



Promoting Nature-Positive Business Models

Advisory service

The Challenge

Biodiversity and business are intricately linked: economic activities massively impact biodiversity in multiple direct and indirect ways. Simultaneously, many businesses, their supply chains and entire economies highly depend on biodiversity. According to the World Economic Forum, 50 percent of the global economy is under threat by biodiversity loss, affecting industries such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, extractives, health care, textile, construction, and manufactured goods. It is increasingly recognized that the private sector must be part of the solution to the biodiversity crisis, given its dependence on nature. Consumer awareness of sustainable consumption and production is also increasing worldwide. However, the economic and financial systems, along with underlying business models have yet to fully internalize the value and associated risks of nature. Small producers and enterprises operating in a biodiversity-friendly way often face challenges in commercializing their products due to a lack of entrepreneurial capacities and limited access to finance and markets.

Our approach

GIZ seeks to build strategic partnerships with private sector actors to increase leverage in addressing the biodiversity crisis and mobilize capital from the private sector, including capital markets. We aim not only to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, but also to promote nature-positive business models and actions. Acting as an honest broker, we strike a balance between local needs and realities on one hand and understanding and harnessing the dynamics of ever-evolving markets on the other. GIZ supports and builds multi-actor-partnerships through which the private sector commits to and implements corporate action for nature in supply chains and operations. GIZ employs various cooperation formats for this purpose, namely:

- Public-private partnerships (PPP) with specific companies on particular business cases or supply chains.
- Cooperation with business organizations on a sectoral and cross-country level, e.g. for standard development.
- Multi-actor-partnerships that bring together businesses, local producer groups, regulators (governments), and civil society.

Our services

Building on our partners' needs and priorities, our extensive in-country presence, and our vast global networks, GIZ offers tailored technical assistance in the business and biodiversity field. This includes:

- Policy and strategy advice on national, regional, and international levels (e.g. on deforestation-free supply chains as well as due diligence and mainstreaming into national economic policies).
- Capacity development for local valorization and processing of biodiversity, Research and Development, market access and setup of new businesses in biotrade, agriculture, (agro-)forestry and aquaculture/fisheries.
- Improvement of regulatory frameworks and international standards for more inclusive and biodiversity-friendly businesses. This includes technical assistance to improve compliance with Access and Benefit-Sharing regulations of countries providing biological material (genetic resources).
- Support in the development, promotion, roll-out and implementation of relevant Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS), e.g. Forest Stewardship Council, Union for Ethical BioTrade.
- Technical assistance in the disclosure and reduction of risks in business processes and supply chains through support with reporting systems, traceability, and risk assessments.
- Organization of platforms for public-private or multi-stakeholder dialogues around a joint endeavor, e.g.



thematic or sectoral roundtables on sustainable rubber, cocoa, cotton, or due diligence in supply chains.

The benefits

Through GIZ's long-term presence in partner countries, we have built strong and trustful relationships with public and private stakeholders across the globe. Based on these networks, we seek to build larger alliances linking business with local communities, civil society, and government to scale and replicate nature-positive business models and the solutions we co-create. We are active members of strong business networks and platforms, such as the German Business and Biodiversity Initiative "Biodiversity in Good Company". GIZ has a track record in private sector promotion and value chain development as reflected in its ValueLinks methodology, as well as in implementing Public Private Partnerships, e.g. under the develoPPP funding programme of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Examples from the field

In Cameroon, Madagascar, Namibia, and South Africa, GIZ is implementing the BMZ-funded project BioInnovation Africa. In cooperation with the respective ministries of environment, producer groups and business partners (such as Symrise, L'Oréal, Guivaudan and The Body Shop), the project has already supported more than 20

African-European biodiversity-based business partnerships and the creation of an enabling environment in the countries. Following a market-based approach, it promotes product innovations for sectors like healthcare, flavors and fragrances and food. Partnerships cover new and existing value chains of more than 25 resources, including rooibos, marula, ylang-ylang and beeswax. The project creates a triple win: fostering local development and private sector support, and ultimately reinvesting into nature.

The Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems (SAFE) project is dedicated to the preservation of forests through the promotion of sustainable agri-food systems. The project is co-funded by BMZ, the European Union and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. SAFE operates in 10 countries – Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Peru, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia – supporting the transition to deforestation-free, sustainable, and legal value chains. The project aligns with the EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products (EUDR) by empowering smallholders, incentivising deforestation reduction, and strengthening local capabilities for sustainable land use and agriculture. It also promotes international knowledge exchange, transparency in value chains, and civil society engagement to support forest conservation and gender-transformative approaches.

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