project has worked with leading South African companies across diverse sectors to align business actions with national and global biodiversity targets.

An output of the BAAP is the Biodiversity and Business Action Plan (BBAP) which represents a culmination of two years of collaborative work between South African businesses, government, and stakeholders to help corporates align their strategies with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The information gathered from this project has also resulted in informing National Targets relating to business.

Aims and Objectives

Facilitated by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) through the National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN), the project aims to integrate biodiversity into all corporate decision-making, reduce corporate biodiversity impacts and dependencies, and assist in achieving South Africa's global sustainability goals.

The BAAP set out to create a platform for businesses to engage with biodiversity targets, particularly Target 15 of the GBF. This was achieved through the Biodiversity Advisory Group (BAG) workshops and these meetings supported dialogue between business, government, and policy.

Accomplishments

Through four BAG meetings in 2024, the project brought together diverse sectors. Sectors included those with direct impacts, impacts within supply chains and those with secondary exposure to impacts. The BAG was made up of the following sectors - Agriculture, Consumer Staples, Energy, Engineering, Finance, Forestry, Manufacturing, Mining, Real Estate and Transport, as well as

advisory organisations, relevant observer organisations and government representatives.

Key outputs from the BAGs included:

- **Identifying** corporate biodiversity actions and commitments and their alignment with global and national targets.
- **Developing** proposed indicators for Target 15, focusing on biodiversity assessments, disclosures, habitat conservation, resource mobilisation, and capacity building.
- **Strengthening** collaboration between businesses and government to ensure the inclusion of business & biodiversity-relevant information in the revision of South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).
- **Concluding** the project through holding a hybrid webinar event that brought together key government and business representatives and broader stakeholders.

Roadmap to 2030

The BBAP outlines a strategic pathway for businesses to align with the GBF, focusing on:

1. **Initial Steps (2025-2027):** Establishing biodiversity targets, piloting supply chain footprinting, and forming public-private partnerships for restoration and conservation.
2. **Scaling Actions (2028):** Expanding best practices, promoting cross-sector collaboration, and aligning policies with GBF targets.
3. **Delivering Outcomes (2030):** Achieving measurable results, including 30% protected areas, restored ecosystems, and enhanced livelihoods for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs).

Vision for 2030 and Beyond

By 2030, we envision a South Africa where businesses lead in biodiversity restoration, with 30% of land and marine areas protected, degraded landscapes rehabilitated, and threatened species recovering. Indigenous communities will play a key role in sustainable use, with their rights and livelihoods upheld. By 2050, South Africa aims to be a global leader, living in harmony with nature and building an equitable, thriving economy. Now is the time for bold business action, collaboration, and innovation to meet biodiversity targets and position South Africa as a model for sustainable development.

Gaps and Further Work

Key gaps include the need for:

- **Tailored capacity building** per sector to address biodiversity knowledge and skills shortages.
- **A repository** with guidance, tools and case studies for transparency and collective learning.
- **Continued dialogue** between government and business to enhance alignment with national policy.

Conclusion

This project has by no means been a small endeavour. In year one we realised the scope of the work and the amount of effort needed to achieve

the outcomes of the BAAP. Amongst an array of global messaging about the biodiversity crisis and failing milestones towards 2030 – it was indeed the right time to be doing a project like this.

With that in mind, the businesses involved in this project showed us that they are determined to improve their biodiversity strategies and forge a way forward and this has led to many of the outcomes shown in this report. It is to them that we owe substantial acknowledgement for its successes. From BAG dialogues, giving feedback on reports, consultation meetings to discuss progress, to answering survey after survey, they, together with our advisory BAG members, ensured the outcomes of the project. Additionally, this project would not have been possible without the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), who have played integral roles – ensuring that the business voice is heard.

A substantial amount of work is still needed to achieve the future goals set out in this document, but this step has been an important one and future successes will be reliant on businesses, government, and broader stakeholders collaborating with each other. The Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet project has shown that this is possible. Finally, this Business Action Plan is not just a tool but a call to action for all stakeholders to rise to the challenge to help create a sustainable future for businesses in South Africa.



Introduction and Context

National Organisation to Support the Development of a Government-Led Business Action Plan on Biodiversity in South Africa

The recent dialogues of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) took place from October 21 to November 1, 2024, in Cali, Colombia and the commitments made under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in 2022 indicate that we stand at a crossroads in addressing the urgent biodiversity crisis. The planet is witnessing an unprecedented rate of biodiversity loss, with ecosystems degrading under the pressures of climate change, resource exploitation, and unsustainable land-use practices. Not only is nature itself threatened but also the very foundation of our economy, society, and our future.

South Africa is set to publish its updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in 2025, which is expected to be aligned with the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(GBF\)](#). The [Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and Environment \(DFFE\)](#) is finalising the publication timeline.

Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet (BAAP)

The [Endangered Wildlife Trust \(EWT\)](#), through the [National Biodiversity and Business Network \(NBBN\)](#), and financially supported by the [Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#) with [Conservation International](#) as the GEF implementing agency began implementing the [BAAP project](#) in 2023. This initiative focuses on strengthening business-government collaboration and integrating biodiversity into business strategies by supporting Business Advisory Groups (BAGs) and developing GBF-aligned biodiversity action plans. Key activities include facilitating BAG meetings, creating capacity-building and raising awareness. Outputs from the project include national target recommendations, a [repository](#), and synthesized

reports and an action plan. The project aims to support businesses in recognising their role in biodiversity mainstreaming, aligning with national and global biodiversity targets, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and enhancing stakeholder engagement.

In Year 1, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formed with representatives from 14 organisations, including DFFE and SANBI, NGOs, and consultants, providing valuable insights. In Year 2 (2024), the project progressed with the establishment of the BAG, involving leading South African businesses, advisory bodies, and government. Four BAG meetings and one hybrid webinar were held, producing key deliverables to facilitate ongoing collaboration and communication between businesses and government.

The Biodiversity and Business Action Plan (BBAP)

The BBAP is drafted by the EWT's National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN) and is part of the work of the Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet initiative, a project in collaboration with [Business for Nature \(BfN\)](#). The BBAP is designed to serve as a practical resource for both businesses and government, enabling interpretation and application from the insights gained from the BAAP project.

Target 15 - A Catalyst for Business Action

Target 15 represents a unique opportunity for businesses both globally and nationally to become stewards of biodiversity. It encourages voluntary disclosure and the integration of biodiversity into all aspects of decision-making. For South African businesses, embracing this target means not only helping towards establishing an informed National Target for Target 15 but also informing SA's revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Transparent reporting, biodiversity footprinting, and embedding biodiversity into ESG frameworks are key steps toward building accountability and enhancing consumer and investor confidence.

Biodiversity at the Core

The BAG process revealed that businesses must move beyond viewing biodiversity as an add-on to their strategies. Instead, biodiversity must become embedded within every aspect of corporate decision-making. Sector-specific capacity building and training, incentives for good practice, ongoing collaboration with government, and knowledge-sharing platforms will be essential for advancing this integration. Apart from the obligation to comply with legislation and standards, businesses can no longer afford to separate sustainability from profitability. Biodiversity action must therefore be the foundation for long-term financial resilience and reputational value.

A Whole-of-Society Approach

A whole-of-society approach is key to achieving a sustainable and equitable future. Businesses cannot be a standalone entity, it is increasingly clear that businesses are deeply rooted within society, communities, and the land on which they operate and derive resources.

The step towards this approach means incorporating society, as with biodiversity, into every decision-making process and this should be done alongside all biodiversity considerations. Not one part of the sustainability chain is separate from another and it is when we begin to view society, business and biodiversity as an interconnected web that far greater results will be achieved.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE BUSINESS ADVISORY GROUP



(1) Connecting the business sector with key stakeholders: Facilitate interactive dialogue between businesses, and between business and government;



(2): Contributions to National Biodiversity Strategy: Articulation and mobilization of multiple stakeholders to create a Business Action Plan which delivers key findings from the feedback of BAGs to help guide the revision process of South Africa's NBSAP and help businesses align with the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;



(3) Assessing corporate alignment with Global Biodiversity Framework Targets: Review of current alignment with global and national emerging nature disclosure standards of companies in reporting against the Global Biodiversity Framework;



(4) Supporting the plan to monitor national business-related targets: Assessing progress of non-state actors towards national targets in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity.



Synthesis of BAG Meetings and Key Findings

Biodiversity Business Advisory Group (BAG) Meeting Series Summary

The first BAG meeting on 22 May 2024 brought South African businesses together to focus on [Target 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Biodiversity Framework](#): *"Businesses Assess, Disclose, and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts."*

Participants were introduced to the project, networked across sectors, and engaged in group discussions specifically around Target 15 and on biodiversity action to support government targets. Sessions included an overview of the National Biodiversity and Business Network and the Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet project, followed by a review of corporate biodiversity mainstreaming in South Africa, guided by the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Target 15 guiding questions.

The second meeting, on 25 July 2024, shifted to a hybrid format, exploring the broader Kunming-Montreal GBF targets and business contributions towards these targets. With insights from DFFE and case studies from companies, attendees discussed challenges, shared recommendations, and discussed ways to enhance biodiversity initiatives within the corporate sector.

On 29 August 2024, the third meeting focused on strengthening business contributions to national biodiversity strategies and revising South Africa's NBSAP. The agenda included updates on NBSAP submissions from other countries that are signatories to the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#). BAG members also discussed their own actions to support biodiversity, including protected areas, restoration, and compliance efforts.

By the fourth meeting, capacity building emerged as a priority. Participants highlighted the need for practical case studies to guide companies taking their first steps in biodiversity and discussed

challenges like engaging investors and motivating the supply chain to consider biodiversity.

Overall, the BAG meetings provided essential insights into the support businesses need on their biodiversity journey. The Roadmap to 2030 on page 35 leverages these findings to inform business and government on South Africa's progress toward national targets.

Challenges that Businesses in South Africa are Facing

Businesses are facing a number of challenges when it comes to aligning with biodiversity goals. Navigating a complex regulatory environment without clear, standardised biodiversity metrics complicates compliance, while limited resources in skills, funding, and technology have restricted biodiversity mainstreaming progress within companies. Biodiversity goals within companies often conflict with board and investor priorities, as executives frequently perceive biodiversity as a secondary concern or a "nice-to-have" rather than a strategic imperative.

Many companies struggle with a top-down focus that prioritizes profitability and investor interests over broader sustainability considerations. Short-term profitability pressures have diverted attention from long-term sustainability gains. This is particularly prevalent in companies without direct land impact.

Data gaps were mentioned on several occasions, as businesses often lack access to timely biodiversity information and measurement tools, resulting in inconsistent reporting. Whilst businesses have mentioned it would be incredibly helpful to know what the national targets are to properly align business and biodiversity strategy; many have already started with their implementation plans and emerging disclosure requirements and will realign once the national targets are released. Such an approach is inherently inefficient and may lead to rework, as well as over- or under-investment which companies can ill afford.

Many sectors struggle with the need for comprehensive biodiversity training and while companies are starting to roll out capacity-building programmes, there is a need for more widespread access to training materials and better integration of biodiversity education into business operations

Common Themes

Participants across all meetings highlighted the need for robust capacity building through training, resources, and partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs) and experts. Clear and consistent policy guidance from the government would aid businesses in aligning strategies with national biodiversity priorities and foster stronger collaboration. Effective biodiversity strategies also depend on multi-stakeholder collaboration, engaging government, NGOs, academia, and the private sector to create comprehensive solutions.

Companies are struggling to navigate the 'framework chaos', and while many recognise the need for more robust integration and recognition of biodiversity into business strategy, they are struggling to balance short-term profitability with the need to meet long-term sustainability goals while maintaining client and shareholder satisfaction. This factor stems from the notion that biodiversity within business is still a relatively new concept, when compared to climate and carbon strategies.

Unlike carbon reporting, which has well-established metrics, biodiversity lacks clear, standardized measures, making it difficult for companies to assess their impact, track progress, and be held accountable. And as a result, long-term sustainability goals, including biodiversity initiatives, are often secondary to immediate business needs. Companies are also battling to deliver on complex disclosure standards that are now merging into national requirements.

Finally, a standardised biodiversity reporting framework, like carbon metrics and principles, would help businesses to integrate biodiversity

efforts more effectively within their broader sustainability goals. The key points emerging from all the BAG meetings reveal that while businesses are committed to biodiversity, they require clearer and more tailored guidance, sector-specific tools, help with identifying gaps and opportunities, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Businesses that are new to this journey would appreciate support that allows them to grow in their progress, and they do not need over complicated guidance.

There was strong emphasis on the need for knowledge sharing, sharing of successful case-studies and a support network, as well as the need for biodiversity-related capacity building and skills development within companies. Moving forward, a strategic roadmap that addresses these needs and enhances communication between stakeholders will be essential for meaningful biodiversity progress in South Africa.

Gaps and Opportunities

Businesses envision significant opportunities to advance biodiversity goals through tailored, sector-specific guidance and tools that offer relevant, actionable steps for different industries. Current frameworks lack strong incentives for biodiversity actions. Financial incentives, like tax breaks or credits, could encourage companies to invest more in biodiversity efforts.

Capacity-building resources, including practical training and a mentorship network, would help bridge skills gaps and promote best practices. A shared repository of case studies would enable transparency and shared learning, adding to collective and collaborative progress amongst the different stakeholders. Additionally, incorporating biodiversity into existing climate and water focused strategies could streamline the transition to nature-positive actions for businesses. This approach also helps companies manage biodiversity, water and climate impacts through a unified framework.

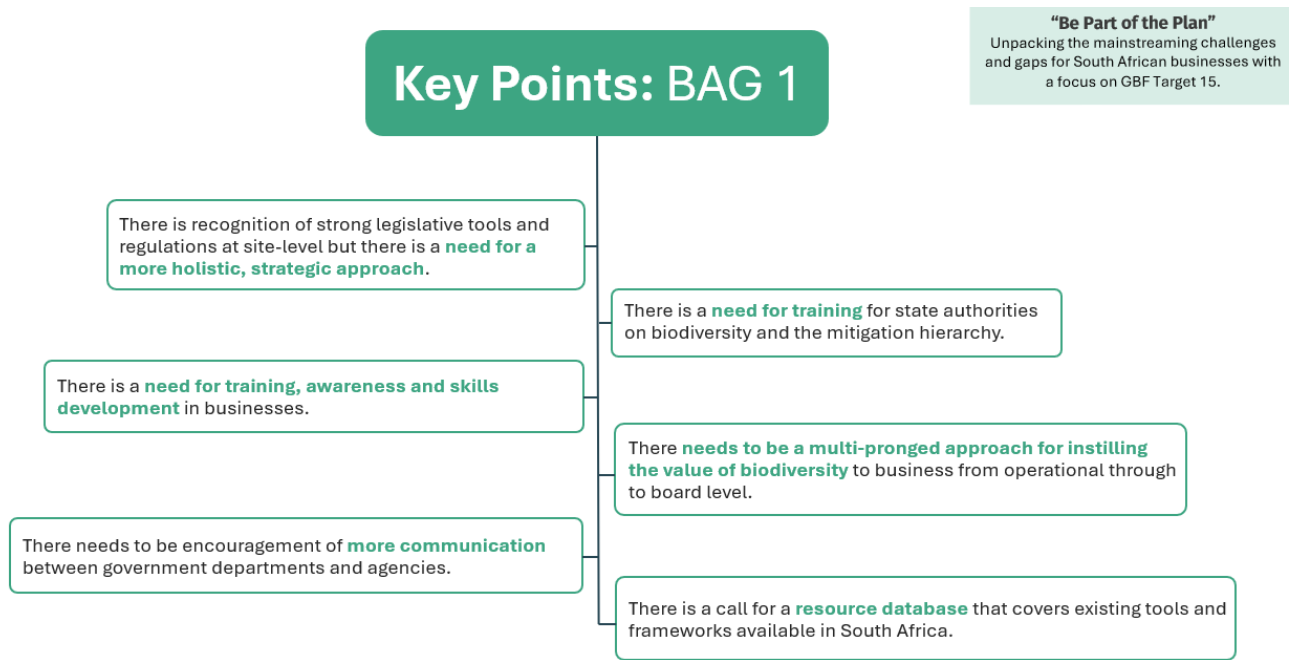


Figure 1: Key points that were raised during the first Business Advisory Group meeting on 22 May 2024.

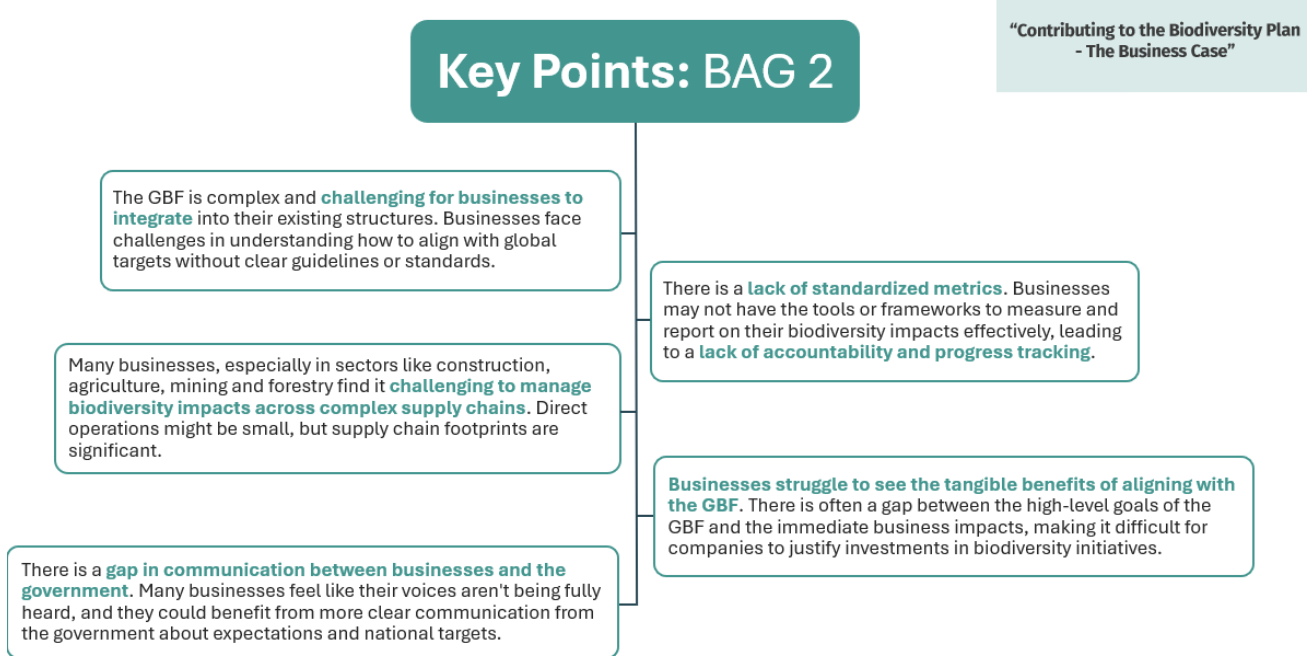


Figure 2: Key points that were raised during the second Business Advisory Group meeting on 25 July 2024.

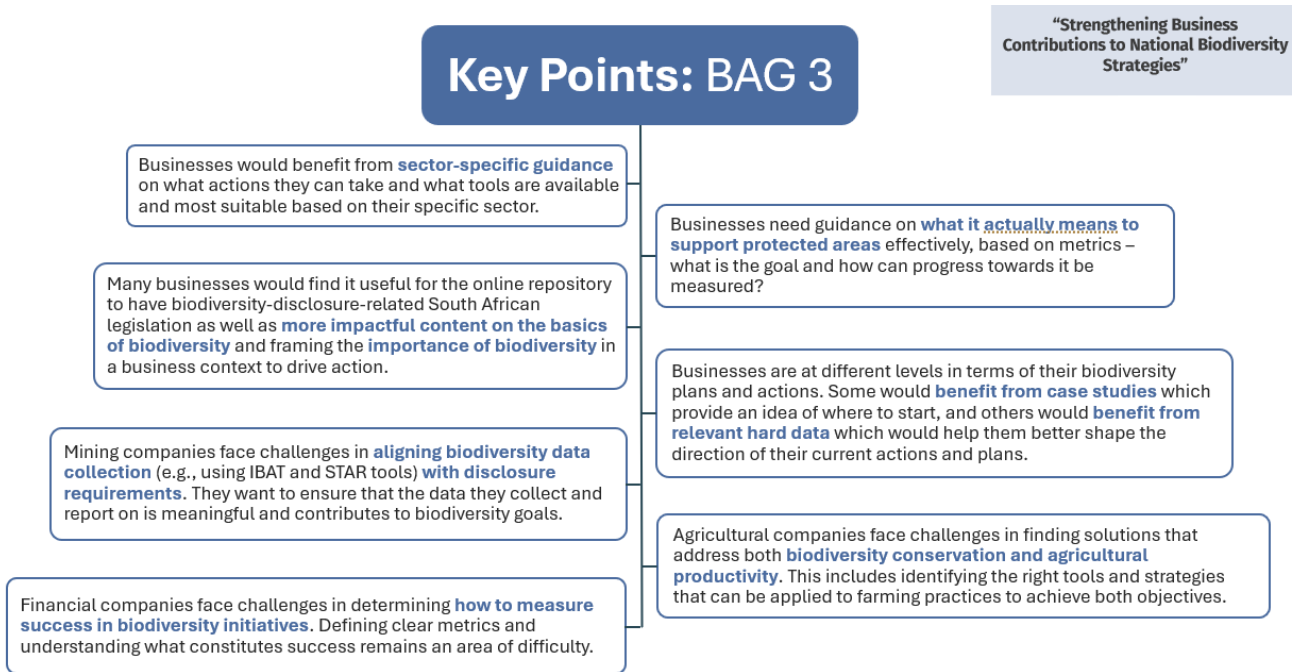


Figure 3: Key points from the third Business Advisory Group meeting held on 29 August 2024.

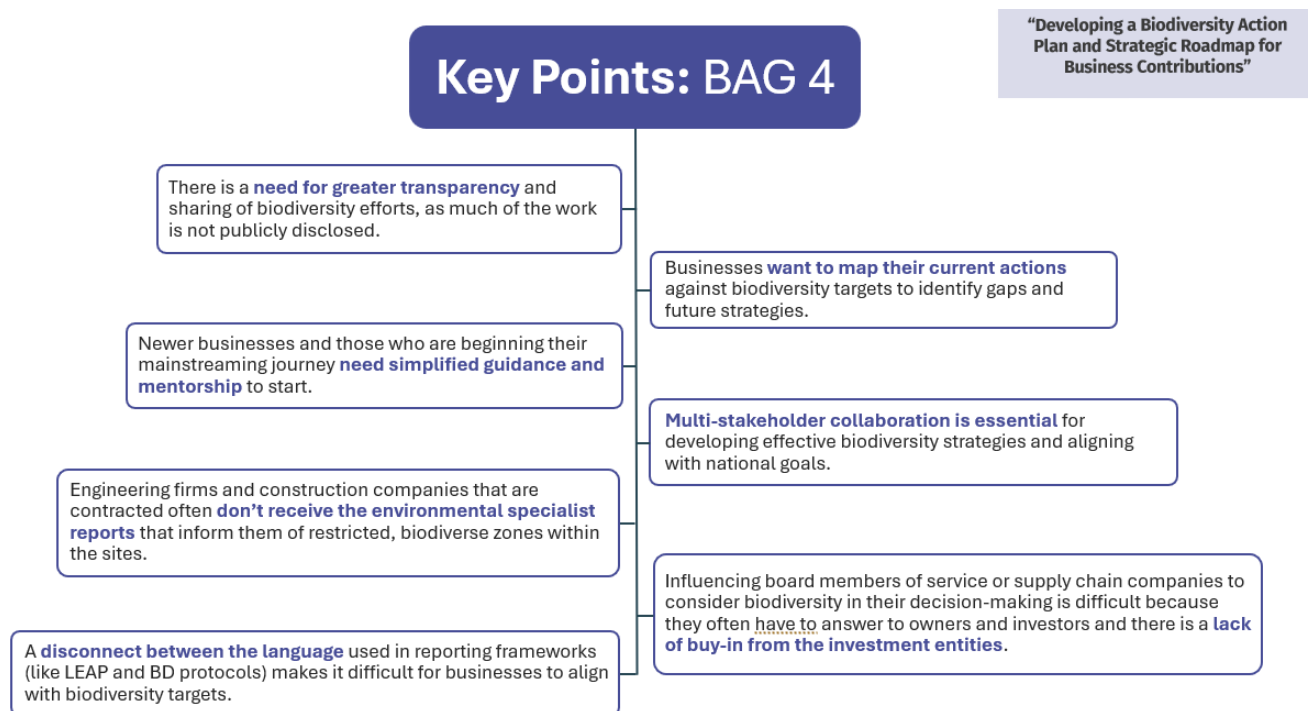


Figure 4: Key points from the fourth Business Advisory Group meeting on 3 October 2024.



Figure 5: Responses from business representatives from the **Agricultural**, **Built Environment**, **Energy**, **Forestry**, **Mining**, and **Retail** sectors when asked how their sector contributes to achieving national biodiversity targets and the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

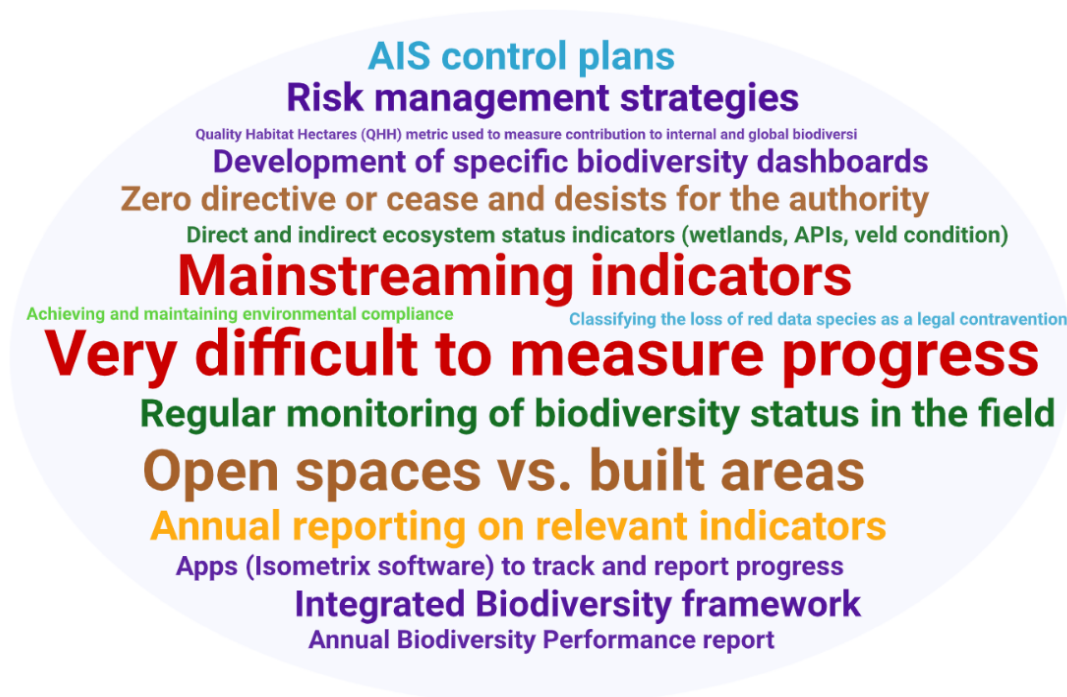


Figure 6: Responses from business representatives from the **Agricultural**, **Built Environment**, **Energy**, **Finance**, **Forestry**, **Mining**, and **Retail** sectors when asked how their sector is measuring the success of their biodiversity initiatives and what indicators are being used to track progress.

Monitoring & Evaluation: Project Statistics and Feedback



Figure 7: The number of companies in each sector involved in the series of four Business Advisory Group meetings held in 2024.

In addition to the representatives from the various sectors shown in Figure 7, the BAG meetings also consisted of representatives from government, in particular the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), advisory bodies, academia and NGO’s. The full list of attendees for each of the four BAG meetings and the *Biodiversity is your Business* event is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 1 A breakdown of the number of attendees at each of the four Business Advisory Group (BAG) meetings and our hybrid webinar event.

Meeting	Date	Theme	No. Company representatives	No. Advisory / Policy representatives	Total no. Attendees	No. Companies	No. Sectors
BAG 1	22 May 2024	<i>‘Be Part of the Plan’ (Target 15)</i>	22	16	38	16	9
BAG 2	25 July 2024	<i>Contributing to the Biodiversity Plan – The Business Case</i>	20	7	27	14	8
BAG 3	29 August 2024	<i>Strengthening Business Contributions to National Biodiversity Strategies</i>	17	9	26	12	7
BAG 4	03 October 2024	<i>Biodiversity and Business Action Plan Development</i>	24	12	36	17	10
Hybrid Webinar Event	2 December 2024	<i>Biodiversity is your Business</i>	36	67	103	26	10

Survey Results

A survey was conducted after the first BAG meeting to gather input from Business Advisory Group members to enhance the experience at future meetings. These were some of the responses received:

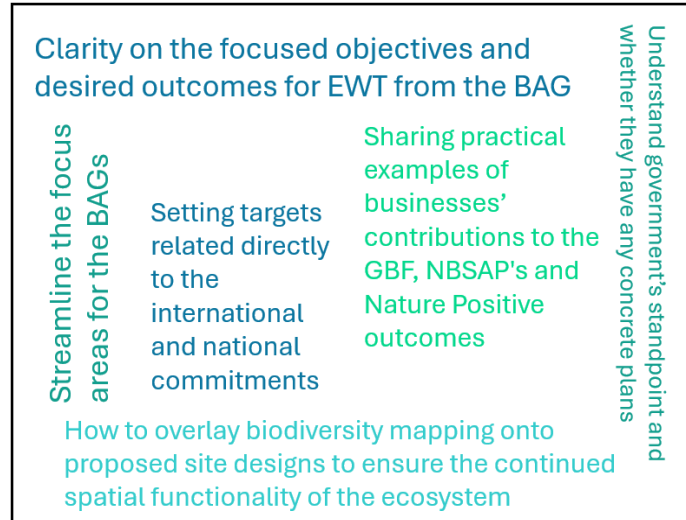


Figure 8: Comments received from the Business Advisory Group members regarding what they would like to see in follow-up meetings.

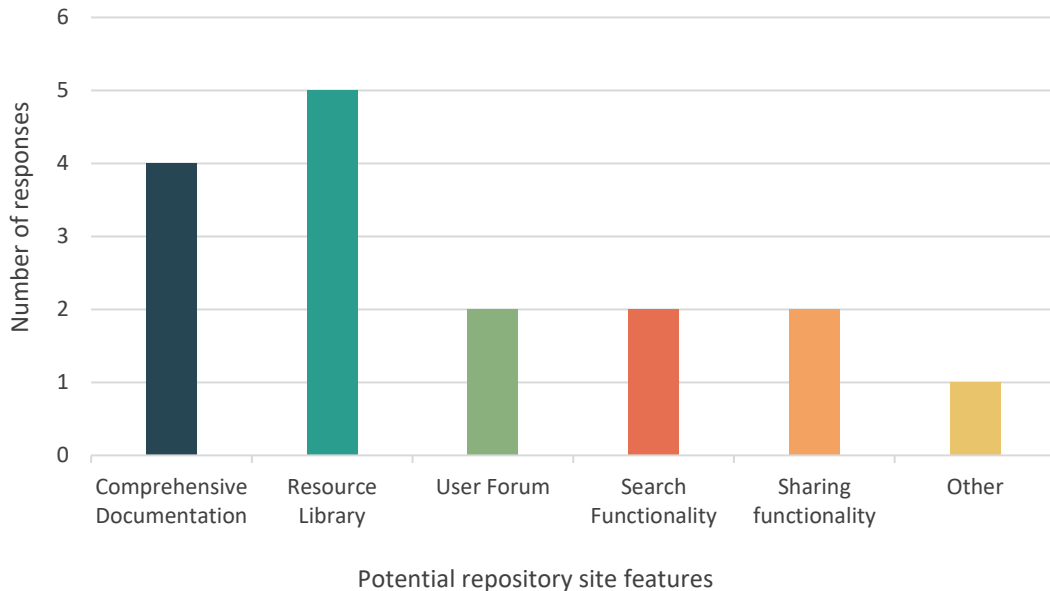


Figure 9: Responses received from the Business Advisory Group members regarding what they would like to see on the Biodiversity and Business Hub – a repository site created by the National Biodiversity and Business Network.

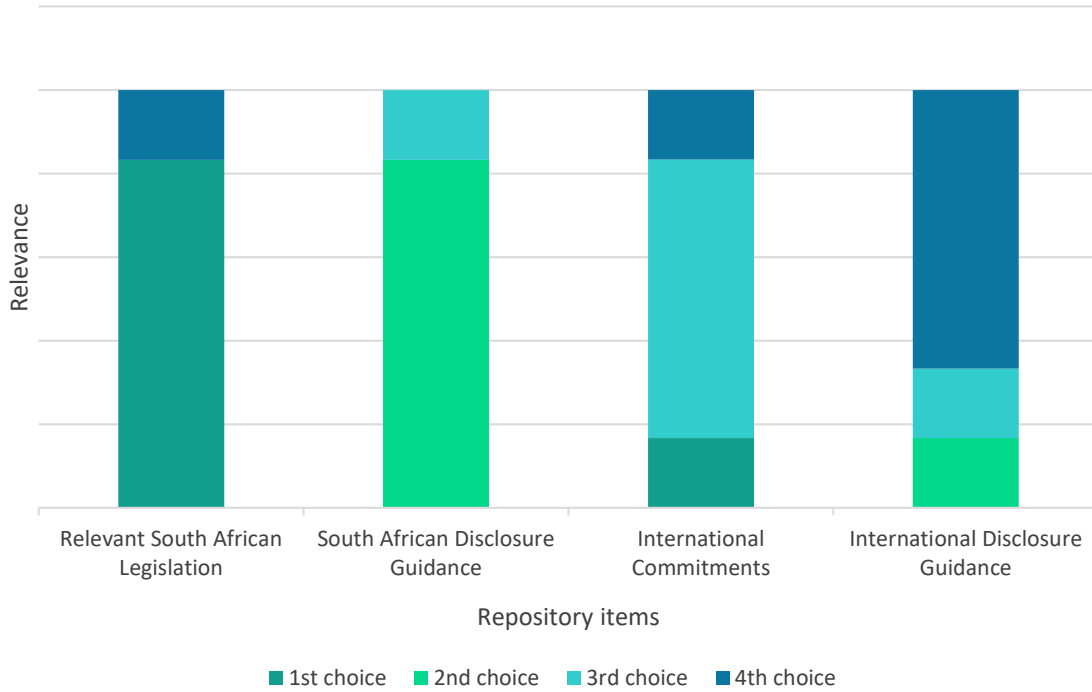


Figure 10: Business Advisory Group members ranked the relevance of the various sections available on the Biodiversity and Business Hub repository site.

Business Advisory Group members also shared positive feedback highlighting the value and effectiveness of the BAG meetings:

“The platform of collaboration in a group of diverse leaders with significant alignment on an agenda of abundance in positively impacting people and the planet is privilege.”

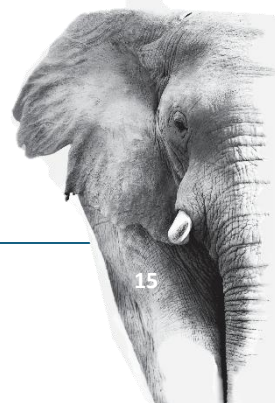
“It was very engaging and informative.”

“Really glad I came to this event!”

“Good event to get the perspective of other industries and the various approaches to Biodiversity in the broad sense.”

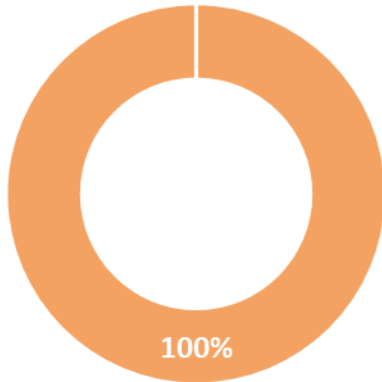


Figure 11: Feedback from the Business Advisory Group members on the value and effectiveness of the BAG meetings.



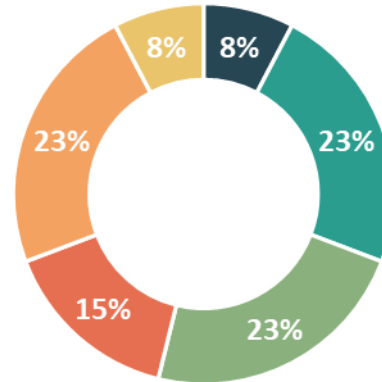
Business and Biodiversity Skills Review Survey

Thirteen business representatives completed a skills review survey aimed at gaining an understanding of their views on the importance of biodiversity, their company's progress on their biodiversity journeys, and the nature-related skills within their company. The survey results are shown in Figure 12 to Figure 30 below.



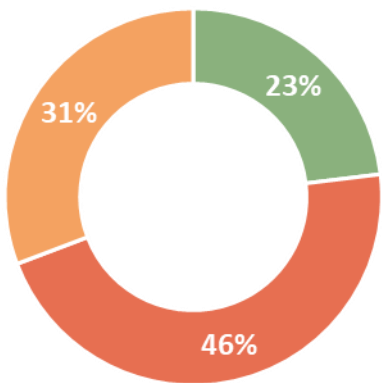
■ <10 employees ■ <250 employees
■ <500 employees ■ >500 employees

Figure 12: The size of the companies whose representatives responded to the survey.



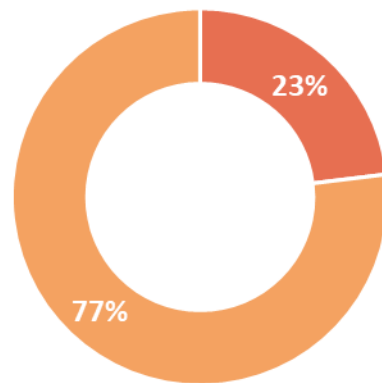
■ Finance ■ Mining ■ Agriculture
■ Energy ■ Transport ■ Retail

Figure 13: A breakdown of the sectors represented in the survey responses.



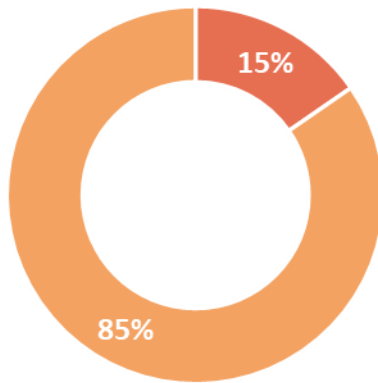
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Figure 14: A breakdown of the percentage of responses from business representatives when asked how important they think biodiversity is to their company's success on a scale of 1 (Not important at all) to 5 (Extremely important).



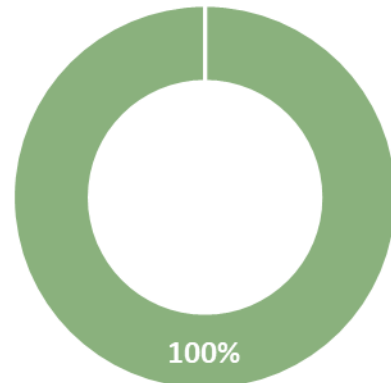
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Figure 15: A breakdown of the percentage of responses from business representatives when asked how important they think biodiversity is to South Africa's economy on a scale of 1 (Not important at all) to 5 (Extremely important).



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Figure 16: A breakdown of the percentage of responses from business representatives when asked how important they think biodiversity is to human health and wellbeing on a scale of 1 (Not important at all) to 5 (Extremely important).



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

Figure 17: A breakdown of the percentage of responses from business representatives when asked whether they think that biodiversity loss poses a risk to their company.

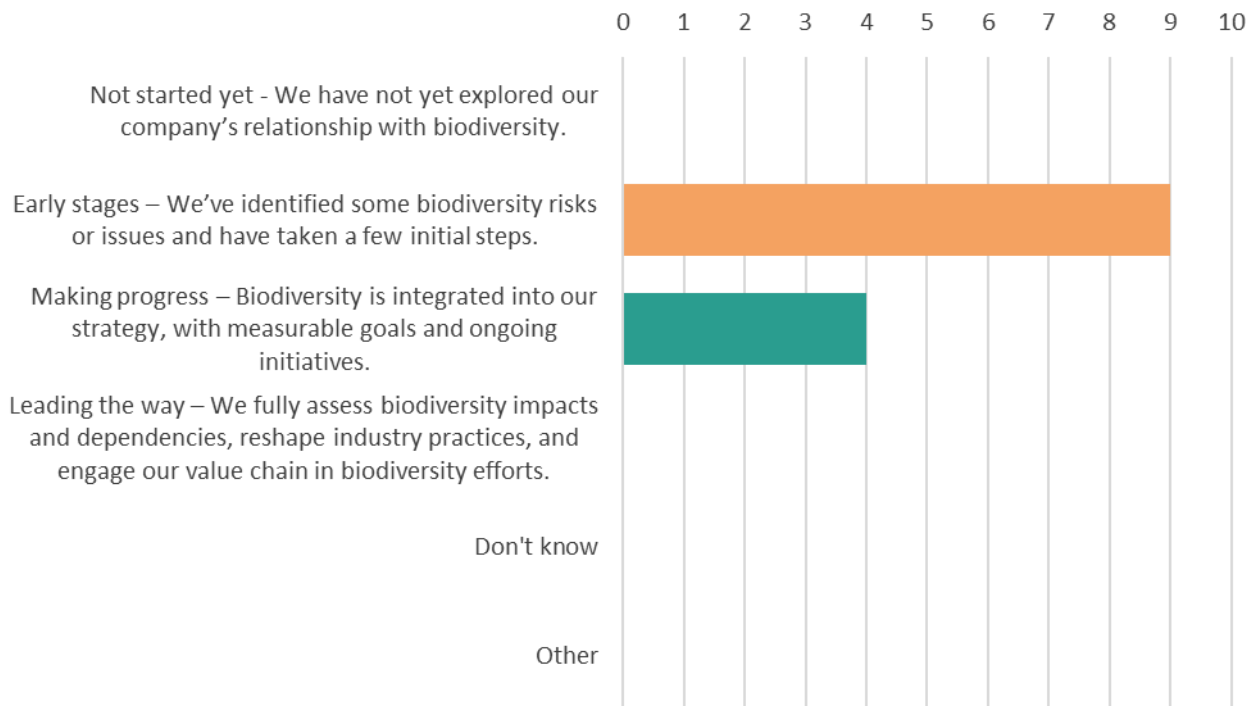


Figure 18: Responses from business representatives when asked where they would place their company on its journey towards biodiversity action.



Figure 19: Responses from business representatives when asked what, if any, are the focus areas of their company’s biodiversity efforts.

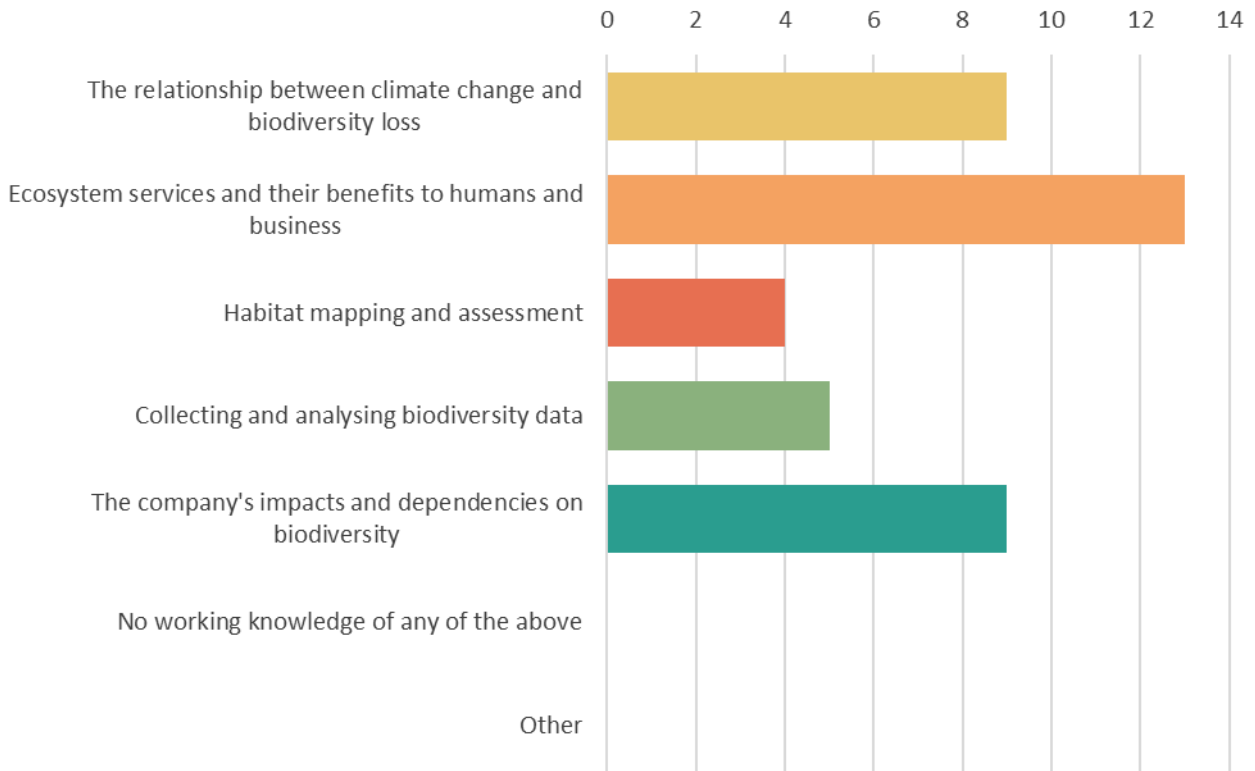


Figure 20: Responses from business representatives when asked if their company has a working understanding of the above topics.

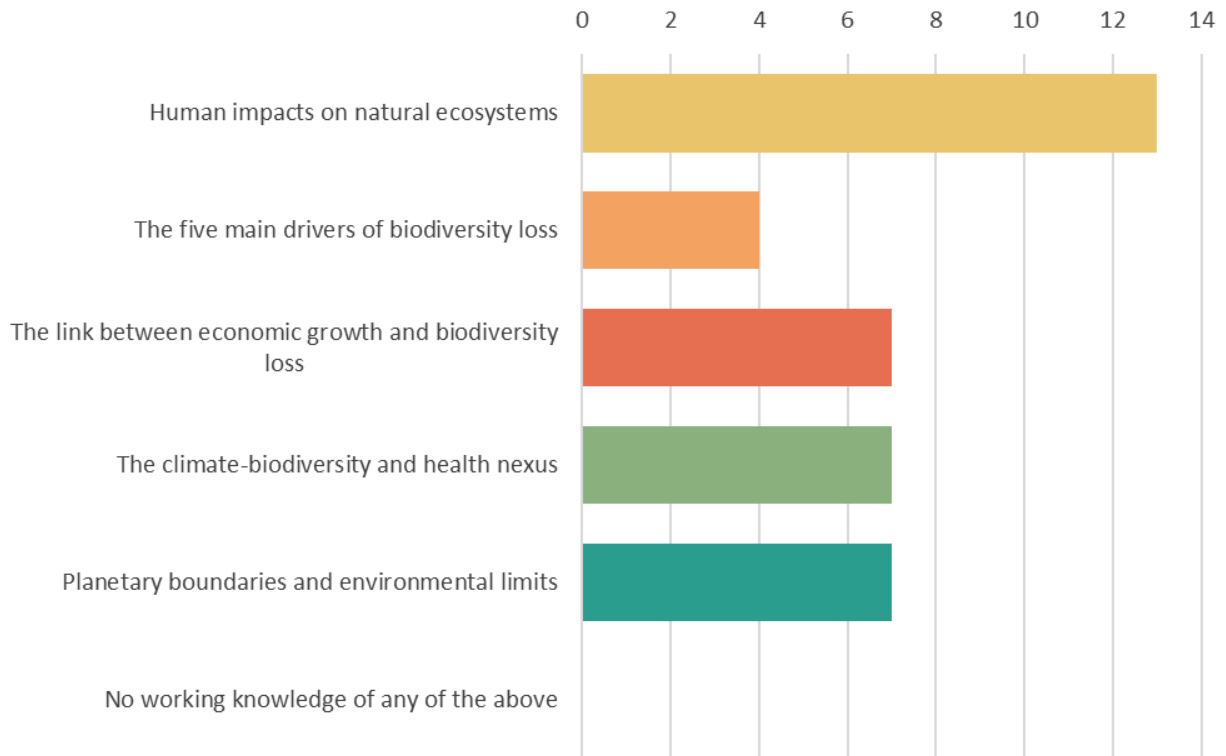


Figure 21: Responses from business representatives when asked if their company has a working understanding of the above topics.

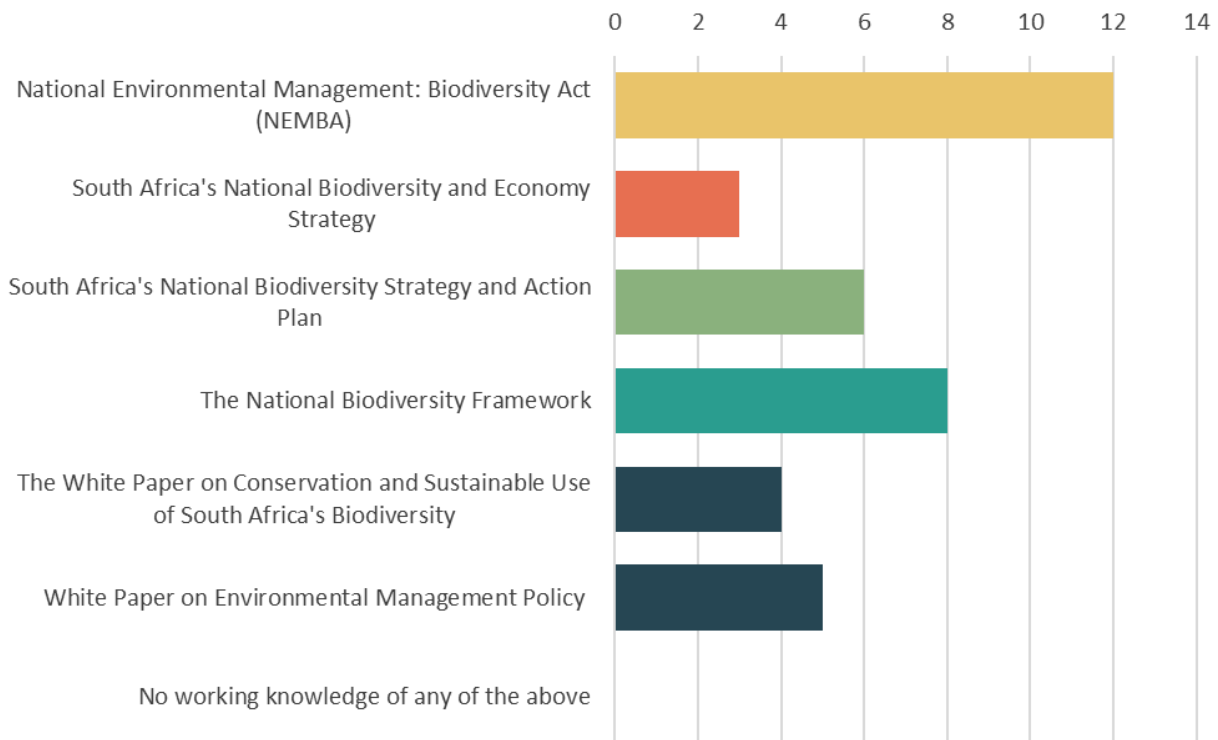


Figure 22: Responses from business representatives when asked if their company has a working understanding of the above legislation and policy.

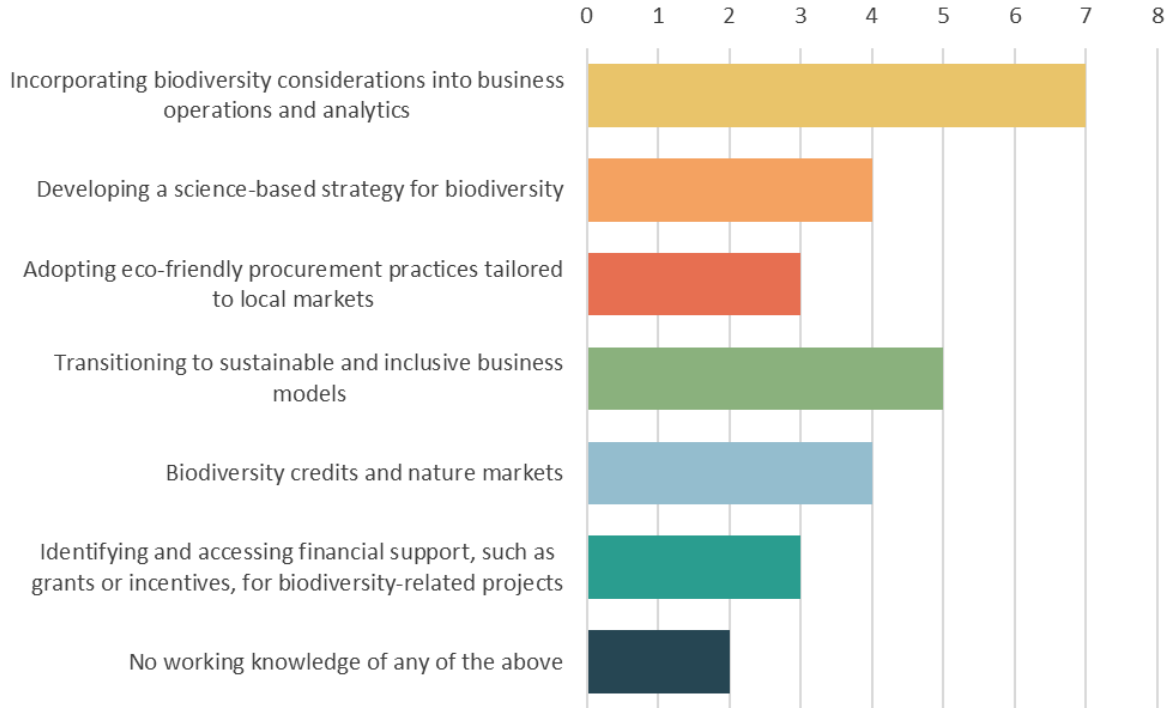


Figure 23: Responses from business representatives when asked if their company has expertise in or understanding of the above topics.

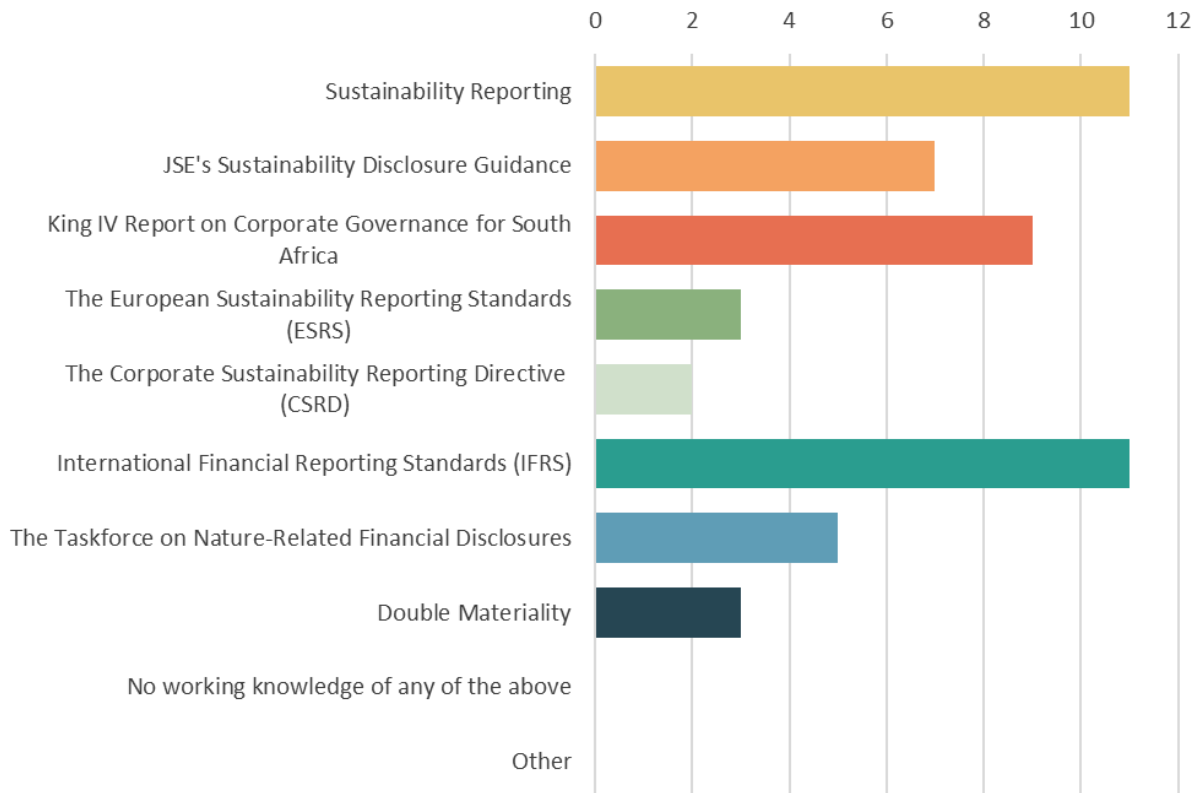


Figure 24: Responses from business representatives when asked which reporting guidelines, if any, their company has a working understanding of.

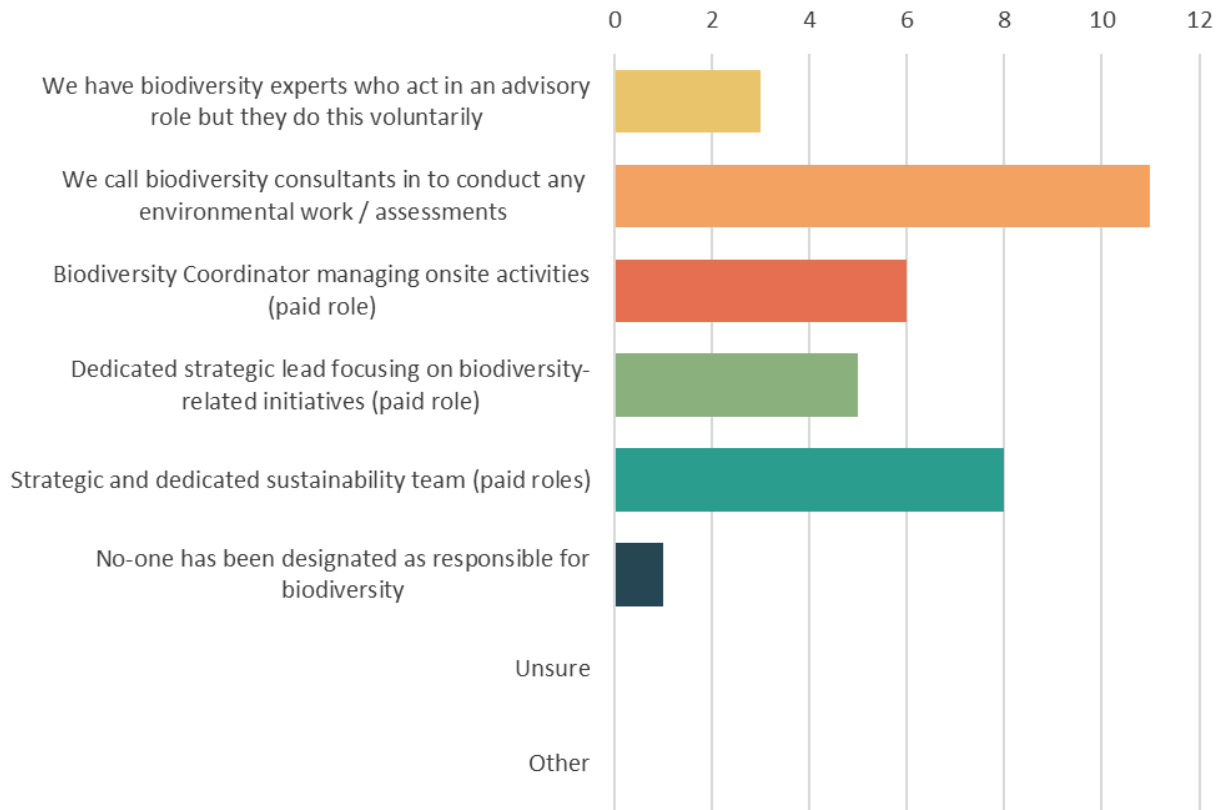


Figure 25: Responses from business representatives when asked which nature-related roles are represented in their company.

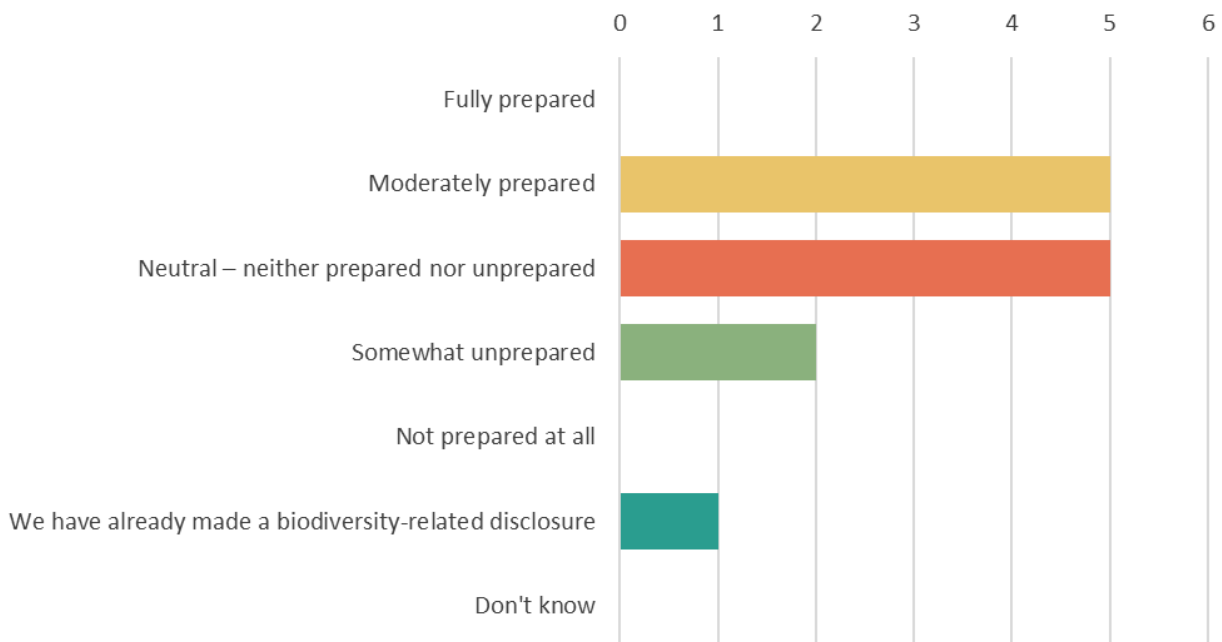


Figure 26: Responses from business representatives when asked how prepared they believe their company is to start reporting on biodiversity-related impacts, dependencies, risks, and opportunities.

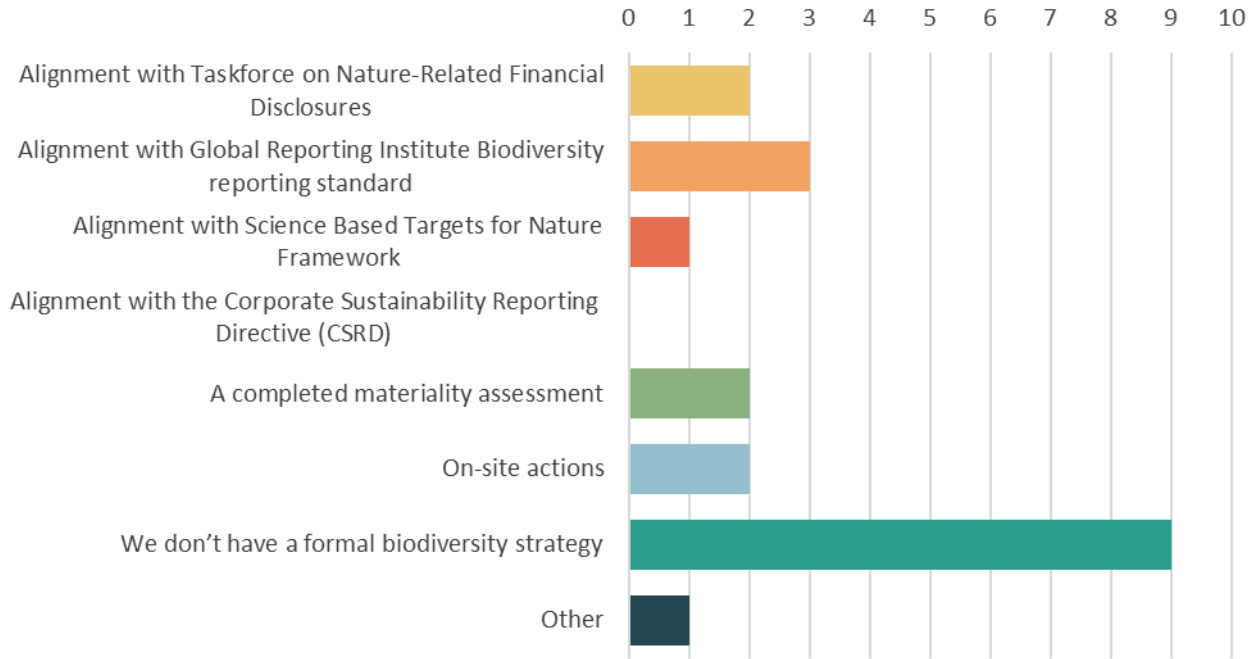


Figure 27: Responses from business representatives when asked which, if any, of the various disclosure guidelines is included in their company's formal biodiversity strategy.

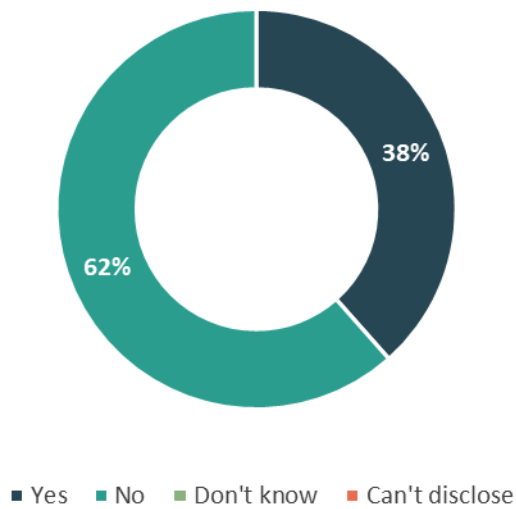


Figure 28: Responses from business representatives when asked if their company has a dedicated budget specifically allocated for biodiversity initiatives.

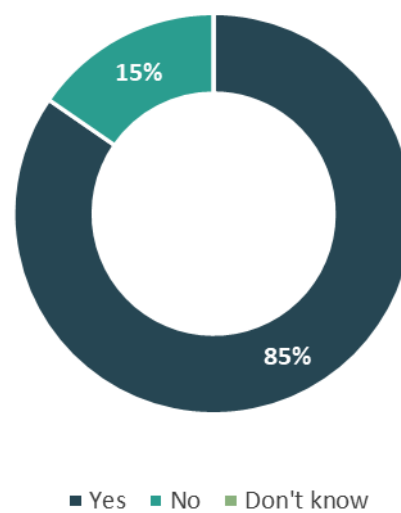


Figure 29: Responses from business representatives when asked whether they think their company requires additional training or capacity-building in biodiversity.

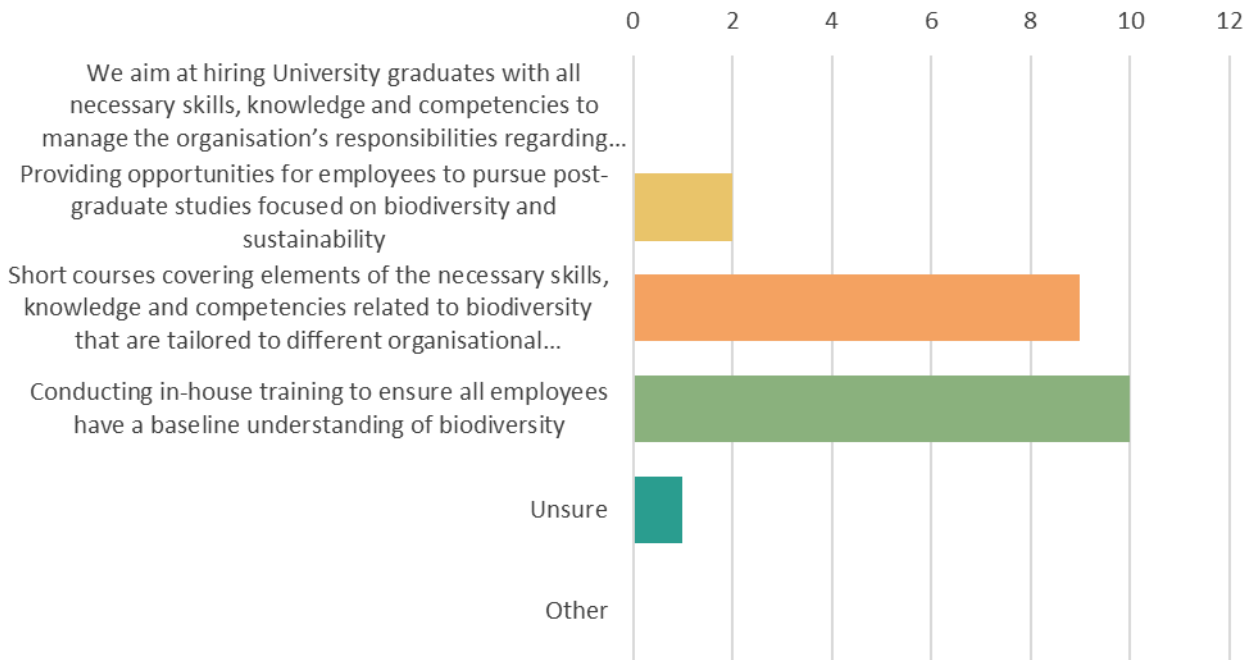


Figure 30: Responses from business representatives when asked which training method would be useful to increase biodiversity skills, knowledge or competencies within their company.

Based on the discussions from the four BAG meetings, we gathered insights from company representatives about their current efforts to support biodiversity targets. Figure 31 below provides a visual representation of the actions that companies are already taking and how these might align with the GBF targets and themes. The main GBF themes emerging are **'Implementation and Mainstreaming,' 'Reducing Threats,'** and **'Sustainable Use and Benefit Sharing,'** in that order. Notably, there is significant alignment with Target 15 (Business) and Target 19 (Finance).

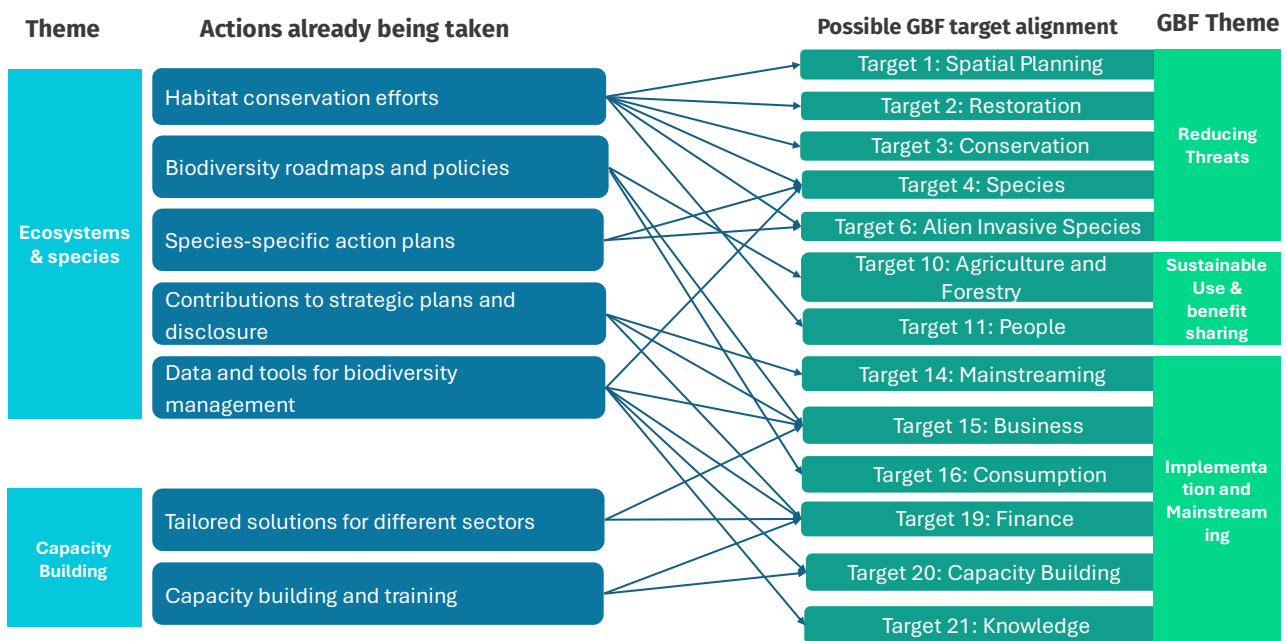


Figure 31: Current actions being taken by companies, and their possible alignment with various targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Based on the discussions from the four BAG workshops, we also gathered insights from company representatives about what they see as future action points when it comes to supporting biodiversity targets. Figure 32 below provides a visual representation of the actions that companies are aiming at taking and how these might align with the GBF targets and themes. The main GBF themes emerging are **‘Implementation and Mainstreaming,’** with many of the arrows pointing towards this theme, thereafter, **‘Reducing Threats,’** and **‘Sustainable Use and Benefit Sharing,’** in that order. Not surprisingly, there is still significant alignment with Targets 15 (Business) and 19 (Finance), with Target 19 showing quite a substantial uptick in recognition, and Target 20 (Capacity Building), showing more interest.

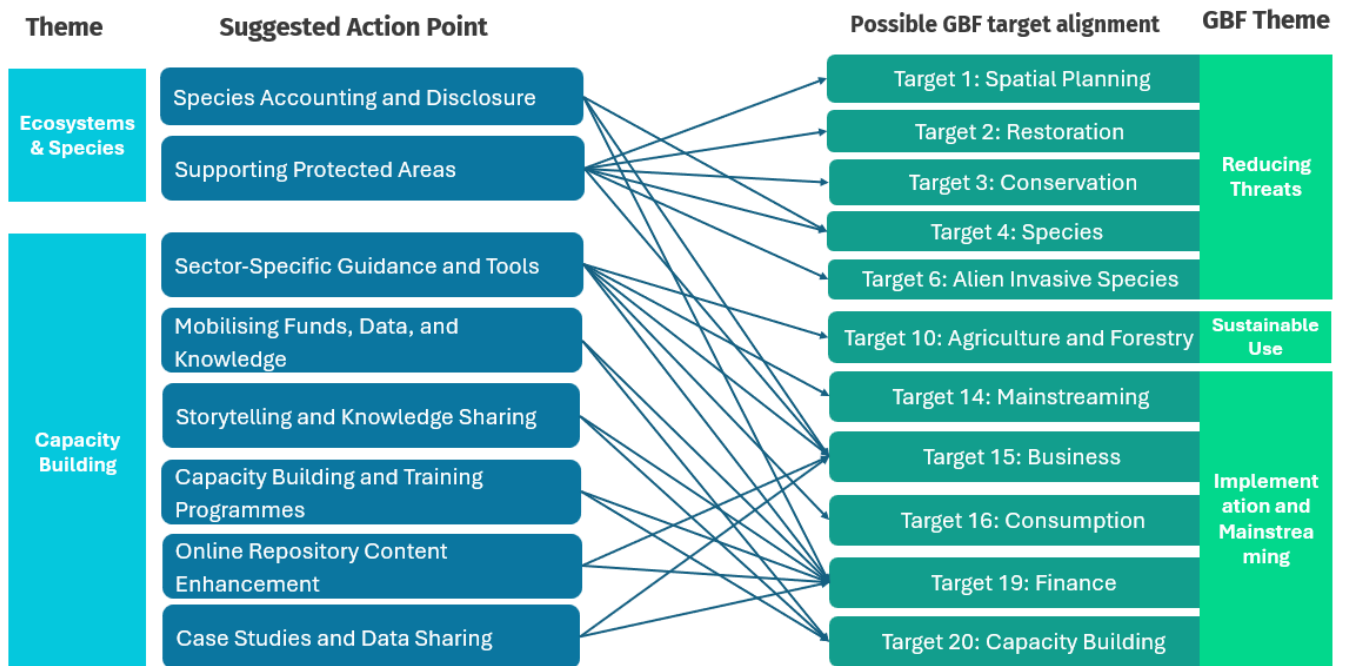


Figure 32: Future actions that companies are aiming to take, and their possible alignment with various targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.



'Biodiversity is your Business' | Hybrid Webinar Event held on 2 December 2024



Figure 33: Panel One discussion: "Reflections from the Business Advisory Group: Achievements, Challenges, and Insights".



Figure 34: Panel Two discussion: "Engagement and Feedback from Broader Stakeholders".



Figure 35: Members of the audience at the *Biodiversity is your Business* hybrid webinar event.

“ The Biodiversity is your Business webinar was fantastic, and I deeply appreciated the valuable insights shared. Looking forward to more of your inspiring events in the future! ”

– Online participant

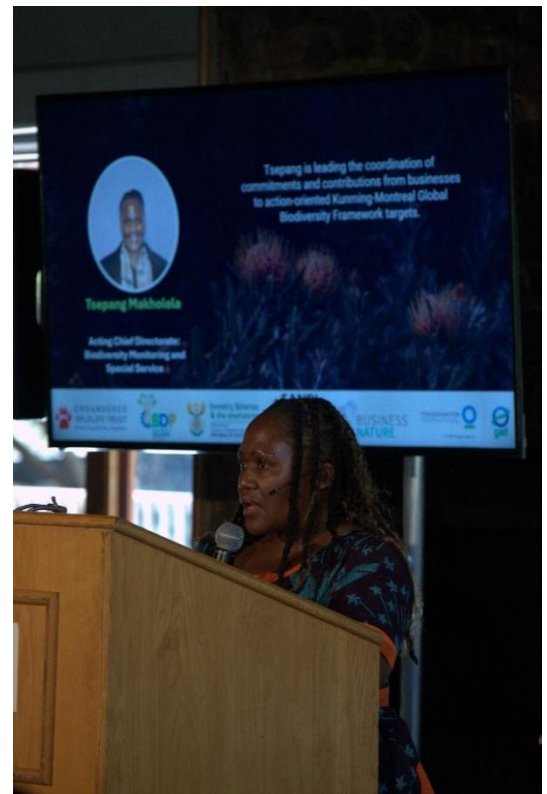


Figure 36: Keynote address by Tsepang Makholela, Chief Director: Biodiversity Monitoring and Specialist Services at the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).

“ Thanks to the [Endangered Wildlife Trust](#) team for steering the advisory group. Fantastic series of in-person and hybrid meetings throughout this year with a wide range of stakeholders who are all passionate about contributing to nature positive outcomes. ”

– BAG member

A South African Perspective

South Africa’s Current National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)



A look inside South Africa’s current NBSAP: [South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan \(NBSAP\) 2015-2025](#) outlines the country's strategic approach to biodiversity management and conservation. The plan aims to ensure that biodiversity assets and ecological infrastructure continue to support South Africa's development path, providing essential services and underpinning the economy.

Vision: “Conserve, manage and sustainably use biodiversity to ensure equitable benefits to the people of South Africa, now and in the future.” – Page 24

South Africa’s NBSAP concerning Business:

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** Emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder cooperation in biodiversity management, particularly at the ecosystem level, involving various role players across different landscapes (p. 14).
- **National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN):** The Endangered Wildlife Trust’s NBBN promotes collaboration between businesses and the biodiversity sector, aiming to integrate biodiversity into business practices and encourage corporate investment in conservation (p. 14).
- **Biodiversity Stewardship:** Engages private and communal landowners in conserving critical biodiversity areas, highlighting the role of biodiversity in job creation and economic growth while protecting natural resources (p. 29).
- **Corporate Funding for NGOs:** Acknowledges the role of NGOs in the biodiversity sector by accessing corporate funding and partnering with the public sector, offering innovation and flexibility that the government may lack (p. 14).

South Africa’s NBSAP mentions the word ‘Business’ 7 times

South African Companies and Sustainability Reports

Regarding the reality for South Africa in terms of ESG disclosure practices, a survey conducted by KPMG ([Survey of Sustainability Reporting 2022](#)) examined trends on this topic worldwide, the report included South Africa. For each country analysed in the study (58 in total), the top 100 companies with the highest revenue in sales were evaluated.



According to the [KPMG Report: Global-Survey-of-Sustainability-Reporting-2022](#), South Africa ranked in the top 20 countries surveyed (out of 58 in total) as having sustainability reporting rates higher than 90% - Page 16. In addition, South Africa ranks high with 95% of its N100 companies incorporating sustainability information in their annual financial reports - Page 20.

A summary based on the KPMG report for South African companies:

1. **Percentage of South African Companies Reporting on ESG Aspects:** 92% of South Africa's largest companies in the N100 report on environmental risks, highlighting a high level of ESG engagement - Page 64.

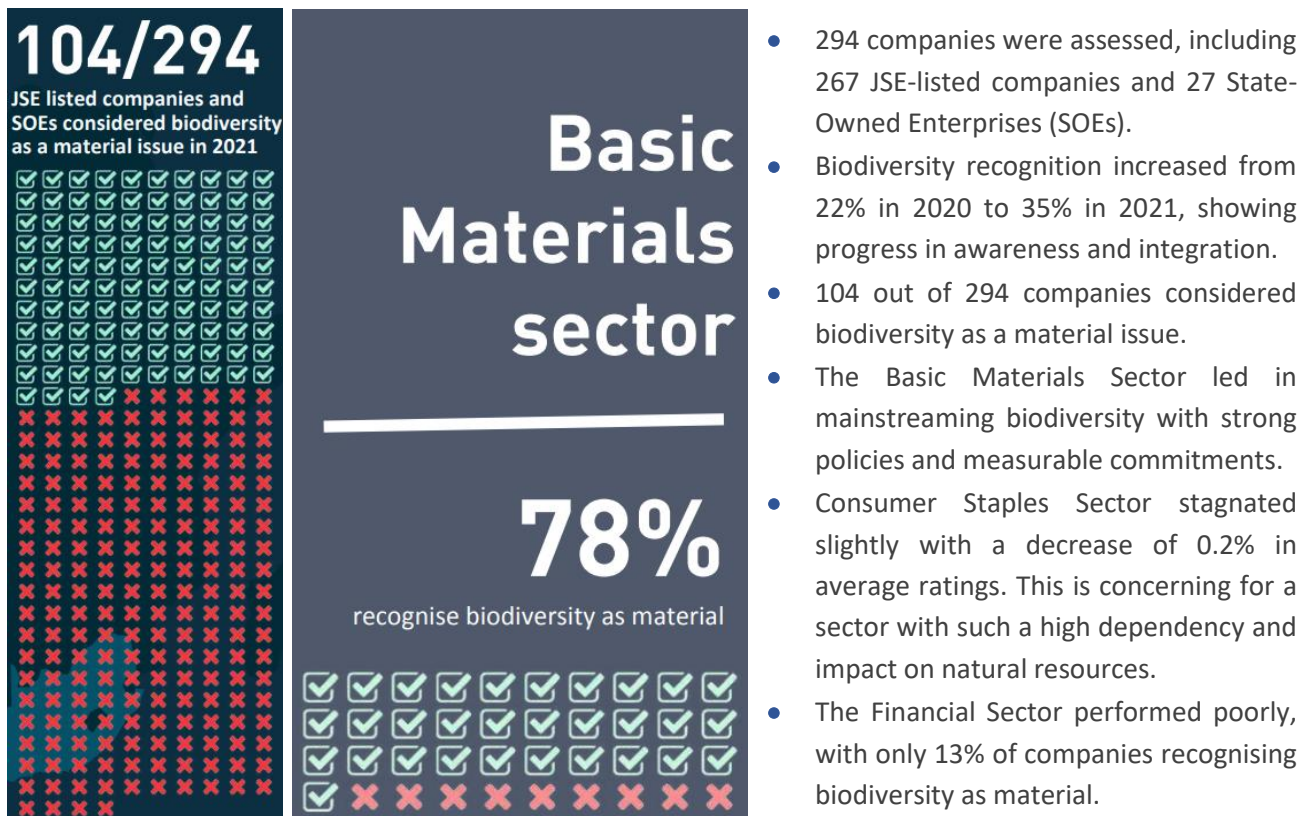
South Africa: 92% of N100 companies reporting on environmental risks

2. **TCFD adoption:** Around 63% of South African companies report in line with the TCFD recommendations - Page 49.
3. **Biodiversity reporting:** The top four N100 reporters are the UK (77 %), Thailand (68 %), South Africa (68 %) and Japan (64 %) - Page 53.
4. **Main method for producing sustainability reports:** South African companies predominantly use the [Johannesburg Stock Exchange \(JSE\) reporting guidelines](#), which aligns with global frameworks like the GRI Standards, the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations, and the International Integrated Reporting Council's (IIRC) Integrated Reporting Framework - Page 23.

While the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) standards are recognised globally, their adoption in South Africa is less prevalent compared to the GRI Standards. The [JSE Group Guidance](#) encourages companies to consider multiple frameworks to enhance the quality and comparability of their sustainability disclosures.

A summary based on the 2021 Biodiversity Performance Ratings report for JSE listed South African companies:

The [Biodiversity Performance Ratings of South African Companies report](#), an output of the Endangered Wildlife Trust's Biodiversity Disclosure Project conducted for the year 2021, provides further information on South African companies and their ratings when it comes to biodiversity reporting.



Takeaways from the BDP Ratings report:

- Biodiversity disclosure often lacks quantitative metrics, focusing more on narratives rather than measurable impacts.
- Many companies still lack comprehensive biodiversity strategies, targets, and action plans.
- While there was an improvement in disclosure and recognition of biodiversity risks, progress on meaningful action such as setting and achieving biodiversity targets remains limited.
- Key areas of stagnation include the development of biodiversity strategies and systematic biodiversity monitoring.

This report highlights the critical need for South African businesses to embed biodiversity into their strategies, not only to mitigate risks but also to seize opportunities for sustainable development. Key recommendations include improving quantitative disclosures, setting actionable targets, and cross-sector collaboration to drive impactful biodiversity outcomes.

High-Level Case Study Review of 6 Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) Listed Companies

As part of the deliverables for the BAAP project, the Biodiversity Disclosure Project team conducted a pilot case-study in 2024 to assess six companies listed on the JSE, focusing on how well their public disclosures align with the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

These 6 companies were pre-screened based on their performance in the 2021/2022 Biodiversity Performance Ratings of South African companies report and their representation of various sectors.

This study addresses the broad themes of each of the targets instead of specifics of the targets, its indicators and intended outcomes.

Aim: The aim of this preliminary study was to identify opportunities where businesses can best contribute to the GBF targets and the upcoming South African national targets. We looked at the capacity of businesses within the 4 chosen sectors to respond to the targets. The case study was not a critique of the company’s current commitments but a tool to inform government on where and how companies in these sectors are already making progress. Relevant examples of progress being made by each of the companies were classed in terms of the following criteria:

Acknowledgement → Disclosure → Commitment → Action ↔ Opportunity

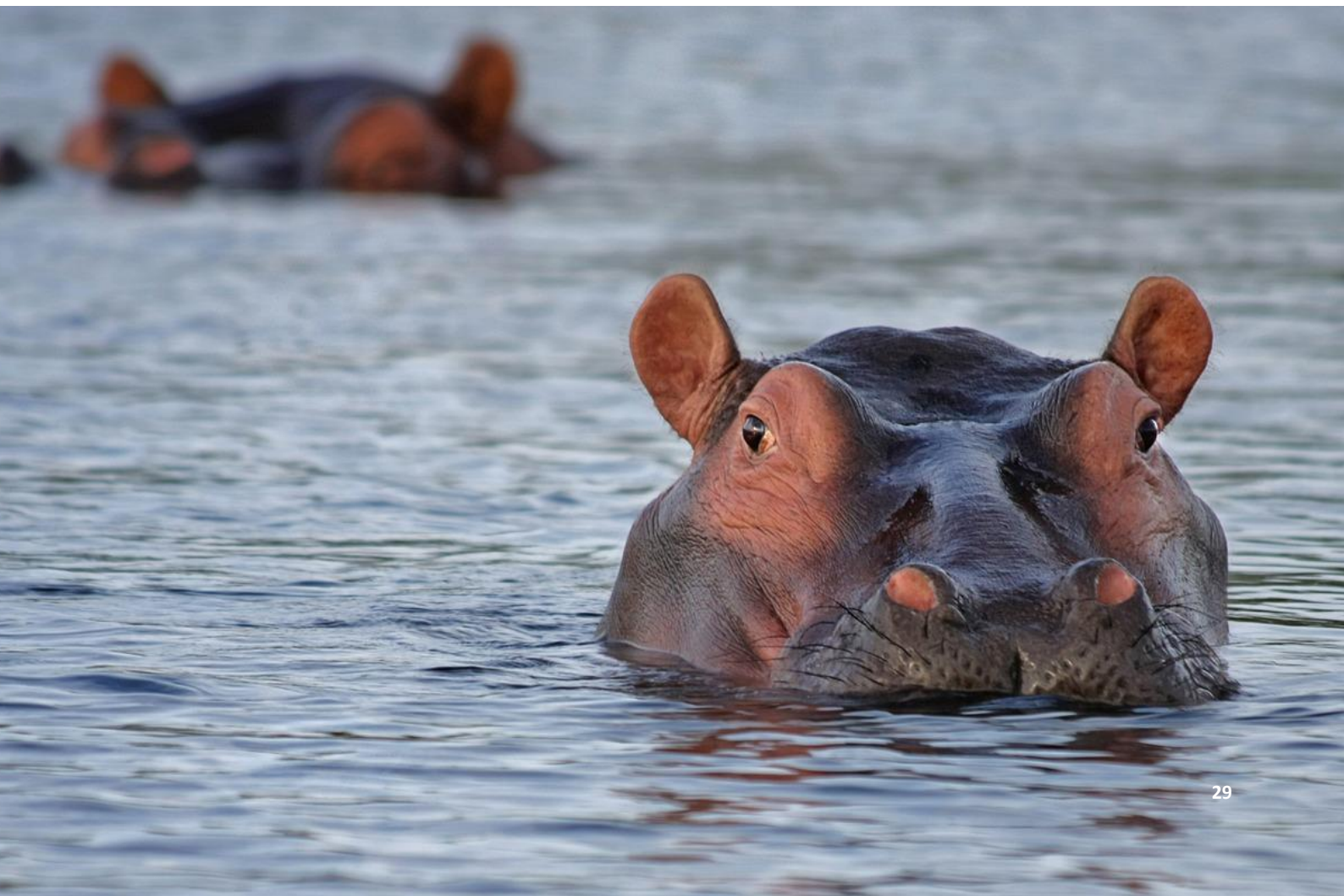
Acknowledgement	The company is expressing awareness of the issue raised by this target and/or their role in addressing it
Disclosure	The company is disclosing information or its impacts, risks and/or dependencies aligned with the target
Commitment	Commitments should ideally be Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) goals or targets
Action	Reporting back on commitments and activities aligned with the target
Opportunity	Where the company recognizes the topic but does not link it to biodiversity

Methods: A detailed review of publicly disclosed information of each of the 6 companies included an analysis of the companies' 2023 Integrated and Annual Reports, Sustainability Reports and associated disclosures, together with information published on company websites. We analysed the companies' responses to the targets of the GBF and used a set of questions per each of the targets.

Sustainability reporting, including biodiversity reporting has historically been qualitative and narrative driven. This makes it challenging to derive tangible results on a business's biodiversity performance and draw fair comparisons. For this pilot study we used a progressive set of criteria that assesses both qualitative statements and quantitative data being disclosed.

Results: While Target 15 of the GBF is often viewed as "the business target", **this study demonstrated that business contributions are not limited to Target 15**. Based on this study, information provided in companies' annual reports already aligns with 18 of the 23 GBF targets. Additionally, actions that are currently being taken by companies align with other targets such as Target 1 – *Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss* – and Target 6 – *Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact*.

This study also revealed that **there are opportunities for businesses to link relevant topics that they report on to biodiversity**. For example, regarding Target 8 – *Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience* – many companies already acknowledge climate change, and report on their various scopes of emissions, but most have yet to link Climate Change and its effects to biodiversity. A visual summary of the results of this study is provided on page 29, Figure 37.



		Acknowledgement	Disclosure	Commitment	Action	Opportunity
1	Spatial Planning	●	●	●●●	●●●	●
2	Restoration		●	●●	●	
3	Conservation		●●		●●	●●●
4	Species		●			
5	Wildlife Harvesting	●●	●	●●		
6	Invasive Species	●			●●●	●
7	Pollution	●			●●	●●
8	Climate	●				●●●●●
9	Sustainable Use					
10	Agriculture & Forestry		●●	●●●	●	
11	People	●		●	●●	
12	Urban Areas					●
13	Access & Benefit Sharing					
14	Mainstreaming			●		
15	Business	●	●●●●●	●		●
16	Consumption	●●		●●		
17	Biotechnology					
18	Subsidies					
19	Finance					●
20	Capacity Building	●				
21	Information	●				
22	Indigenous People					●
23	Gender					

Figure 37: Summary of the review of publicly disclosed information from six companies for alignment with one or more of the 23 GBF targets. Each dot in a column represents a company that aligned with a GBF target either through acknowledgement of an issue, disclosure of information, commitment to a goal, reporting of an action, or an opportunity to link a mentioned topic to biodiversity.

Conclusion: This case study highlighted the significant potential for businesses across all sectors to contribute to national and global biodiversity goals. While only a handful of leading companies were used in this study, the results show a growing trend toward aligning with the GBF and national policies.

With private companies owning 25% of South Africa’s land—more than double the area currently under formal protection—private enterprises play a critical role in identifying and managing land for biodiversity.

Privately owned land will form a significant proportion of South Africa’s contribution to Target 1 and Target 3 of the GBF and could play a pivotal role, either as formally protected areas or through Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECM’s).

Businesses display a greater focus on climate commitments, and while they make ambitious commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they generally do not draw the causal link of Climate Change as a major impact driver of biodiversity loss nor readily identify nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches in their climate strategies. ***Target 15 presents an opportunity for businesses to enhance accountability by reporting not only on biodiversity risks but also on their progress in reducing impacts.***

Case studies like this have the potential to assist other companies to adopt biodiversity mainstreaming practices by providing tangible examples and showcasing progress toward GBF goals. Additionally, this case-study provides insights for government into which sectors and companies are already taking steps toward biodiversity mainstreaming and aligning with global and national policies. This has the potential to encourage more business-government dialogue and assist in providing valuable insights for national target-setting and business stakeholder input into the process of updating South Africa’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).



The South African Legal Perspective

Introduction:

As part of the Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet (BAAP) project, an output of the work included conducting a review on South African Legislation as it pertains to the environment but also to business. The purpose of this high-level review is to provide an overview of South Africa's environmental law and policy relating to business as part of the deliverables for the Business for Nature (BfN) BAAP project. In partnership with the [EWT LAWS Unit](#), the review covers relevant key environmental laws and policies however this is not an exhaustive review of applicable law or policy but rather a high-level overview to the environmental legal framework.

The South African Constitution includes a dedicated environmental right in section 24 providing that:

Everyone has the right –

- (a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
- (b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –
 - (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
 - (ii) promote conservation; and
 - (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

To support the realization of Section 24 of the Constitution, a wide range of legislation has been promulgated, specifically the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and several specific environmental management acts.

Specific environmental management acts are the:

- Environment Conservation Act 73 of 1989;
- National Water Act 36 of 1998 (NWA);
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 (NEMPAA);
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (NEMBA);
- National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act 39 of 2004 (NEMAQA);
- National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008 (NEMICMA);
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008 (NEMWA);
- World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999 (WHCA);

Gaps and Opportunities for Mainstreaming

A number of opportunities for mainstreaming have been identified and the following opportunities are considered: more effective public participation processes, establishing incentives, policy to address green washing and the role of business in supporting the realisation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets.

Mainstreaming Public Participation

NEMA includes a dedicated environmental management principle on public participation “the participation of all interested and affected parties in environmental governance must be promoted...”

There are four generally accepted levels of public participation, inform, consult, involve and collaborate.

- At the **inform** level the public is provided with information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.
- At the **consult** level the public is invited to provide feedback, input or comment on analyses, alternatives and/or decisions.
- At the **involve** level the public is provided with opportunity for dialogue and interaction.
- At the **collaborate** level the public is provided with opportunity to partner or work jointly with decision-makers and the identification of the preferred solution.

Public participation in environmental decisions, law and policy tends to take place across the first three levels, with limited opportunities for participation at the collaborate level. This is the first opportunity to mainstream business into biodiversity law and policy: unlock opportunities for collaboration in environmental legislation and policy.

Through the Biodiversity Disclosure Project (BDP), the National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN) assesses corporate biodiversity impact and actively engages with companies to disclose and continuously improve their biodiversity-related performance. As part of this project, the NBBN held a series of four Biodiversity Business Advisory Group (BAG) meetings in 2024. The aims of these meetings were to:

Facilitate interactive dialogue between businesses, and between business and government.

- **Deliver** key policy-related findings from the feedback of BAGs and stakeholder engagement focusing on a joint action plan for the NBSAP updating process.
- **Review** current alignment of companies in reporting against the GBF Targets.
- **Assess** progress towards national targets by non-state actors in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

In these meetings, representatives from various companies in different sectors met to discuss business and biodiversity, particularly in relation to the CBD’s GBF and South Africa’s NBSAP. Representatives from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment and the South African National Biodiversity Institute were present at these meetings. This is a key foundation for future collaborative level participation of business in the environment legal framework.

Incentives for Good Environmental Practices

There are two broad categories of environmental compliance and enforcement mechanisms:

1. command-and-control mechanisms which prescribe obligations with criminal, administrative or civil controls becoming applicable where the obligation is not met.
2. alternative compliance mechanisms, which include market-based instruments (MBI) and co-regulatory instruments.

MBI can be defined as a package of policy instruments that seek to correct environmentally related market failures through the price mechanism. MBIs include revenue raising instruments (specifically environmental-related taxes) levies and user-charges; deposit-refund systems; and targeted subsidies. It is beyond the scope of this review to assess MBI in relation to business mainstreaming in biodiversity, but it is noted as a key

opportunity to be considered in future work, specifically in collaboration with business. It is also important that this is not limited to economic incentives, motivational incentives (to incentivise business to go beyond base legal requirements), and these should also be explored and developed.

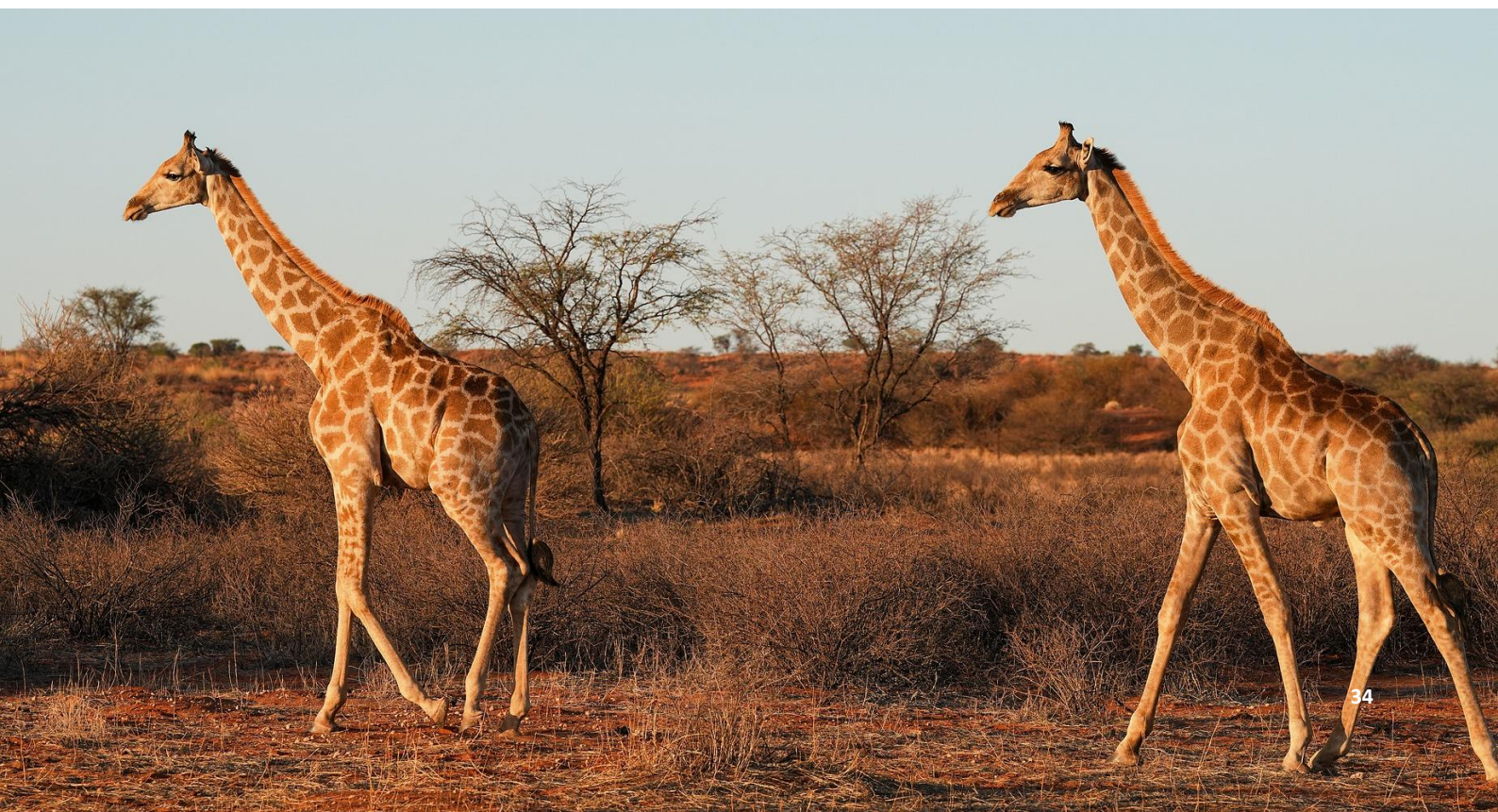
Co-regulatory instruments provide another approach to compliance. In a co-regulatory approach, the overall policy objective is set by the Government while businesses would determine, per negotiated agreement, the details (actions, targets etc.) to meet the policy objective. A key opportunity to support business mainstreaming lies in building on the solid foundation already established by NBBN, as outlined above.

Greenwashing Policy

Another alternative compliance mechanism is information-based instruments, which seek to enhance awareness on environmental issues and include eco-labelling. These information-based instruments allow for access to certain markets, promote a positive brand image and generate support for companies that themselves report to support ecological sustainability. However, a gap in South Africa that businesses themselves are primed to play a leading role in addressing is the issue of Greenwashing. Greenwashing can be defined as “misleading claims are made about the sustainability characteristics of a product or about environmental or sustainability practices.”

Example: TotalEnergies was found guilty of greenwashing by South Africa's Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB). The case involved an advertisement promoting the company's partnership with SANParks, in which TotalEnergies claimed, “We're committed to sustainable development and environmental protection.” Despite TotalEnergies' support for SANParks conservation efforts, the ARB found this claim misleading, as it did not align with the company's core fossil fuel extraction activities.

While there are laws seeking to prevent false statements / advertising to gain market advantage (see for example the [Competition Act 89 of 1998](#) and the [Consumer Protection Act 68 of 2008](#)) the South African legal framework is largely silent on greenwashing. To begin to address this gap, the [Biological Diversity Protocol \(BD Protocol\)](#), an output of the NBBN, has highlighted points to guide companies on the best ways to disclose information. These recommendations are aimed at helping companies avoid the trap of Greenwashing and allow them to follow a set of guidance steps on accounting and reporting principles.



Accounting and Reporting Principles

The BD Protocol is based on seven accounting and reporting principles which are derived, in part, from the [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#) and generally accepted financial accounting and reporting principles. These principles are intended to underpin all aspects of biodiversity impact accounting and reporting. Their application will endeavour to ensure that the biodiversity impact inventory constitutes a credible and unbiased representation of the company’s biodiversity impacts. These accounting and reporting principles are defined in Figure 38 below:

The BD Protocol is based on **seven accounting and reporting principles**:

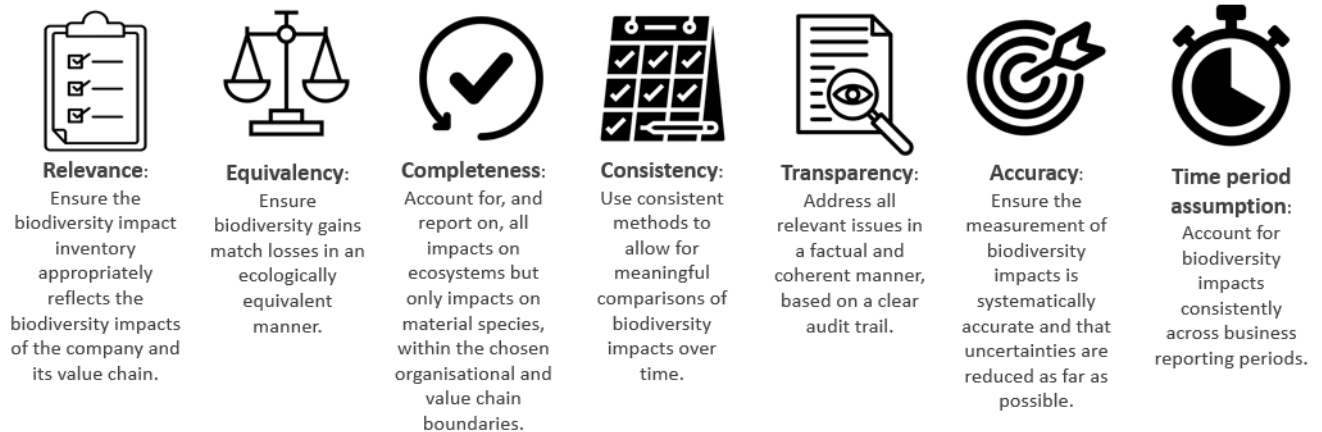


Figure 38: The seven accounting and reporting principles of the Biological Diversity Protocol which reduce the risk of greenwashing (found on page 33 in the [Biological Diversity Protocol](#))

Business and the GBF

The GBF states that national biodiversity strategies and action plans need to be revised or updated in alignment with the GBF, its goals and targets. National biodiversity strategies and action plans will be the main vehicle for implementation of the GBF, including establishing national targets. **To date there has been no engagement on revising the South African NBSAP or setting of domestic targets.** This is the first opportunity for business as a stakeholder group to guide how business can positively contribute to the GBF targets, particularly Target 15.

Drawing from the information above, a business led review of the GBF targets to develop measurable contributions to inform South Africa domestic targets is a first step to motivate for level four public participation (collaborate public participation) discussed above. This review can then form engagement with government to motivate for a co-regulation approach. It is submitted that this is a prime opportunity for business to mainstream themselves into biodiversity conservation as an active and critical stakeholder. In turn, by contributing to global objectives, businesses can demonstrate support for ambitious sustainability policies and accelerate the global transition to a net-zero, nature-positive and equitable world.

Conclusion

Through the mainstreaming opportunities discussed above, businesses can not only support or contribute to global objectives but be a leading stakeholder in their achievement. For true mainstreaming to occur, businesses need to move from a position of “what obligations are imposed” to “how can we positively contribute to biodiversity conservation” and use their inherent innovation, networks and resources to positively contribute to the realisation of societal and environmental goals.

Proposed Action Plan: Roadmap to 2030

This diagram outlines a strategic roadmap for businesses in South Africa to align with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) by 2030. It illustrates a step-by-step approach, starting with understanding biodiversity impacts in 2024, progressing through operational footprinting, collaboration, and management improvements, and culminating in measurable biodiversity outcomes by 2030.

Starting at step 1, each step builds on the previous one, emphasising biodiversity target setting, partnerships, accountability, and restoration efforts to achieve national and global conservation goals. It reflects the collaborative efforts of BAG members across various sectors and highlights their role in driving meaningful biodiversity outcomes.

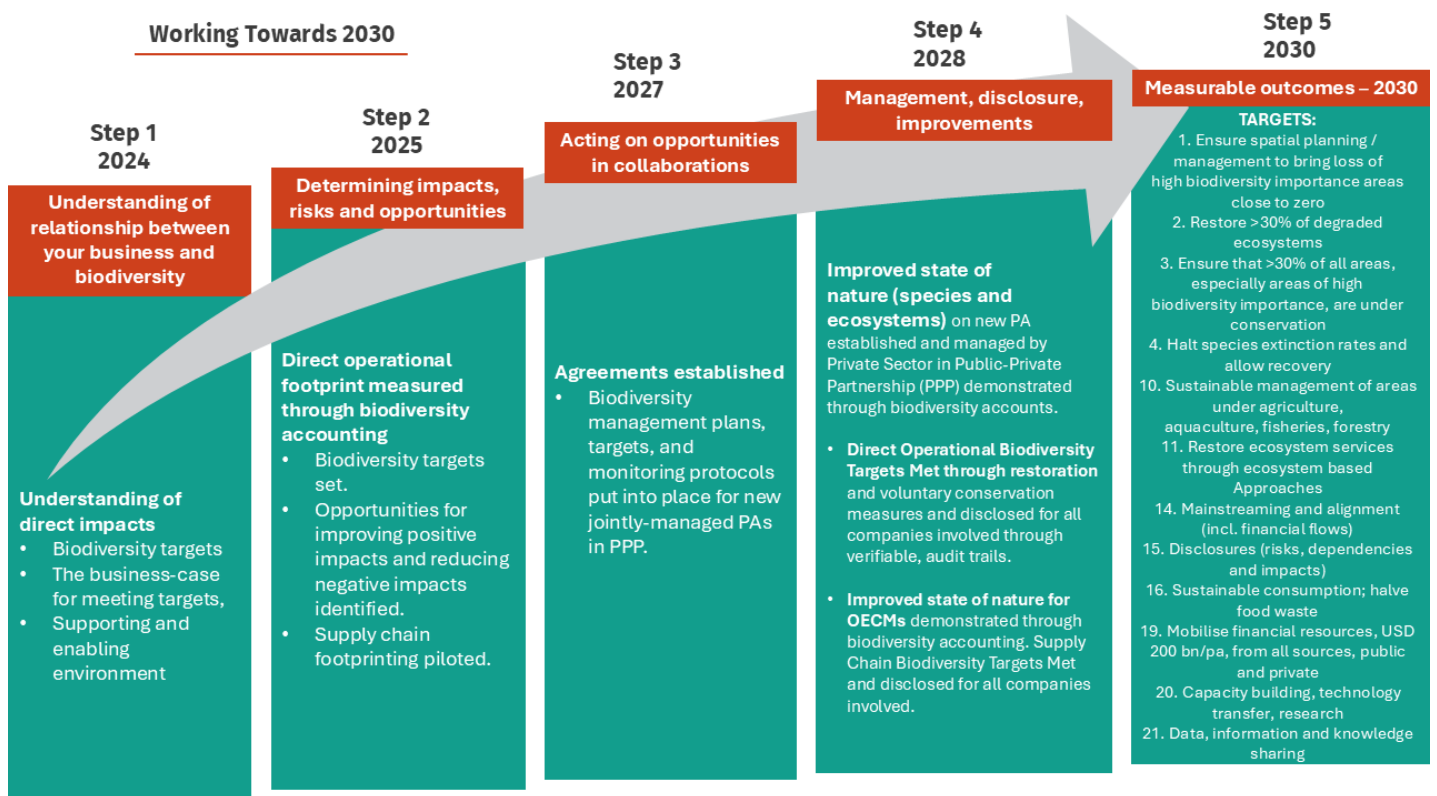


Figure 39: Five-Step action plan

The roadmap emphasises the importance of building a shared understanding of biodiversity impacts, risks, and opportunities within businesses. It encourages businesses to take measurable steps, from setting biodiversity targets to piloting innovative approaches such as biodiversity footprinting within supply chains.

The roadmap highlights the role of collaboration, with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) playing a central role in scaling conservation efforts, restoring degraded ecosystems, and managing new protected areas. BAG businesses have a unique opportunity to demonstrate leadership in biodiversity management by working collectively, sharing insights, and co-developing solutions with government, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

By 2030, the businesses involved in the BAG initiative are poised to deliver tangible contributions to national and global biodiversity goals. Their actions will:

- Help **restore** degraded landscapes and **halt species extinction** rates.
- **Promote sustainable use** of biodiversity resources in key industries.
- **Showcase** South Africa as a leader in **biodiversity mainstreaming** and corporate responsibility.

The roadmap is not only a tool for guiding action but also a testament to the commitment and potential of South African businesses. It positions them to influence national policy, support the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and inspire broader sectors to prioritise nature-positive practices.

2025-2027 - Strategic implementation (Steps 1- 3)

Operational integration:

- Set biodiversity targets within companies' operational footprints, focusing on land restoration, invasive species management, and species conservation.
- Piloting supply chain biodiversity footprinting in sectors that have direct impacts.

Collaborative actions:

- Form Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to co-manage protected areas, meeting GBF Target 3 (Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas).
- Implement biodiversity disclosure practices aligned with international frameworks, such as the TNFD.

Resource mobilisation and incentives:

- Identify and apply innovative financial mechanisms, including biodiversity credits, tax incentives, and nature-linked investment products.
- Enhance capacity for businesses to access funding through grants or partnerships with institutions like SANBI and JSE.

2028 - Scaling and alignment (Step 4)

Scaling best practices:

- Expand successful initiatives from pilot project to broader operations, leveraging lessons learned from case studies.
- Establish cross-sectoral platforms for businesses to collaborate and share biodiversity solutions.

Policy and framework alignment:

- Collaborate with government to streamline reporting requirements, reducing duplication and aligning with the GBF.
- Support sustainable consumption practices and halve food waste through corporate policies.

STEPS 1-3

STEP 4

2030 - Measurable outcomes are delivered (Step 5)

South Africa in 2030: Realising the GBF Targets By 2030, businesses, in collaboration with government, NGOs, and local communities, have significantly contributed to achieving the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets, resulting in:

New protected areas:

- 30% of South Africa's terrestrial and marine areas are formally protected, effectively conserved, and managed to maintain ecosystem health and resilience.

Restoration of degraded landscapes:

- Large-scale restoration projects have rehabilitated degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services like water purification and carbon sequestration.

Recovery of threatened species:

- Human-induced extinction rates have been halted, with targeted conservation efforts enabling the recovery of South Africa's iconic and endangered species.
- The private sector can contribute to the declaration, management and restoration of new Protected Areas with species recovery plans, while also meeting their own internal targets for direct operations and disclosing their impacts.

Sustainable use and Indigenous People's and Local Communities (IPLCs) rights:

- Sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries are implemented at scale, ensuring resource use benefits both biodiversity and local communities.
- The rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) are upheld, with equitable sharing of benefits derived from biodiversity.

Points to consider:

The following, derived from BAG discussions, are key tools in the process and progress towards achieving meaningful and measurable outcomes by year **2030**:

- ➔ **Capacity building:** Continued upskilling of employees and executives in biodiversity management.
- ➔ **Data and knowledge sharing:** Establish a national repository for biodiversity tools and frameworks.
- ➔ **Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships between businesses, NGOs, academia, and government.
- ➔ **Incentives:** Promote financial incentives for biodiversity actions and provide support for compliance.

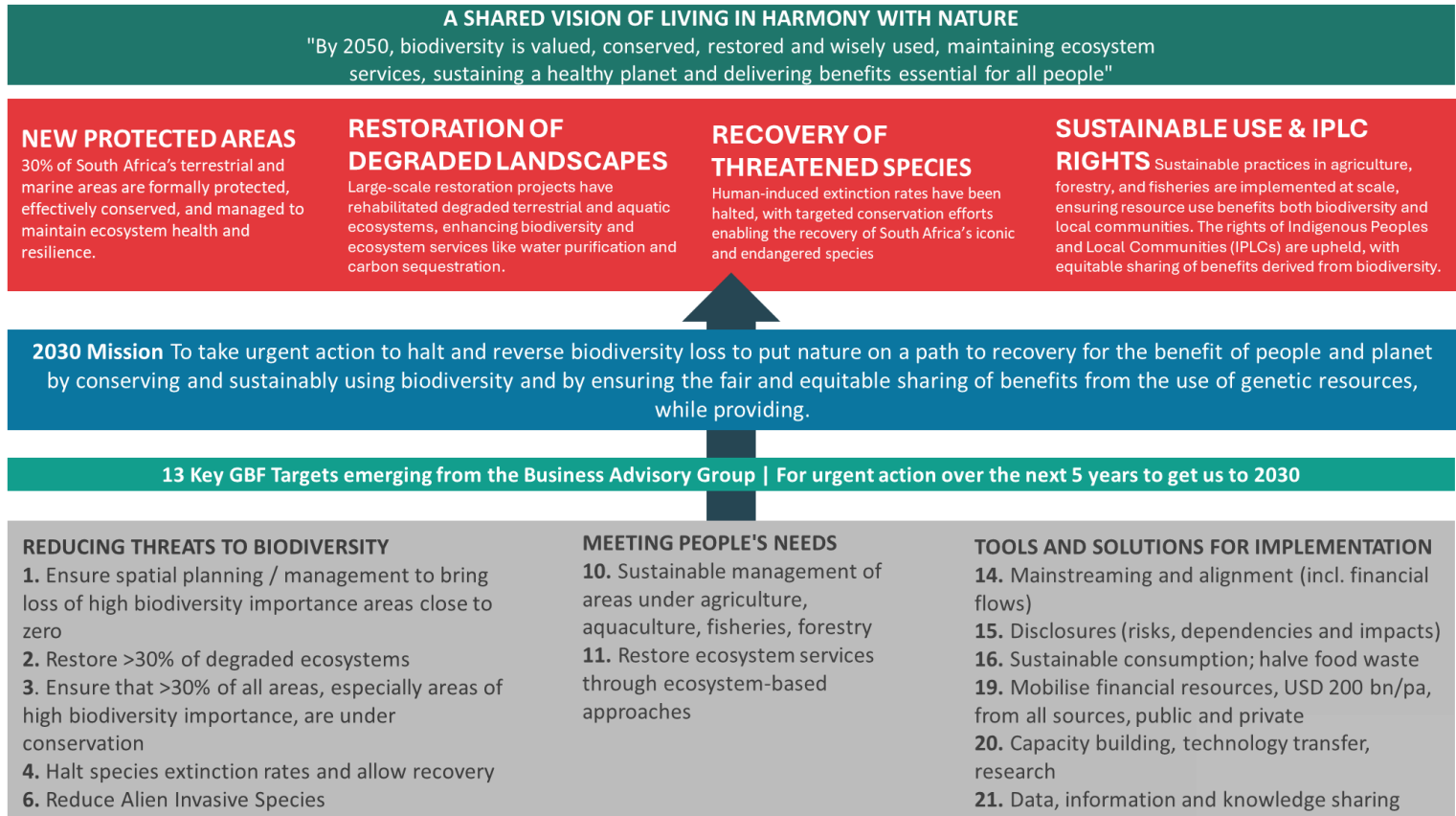


Figure 40: Thirteen Key emerging Targets from the BAG Project

There are 4 Key goals resulting from the 13 key targets:

- **Establishing new protected areas** – 30% of South Africa's terrestrial and marine areas are formally protected, effectively conserved, and managed to maintain ecosystem health and resilience.
- **Restoration of degraded landscapes** - Large-scale restoration projects have rehabilitated degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services like water purification and carbon sequestration.
- **Recovery of threatened species** – Human-induced extinction rates have been halted, with targeted conservation efforts enabling the recovery of South Africa's iconic and endangered species
- **Sustainable use and IPLC rights** – Sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries are implemented at scale, ensuring resource use benefits both biodiversity and local communities. The rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) are upheld, with equitable sharing of benefits derived from biodiversity.

The thirteen key emerging targets outlined above represent some of the findings from the Business Advisory Group (BAG) discussions as well as consultation sessions with businesses. These targets are grouped into three key themes: **Reducing Threats to Biodiversity, Meeting People's Needs, and Tools and Solutions for Implementation**. These priorities highlight the urgent need for businesses and stakeholders to take decisive action over the next five years to achieve progress toward South Africa's 2030 biodiversity mission and lay the groundwork for the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature. Thirteen out of the twenty-three GBF targets key targets have been identified, however, this does not mean that the other 10 targets aren't relevant to business, this is ultimately a representation of the targets shown to be the most relevant to corporate South Africa right now.

Priorities and Actions: Progress of Non-State Actors Towards National Targets

This review of current alignment of companies in reporting against the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets evaluates how businesses are disclosing biodiversity-related actions and impacts. The focus extends beyond Target 15 and indicates any contributions that are currently being made and how these align with:

1. **The 6 objectives of South Africa's current National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP);**
2. **The 23 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Targets and;**
3. **Any applicably identified Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

This work stems from insights gathered through the Business Advisory Group (BAG) process as well as consultation sessions with businesses and provides a set of case studies showcasing the alignment of corporate practices with GBF indicators.

Businesses play a pivotal role in achieving biodiversity goals, not only through compliance but by voluntarily embedding biodiversity considerations into their decision-making and operations. The review examines disclosures across industries involved in the BAG to identifying gaps, strengths, and opportunities for improvement.

Key objectives of this review include understanding how businesses assess, disclose, and mitigate biodiversity risks, how these align with South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the GBF goals and the SDG goals. Through this work, the review aims to strengthen business-government collaboration and inform policy development while advancing the Kunming-Montreal GBF's global biodiversity targets. Further opportunities for this work will include updating the alignment with the strategic objectives of South Africa's revised NBSAP once it is released.



Mapping of sector priority actions against NBSAP objectives, GBF targets, and SDGs



Table 2 How actions being taken by companies within the Agriculture sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Agriculture













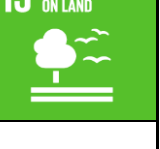



















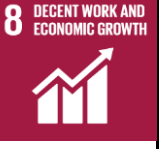
NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T6: Invasive Alien Species  T7: Pollution Reduction  T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change	 	 
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making		
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T16: Sustainable Consumption and Reduced Waste  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 	
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 	
6: Effective knowledge foundations , including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T23: Gender Equality	 	

Table 3 How actions being taken by companies within the Forestry sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Forestry




































NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T6: Invasive Alien Species  T7: Pollution Reduction  T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change	 	 
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making		
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T16: Sustainable Consumption and Reduced Waste  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 	
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making	 	
6: Effective knowledge foundations , including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making  T23: Gender Equality	 	

Table 4 How actions being taken by companies within the Manufacturing sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Manufacturing






















NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery	 14 LIFE BELOW WATER  15 LIFE ON LAND	
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T6: Invasive Alien Species  T7: Pollution Reduction  T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change	 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  13 CLIMATE ACTION  15 LIFE ON LAND	
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T22: Participation in Decision Making	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
6: Effective knowledge foundations , including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T23: Gender Equality	 5 GENDER EQUALITY	

Table 5 How actions being taken by companies within the Retail sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Retail










































NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity	 14 LIFE BELOW WATER  15 LIFE ON LAND	
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T6: Invasive Alien Species  T7: Pollution Reduction  T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change	 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  13 CLIMATE ACTION  15 LIFE ON LAND	
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T16: Sustainable Consumption and Reduced Waste  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making	 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  14 LIFE BELOW WATER  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  15 LIFE ON LAND	
6: Effective knowledge foundations, including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making  T23: Gender Equality	 2 ZERO HUNGER  5 GENDER EQUALITY  8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	

Table 6 How actions being taken by companies within the Transport sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Transport






































NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems		
	 T3: 30x30 Protection		
	 T4: Species Recovery		
	 T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems		
	 T6: Invasive Alien Species		
	 T7: Pollution Reduction		
	 T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change		
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making		
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	 T20: Capacity Building		
	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge		
	 T22: Participation in Decision Making		
6: Effective knowledge foundations, including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T20: Capacity Building		
	 T22: Participation in Decision Making		
	 T23: Gender Equality		

Table 7 How actions being taken by companies within the Finance sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Finance






















NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals
<p>1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced</p>	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity	<p>The financial sector's priority actions for biodiversity have not been tied to specific SDGs:</p> <p>Finance acts as a cross-cutting enabler, impacting multiple SDGs rather than a single goal.</p> <p>By building capacity, developing nature-positive policies, embedding nature in risk systems, and engaging with high-impact businesses, the financial sector indirectly supports all SDGs.</p> <p>The focus is on creating a systemic shift within financial institutions that ultimately benefits biodiversity while fostering sustainable development across sectors.</p>
<p>2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society</p>	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T6: Invasive Alien Species  T7: Pollution Reduction  T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change	
<p>3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors</p>	 T14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision Making  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity	
<p>4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity</p>	 T16: Sustainable Consumption and Reduced Waste  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	
<p>5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce</p>	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making	
<p>6: Effective knowledge foundations, including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity</p>	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making  T23: Gender Equality	

Table 8 How actions being taken by companies within the Energy sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Energy





























































NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems  T3: 30x30 Protection  T4: Species Recovery  T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
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3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge		
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T20: Capacity Building  T22: Participation in Decision Making		
6: Effective knowledge foundations , including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T19: Mobilize Finance  T20: Capacity Building  T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge  T22: Participation in Decision Making  T23: Gender Equality		

Table 9 How actions being taken by companies within the Mining sector align with South Africa's NBSAP strategic objectives for 2015 to 2025, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mining

NBSAP Strategic Objectives	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Targets	Sustainable Development Goals	
1. Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	 15 LIFE ON LAND
	 T3: 30x30 Protection		
	 T4: Species Recovery		
	 T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity		
2. Investment in ecological infrastructure enhances resilience and ensures benefits to society	 T2: Restoration of Degraded Ecosystems	 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
	 T6: Invasive Alien Species	 13 CLIMATE ACTION	 15 LIFE ON LAND
	 T7: Pollution Reduction		
	 T8: Minimize Impacts of Climate Change		
3. Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors	 T15: Reduce Businesses' Negative Impacts on Biodiversity	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
4. People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity	 T16: Sustainable Consumption and Reduced Waste	 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce	 T20: Capacity Building	 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	 15 LIFE ON LAND
	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	
6: Effective knowledge foundations, including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support the management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	 T20: Capacity Building	 14 LIFE BELOW WATER	 15 LIFE ON LAND
	 T21: Available and Accessible Knowledge	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	

Challenges and Recommendations

Recommendations for Addressing Key Challenges

Challenge: Regulatory complexity



Businesses struggle with navigating a complex regulatory environment, often marked by inconsistencies across frameworks. There is a need for standardised, clear biodiversity metrics that are similar to carbon reporting.

Recommendations:

- **Biodiversity reporting and disclosure:** There needs to be clearer guidelines for assessing and reporting biodiversity impacts. This could include creating sector-specific metrics to support comparability and consistency. Map risks and opportunities related to natural assets and the services provided by ecosystems.
- **Collaboration:** Establish working groups per sector and ensure more sharing of information and insights among businesses within the same sector, and businesses outside of the sectors. More collaboration between government as well as other NGOs through stakeholder engagement. All of this will help to streamline reporting requirements, identify overlapping frameworks, and minimise reporting fatigue.

Challenge: Complexity of biodiversity science and reporting



The complexity of biodiversity science and reporting creates challenges for businesses, as the technical nature of biodiversity goals often lacks clear, actionable guidance. Many companies struggle to integrate these goals within their existing ESG frameworks, where they are more comfortable.

Recommendation:

- **Simplify and translate biodiversity science:** Develop simplified guidelines for different industries that provide clear, actionable biodiversity goals and frameworks, reducing technical complexity for businesses.
- **Integrate biodiversity into existing ESG structures:** Use established ESG frameworks to introduce biodiversity metrics gradually, allowing companies to align biodiversity efforts with existing sustainability strategies. This alignment helps companies adopt biodiversity measures within familiar structures. Provide support to companies for tracking and reporting and disclosing biodiversity impact.

Challenge: Transparency and disclosure fears



Businesses face challenges around transparency and disclosure due to concerns around reputational risk. Many companies are hesitant to disclose biodiversity impacts, particularly unsuccessful efforts, as they worry about potential negative public and stakeholder backlash. A safe disclosure environment where businesses can openly share both positive and negative biodiversity actions is needed.

Recommendation:

- **Create a supportive disclosure environment:** Encourage transparency by establishing a safe platform where companies can share both successful and unsuccessful biodiversity actions without fear of reputational damage. Include a repository of lessons learned and case studies to help companies refine strategies.
- **Showcase successful and unsuccessful biodiversity actions:** Use a repository of case studies that highlight both effective and ineffective biodiversity strategies. This transparency will aid learning and provide a reference for businesses refining their approaches.

Challenge: Data gaps



Access to up-to-date biodiversity data is limited, particularly for species behaviour and ecosystem needs. Many businesses also lack tools to measure biodiversity impacts, leading to inconsistencies and gaps in reporting.

Recommendation:

- **Create a centralized data repository:** Collaborate with research institutions and government bodies to develop a centralized, publicly accessible biodiversity data repository. This repository could host relevant biodiversity metrics, species data, and best practices, available for businesses to use in decision-making.
- **Public-private data partnerships:** Establish partnerships between businesses, government, and academia to promote real-time data sharing and continuous biodiversity monitoring to fill data gaps, especially in high-impact industries like mining and agriculture.

Challenge: Short-term profitability pressure



Companies face pressure to prioritize immediate financial gains over biodiversity initiatives, with executive and shareholder focus often directed toward short-term financial goals rather than long-term sustainability benefits.

Recommendation:

- **Incentivize long-term value creation:** Implement financial and tax incentives, such as biodiversity credits or government grants, that reward companies for prioritizing biodiversity goals alongside financial metrics. This could include tax breaks for companies investing in conservation initiatives
- **Set long-term biodiversity targets:** Encourage businesses to set specific, measurable biodiversity targets that are linked to long-term business goals. Reporting on these targets could also be integrated into ESG frameworks, creating a balance between immediate financial performance and biodiversity progress.

Challenge: Board-Level buy-in and investor priorities



There is difficulty in aligning biodiversity goals with board members' priorities, especially in companies without direct landholdings. Investors' focus on short-term financial returns also limits prioritization of biodiversity, making long-term sustainability goals challenging to advocate

Recommendations:

- **Engage investors in biodiversity agendas:** Partner with major investment bodies to incorporate biodiversity as a core element of ESG criteria and encourage biodiversity reporting alongside financial and climate metrics. Emphasize the long-term financial risks of biodiversity degradation and potential opportunities
- **Develop compelling narratives for board members:** Use storytelling and case studies to make the business case for biodiversity. Highlight the reputational, risk mitigation, and long-term financial benefits of integrating biodiversity into business strategies.

Challenge: Capacity and skills shortages



Limited capacity in terms of skills, funding, and technology inhibits businesses from fully engaging with biodiversity initiatives. Many companies lack trained staff or access to the necessary data to assess and manage biodiversity impact effectively.

Recommendation:

- **Invest in capacity building:** Develop targeted training programmes, resources, and a dedicated online repository of tools and case studies. Capacity-building programmes can include skills-based workshops, mentorship, and access to sector-specific resources.
- **Leverage technology for data collection:** Encourage the use of digital tools and real-time data collection platforms (such as GIS or mobile applications) to support biodiversity monitoring, especially in resource-constrained sectors.

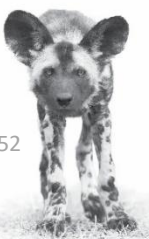
Challenge: Communication barriers



Businesses feel a disconnect in communication with the government regarding biodiversity expectations and targets. This gap results in ambiguity around compliance and reporting requirements.

Recommendation:

- **Establish regular communication forums:** Create regular forums for businesses and government to discuss biodiversity targets and alignment needs. This could include quarterly roundtable meetings or online forums where businesses can share updates and receive guidance
- **Feedback loops:** Implement a feedback loop between businesses and government to clarify reporting and compliance requirements, address challenges, and adapt policies as needed to encourage collaboration and transparency.



Implementation of Target 15

Target 15: Scope and Purpose

For the first time in history, an international agreement has established a specific target focused on the private sector and financial institutions, with governments committing to requiring non-state actors to monitor, assess, and disclose their: (i) risks; (ii) dependencies on Biodiversity; and (iii) impacts on Biodiversity. The last part of Target 15 is the most important aspect of it, and it consists of 4 specific goals:

- (i) Progressively reduce the negative impacts on biodiversity;
- (ii) Increase the positive impacts;
- (iii) Reduce biodiversity-related risks to businesses and financial institutions; and
- (iv) Promote and develop measures to ensure sustainable patterns of production.

Why is Target 15 important?

“All businesses are dependent in some way on biodiversity, however these dependencies are not always acknowledged or accounted for. By assessing and monitoring their impacts on biodiversity, businesses can better understand their relationship with biodiversity and assess the impacts of their activities on it and the risks posed by biodiversity loss to their operations and supply chains. Once these relationships, impacts and risks have been assessed and disclosed, it becomes easier to take concrete steps to address them. Governments have a particularly important role to play in this respect as they can put in place the legal, administrative or policy measures that can facilitate these assessments to take place in a consistent and equitable manner.” – [Guidance notes prepared by the CBD Secretariat for Target 15.](#)

Challenges in Implementing Target 15

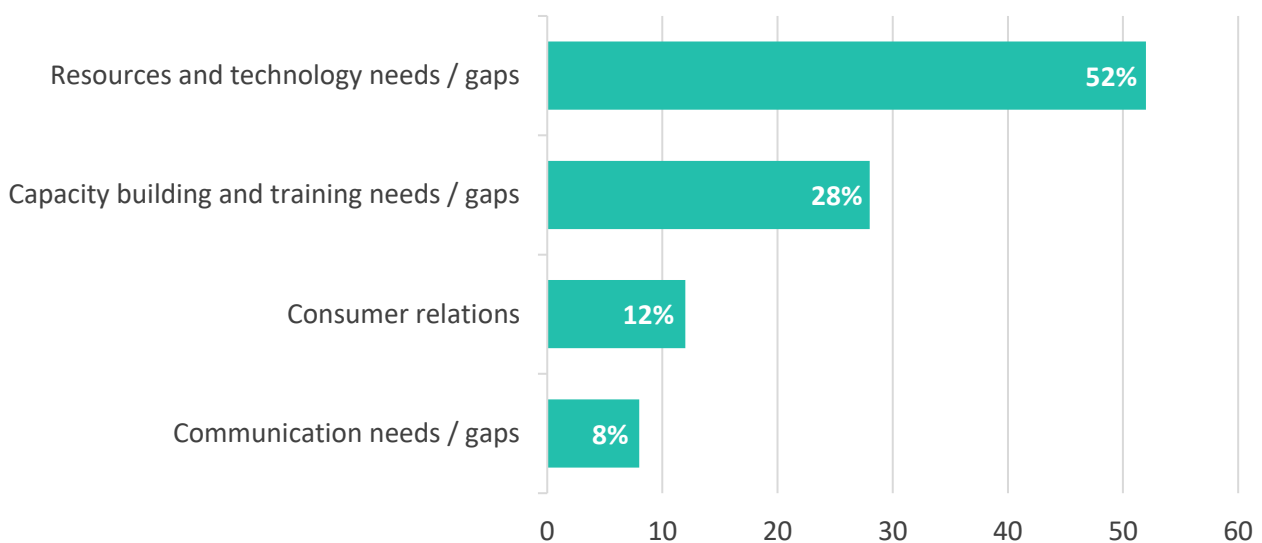


Figure 41: A breakdown of the various challenges faced by South African companies that were part of the BAG when it comes to implementing Target 15 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

When BAG members were asked the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\) guiding questions on Target 15](#) of the GBF, the main challenges indicated in figure 41 above, are explained in more detail below:



- **Resources, tools, frameworks, technology**

Explanation: The challenges highlight the need for better tools, clear communication, and strategy development to advance biodiversity efforts in businesses. Key gaps include translating biodiversity information into understandable language, leveraging technology for on-ground assessments, and creating a South Africa specific resource database. Goal-oriented, SMART indicators are essential to measure short and long-term outcomes, alongside materiality assessments to prioritise high-impact areas.

Businesses must improve understanding of biodiversity dependencies and focus on enhancing ecological value in land use. There should be more effort to help alignment of the different frameworks in order to reduce reporting fatigue, and reporting should shift from compliance to meaningful impact tracking. Supportive measures are needed to encourage transparency and investment in biodiversity initiatives.



- **Training and capacity building**

Explanation: Addressing capacity-building challenges requires targeted training and skills development for businesses and government. Authorities need training in biodiversity strategies, while businesses must close skills gaps by recruiting specialists and encouraging executive-level focus on biodiversity. Practical resources, such as guidebooks and training tools, are critical to improve understanding and alignment with biodiversity goals. Developing a strong business case with a clear roadmap and executive commitment is essential for embedding biodiversity into strategies and operations.

- **Consumer relationships / communication**

Explanation: Measures to motivate businesses to share information with consumers remain limited. Frameworks like the National Waste Management Act, which promotes the cradle-to-grave principle exist, however, these frameworks are underutilised as tools for engaging consumers. Driving consumptive behaviour change will require a balanced approach, combining incentives (pull) with penalties (push) to achieve meaningful progress. Improving consumer relationships and communication is essential to drive sustainability. Businesses should leverage legal frameworks and adopt a balanced approach to influence consumer behaviour effectively.



- **Communication (across industries / within industries / business-government)**

Explanation: There is a need for improved communication and coordination across government levels, supported by a collaborative, country-level, bottom-up approach that engages industry stakeholders and addresses their biodiversity efforts effectively.

Suggested Indicators for Target 15

To develop these 9 indicators, we engaged directly with members of the Business Advisory Group (BAG) and collected information through the following:

- Focused consultations – Incorporating feedback on BAG businesses biodiversity actions and commitments;
- Dialogue during BAG meetings;
- Survey results;
- Review of any publicly disclosed company reports.

These indicators reflect both the current actions of businesses and opportunities to strengthen alignment with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and South Africa's biodiversity targets. They are tailored to capture meaningful and measurable contributions toward biodiversity mainstreaming, restoration, and sustainable use.

1. Biodiversity assessments



- Biodiversity Footprint Assessments using biodiversity accounting with full transparent audit trails of biodiversity states.
- Percentage of company operations assessed for biodiversity dependencies and impacts using recognised tools.
- Number of biodiversity risk assessments completed within the supply chain.
- Presence of biodiversity considerations in Environmental Management Systems (EMS).

2. Biodiversity disclosures



- Annual disclosure rate of biodiversity-related risks and actions in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) reports.
- Percentage of operations disclosing biodiversity footprint, including the use of frameworks like the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD).
- Extent of public reporting on restoration, conservation, or offset initiatives (e.g., hectares restored).

3. Habitat and species conservation



- Hectares of land managed for biodiversity protection, aligned with South Africa's Protected Areas Expansion Strategy.
- Number of species-specific conservation action plans developed or implemented.
- Reduction in invasive alien species presence on company-owned land.

4. Resource mobilisation



- Percentage of operational budgets allocated to biodiversity action plans, such as restoration projects, invasive species management, or capacity building.

5. Training and capacity building



- Percentage of employees trained on biodiversity-related topics annually.
- Presence of a biodiversity champion/team within the organisation.
- Efforts under the National Waste Management Act.
- Number of stakeholder consultations held annually to address biodiversity concerns.

6. Sustainable use and restoration



- Volume of sustainable natural resources procured (e.g., FSC-certified timber, biodiversity-friendly agricultural products).
- Percentage of degraded land under restoration within company-managed areas.
- Reduction in resource consumption impacting biodiversity, such as water and energy efficiency measures.

7. Consumer and stakeholder engagement



- Presence of consumer-facing biodiversity information campaigns or product labelling, such as efforts under the National Waste Management Act.
- Number of stakeholder consultations held annually to address biodiversity concerns.

8. Financial contributions



- Amount of funding allocated or leveraged for biodiversity projects, including contributions to biodiversity credits or nature markets.
- Integration of biodiversity considerations into green finance products, such as sustainability-linked loans.

9. Cross-sectoral collaboration



- Participation in multi-stakeholder forums like EWT's National Biodiversity Business Advisory Group.
- Number of business-partnerships with academic or research institutions to innovate biodiversity impact measurement.
- Number of business-partnerships with conservation NGO's, specifically with projects supporting biodiversity initiatives.



Next Steps



The EWT's Biodiversity Disclosure Project would like to expand on the work of the BAG and as we advance into 2025, **the focus will be on furthering business engagement and facilitating impactful biodiversity** actions aligned with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Key priorities include **formalising business commitments and integrating them into South Africa's updated NBSAP** through a collaborative approach with government. Efforts will expand on biodiversity footprinting to measure impacts and dependencies, guiding business strategy development and reporting.

To support businesses, **a centralised repository will be launched on a new website**, offering resources, tools, and case studies, and tailored capacity-building programmes for sector-specific needs.

Collaboration will be strengthened through **formalised engagement platforms, working groups, and partnerships with advisory bodies and government**. Storytelling and showcasing case studies through strong messaging aims to raise awareness and inspire further action.



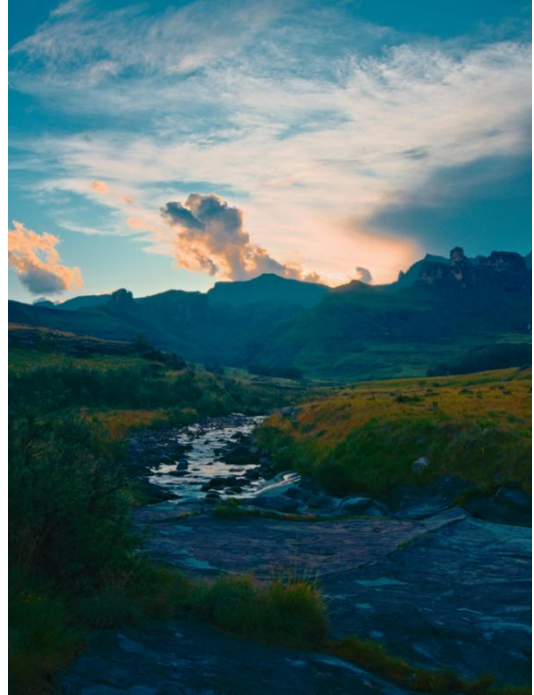
Conclusion

The Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet (BAAP) project represents a groundbreaking step in facilitating collaboration between South African businesses, government, and stakeholders to tackle the urgent need for biodiversity action. Over the past two years, the Business Advisory Groups (BAGs) have laid a strong foundation for understanding some of the challenges businesses are facing when it comes to integrating and advancing biodiversity commitments across industries.

From referring to the many frameworks and tools that are out there to **“framework chaos”**, our BAG members have been pivotal in providing honest, constructive and catalytic feedback when it comes to their specific needs, challenges and vision for their business and for their sector.

This work has not only highlighted the fundamental importance of Target 15 in business but has also demonstrated that **businesses have a say in shaping government policy** – as the business voice will collectively inform a national target for Target 15 through meaningful and impactful business input.

The outcomes from these engagements underline the importance of embedding biodiversity into core business strategies, aligning actions with national and global targets, and moving beyond mere compliance. The project has highlighted challenges, gaps and opportunities, pointed out success stories and has provided the platform to allow businesses to step up as leaders paving the way towards sustainability in South Africa.



Through being key contributors to South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and informing a national target for Target 15, **businesses have the potential to shape the South African economy and lead SA's sustainable future**. On the other end of the scale, businesses have the power to move planetary boundaries – and it is what we do now that will determine which way the needle gets tipped.

This work is a call to action for businesses to take the lead—not just as participants in the solution but as pioneers of innovation and sustainability. The journey is challenging, but the opportunity to leave a legacy for generations to come makes it one worth taking.



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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Further Reading

Business for Nature Recommendations / Guidance / Sector Actions:

- [Business for Nature Sector actions toward a nature-positive future - Mapping the sector priority actions against the recommendations of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- Priority Actions towards a Nature-Positive Future (Overview Documents):
 1. [Agri-food](#)
 2. [Built Environment](#)
 3. [Chemicals](#)
 4. [Cement & Concrete](#)
 5. [Energy](#)
 6. [Fashion & Apparel](#)
 7. [Financial Services](#)
 8. [Forest Products](#)
 9. [Household & Personal Care Products](#)
 10. [Travel & Tourism](#)
 11. [Waste Management](#)
 12. [Water Utilities & Services](#)
- [Recommendations for governments on the implementation of Target 15\(a\) of the Global Biodiversity Framework](#)
- [How to engage with national governments to support an ambitious National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan \(NBSAP\) update process – A national engagement guide for business organizations](#)

During the first Biodiversity Business Advisory Group (BAG) meeting, participants highlighted the need for a repository of biodiversity-related information relevant to South African businesses. In response, the NBBN created the [Biodiversity and Business Hub](#). This hub serves as a one-stop resource centre, categorizing relevant materials into the following sections:

- [International Commitments](#) which set the scene for biodiversity action on the global stage and focus on the Global Biodiversity Framework
- [South African Disclosure Guidance](#) which lays out the current reporting guidelines for South African companies
- [International Disclosure Guidance](#) which provides context on international reporting frameworks and standards
- [Relevant South African Legislation](#) which addresses the environmental regulatory landscape.

The reports for each BAG meeting can be accessed at the following links:

- [BAG 1 report](#)
- [BAG 2 report](#)
- [BAG 3 report](#)
- [BAG 4 report](#)