



National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan to 2030

Draft Version

Environment and Resources Authority 2023



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THE CURRENT DRAFT NBSAP IS A RESULT OF INTER-MINISTERIAL CONSULTATION WITH THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES AND PERTAINING RELEVANT ENTITIES:

MAFA	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights
MEEE	Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Enterprise
MEFL	Ministry for the Economy, European Funds and Lands
MEYR	Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation
MFAA	Ministry for Active Ageing
MFE	Ministry for Finance and Employment
MFET	Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade
MFH	Ministry for Health
MFJ	Ministry for Justice
MFT	Ministry for Tourism
MGOZ	Ministry for Gozo
MHAL	Ministry for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government
MHSR	Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality
MIVC	Ministry for Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights
MPWP	Ministry for Public Works and Planning
MSAA	Ministry for Social and Affordable Accommodation
MSPC	Ministry for Social Policy and Children's Rights
MTIP	Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister

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01. Introduction

The conservation of biodiversity, defined as the diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems, is considered of utmost importance. Biodiversity matters not only for its intrinsic value, but also due to the multitude of benefits it offers to humans, which are vital for human existence and good quality of life. However, we are in a state of planetary emergency as we are faced with an unprecedented rate of biodiversity loss. Human actions are threatening more species with global extinction now more than ever and unless action is taken to mitigate the drivers of biodiversity loss, it

is estimated that approximately 1 million species face extinction.¹

Malta faces many challenges that are common in the global scenario. Biodiversity in Malta experiences various pressures and threats, with development and construction, alien and problematic species, and natural processes being the most significant pressures. Climate change is also recognised at the global level as one of the five direct drivers

¹ https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf



of biodiversity loss. Both the climate change and biodiversity loss crises are strictly interdependent and threaten our society, our culture, our prosperity, and our planet.

Indeed, without the benefits provided by biodiversity, societal and economic prosperity are not possible. Such benefits, also known as ecosystem services, include food and feed, medicines, climate regulation, flood mitigation, recreation, and physical and mental health benefits, amongst others. Because of these ecosystem services, biodiversity has been linked to important aspects of human survival and good quality of life. For instance, following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the link between thriving nature and human health and well-being has become increasingly evident. Biodiversity is also crucial for food security through the provision of services such as pollination, soil fertility, and pest control.² It should be highlighted that the majority of nature's contributions to humans cannot be fully replaced and others are downright irreplaceable.³ Therefore, considering the high-stakes associated with the loss of biodiversity, and the ever-increasing social and economic cost of inaction, efforts need to be urgently reinforced.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) aims at providing strategic direction on the management and protection of biodiversity, and is the principal instrument for implementing the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at national level. It drives the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes, and policies. Such mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations across sectors, including both the public and private sectors, is imperative to ensure whole-of-government and

whole-of-society approaches which are necessary to holistically address the closely linked environmental crises. Hence, the NBSAP is an appropriate tool to galvanise transformative action towards biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of nature.

Malta adopted its first NBSAP in 2012, covering the period up to 2020. A final review of progress has been carried out, and the findings showed that Malta has contributed to the achievement of the UN Aichi Targets and CBD objectives and has advanced on the implementation. However, pressures and threats to biodiversity are still present and gaps need to be addressed through further concerted action.

Malta's second NBSAP for the period up to 2030, which falls within the scope of the National Strategy for the Environment, is presented in this document. It builds upon Malta's first NBSAP and its final review of progress, in order to continue the Government's long-term efforts to manage and protect biodiversity. The main objectives of the NBSAP to 2030 are to:

- outline the national priorities and establish a comprehensive and proactive framework for safeguarding Malta's biodiversity;
- serve as a national policy driver to mainstream biodiversity and its services into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies, especially those that have a bearing on Malta's biological and natural resources;
- provide coordinated measures for addressing biodiversity loss and fostering nature conservation;
- contribute to the protection of ecosystems and their services, as well as social and economic safeguards through the elimination and effective management of all associated pressures and threats;
- structure and facilitate broad participation and collective action for biodiversity conservation and restoration through stakeholder cooperation;
- streamline the legal requirements of global, regional and national legislation, as well as to offer strategic

² <http://www.fao.org/state-of-biodiversity-for-food-agriculture/en/>

³ https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf

direction on how to address biodiversity loss at a national level;

- provide opportunities and create an impetus necessary for achieving the national priorities, while also contributing to the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030 and the UN Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Apart from the UN Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the NBSAP to 2030 strengthens synergies with various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and contributes towards the implementation of the United National International Decades, as well as other EU Directives and Strategies. These include, amongst others, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the European Green Deal.

Moreover, the NBSAP ensures synergies with national strategies on sustainable development, climate change, waste, and air, amongst others. Indeed, in order to achieve the mission of the NBSAP, the successful implementation of various thematic strategies is imperative.

Despite the failure at the global level in meeting any of the UN Aichi Targets, evidence shows that we are still in time to halt and reverse the current declining trends in biodiversity.⁴ However, to reduce, stop, and reverse biodiversity loss, immediate action simultaneously addressing a combination of direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss should be implemented.⁵

Malta's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) to 2030, prompted by 22 Targets and 78 Actions, will address multiple direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5/publication/gbo-5-en.pdf>

⁵ https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf

02. Guiding Principles and Approaches for Implementation

Ten guiding principles and approaches have been selected to promote effective interpretation and implementation of the NBSAP by all stakeholders, including the public and private sectors and civil society, thus steering the NBSAP implementation towards fulfilling its mission.

2.1 MITIGATION HIERARCHY

The Mitigation Hierarchy is a tool that helps to limit, as far as possible, the negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. It can be applied to all stages of planned interventions,

such as projects, policies, programmes, plans, and strategies. Decision-makers are invited to take the following steps into consideration: Avoidance, Minimisation, Remediation, and Offsetting. The steps are sequenced to provide a priority order according to the degree of detrimental impacts on biodiversity. For instance, avoiding adverse impact on biodiversity is preferred over minimising impact, and so on. Complementary to each of the steps, is Enhancement. Enhancement results in improvement in the status of biodiversity and the environment, as well as environmental health and well-being, hence, playing a key role in achieving biodiversity net gain.



2.2 PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

Decision-makers should be guided by the Precautionary Principle. As indicated in the Convention on Biological Diversity, “where there is a threat of significant reduction or loss of biological diversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid or minimize such a threat”.⁶ This reflects the broader definition of the principle as found in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), which addresses, in general, threats of serious or irreversible damage to the environment. By anticipating the risk of environmental damage, measures can be implemented to mitigate or prevent serious and irreversible damage to the natural environment and biodiversity.

2.3 POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE

According to the Polluter Pays Principle, polluters bear the cost of the environmental degradation that they have caused. Therefore, this principle strengthens the environmental responsibilities of parties that are impacting the environment. The Polluter Pays Principle addresses pollution prevention and control since polluters assumably limit their polluting activities when the costs they have to pay exceeds the expected benefits of polluting. Moreover, the Polluter Pays Principle holds polluters liable for environmental damage that they cause, thus promoting liability and redress.

2.4 DO NO SIGNIFICANT HARM PRINCIPLE

The application of the Do No Significant Harm Principle should be taken into consideration to promote and support activities that do not obstruct the achievement of environmental objectives. Such approach would encourage sustainable decisions and contribute to the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems. The interpretation of this principle with respect to the NBSAP corresponds with the understanding and implementation of this principle under Article 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2020/852).

2.5 INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

Intergenerational Equity proposes that, “future generations have a right to an inheritance (capital bequest) sufficient to allow them to generate a level of well-being no less than that of the current generation.”⁷ By considering the human community as a partnership between generations, the principle of Intergenerational Equity highlights the right of every generation to inherit equally diverse natural and cultural resources, and the right of equitable access to the utilisation of these resources.⁸ In this way, the needs of present generations are met without compromising the needs of future generations.

2.6 RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The protection of the natural environment and conservation of biodiversity is intricately related with human rights. Therefore, a rights-based approach to biodiversity conservation simultaneously contributes to a thriving environment and society. This approach involves “integrating rights norms, standards, and principles in policy, planning, implementation, and evaluation to help ensure that conservation practice respects rights in all cases, and supports their further realisation where possible.”⁹ Moreover, a Rights-based Approach can assist in the identification and rectification of environmental inequities and injustices.

2.7 GOOD GOVERNANCE

Since governance strongly influences the outcomes of the NBSAP, good governance should be employed by all decision-making bodies. This can be achieved by embracing a number of key elements, including:

- Political Will
- Rule of Law
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Participation
- Equity
- Effectiveness and Efficiency
- Capacity

⁷ <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/29355?show=full>

⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4165836/#:~:text=other%20life%20forms.,Intergenerational%20equity%20is%20a%20notion%20that%20views%20the%20human%20community,and%20benefits%20of%20these%20resources>

⁹ https://wwfin.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/rights_based_approaches.pdf#page=27

⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>

2.8 WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

Cross-cutting issues like environmental protection and biodiversity conservation cannot be effectively and efficiently addressed unless there is a shift away from silo thinking and departmentalism. This is because there are many sectors that directly or indirectly impact the state of the environment and biodiversity. Hence, a whole-of-government approach, where all ministries, public entities, public agencies, and public bodies collaborate across their portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal, is imperative. A whole-of-government approach enables the mainstreaming of biodiversity across sectors by fostering a deeper sense of collaboration and by creating cohesion and synergies.

2.9 WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH

Successful implementation of the NBSAP relies on broad participation, ownership, commitment, and collective action by a wide range of non-state actors. Therefore, adopting a whole-of-society approach is important to recognise, promote, and support the roles and contributions of all relevant stakeholders in relation to environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. Indeed, meaningful participation and action by individuals, local communities, civil society (including NGOs, and religious institutions, amongst others), academia, and the private sector (including, inter alia, industry, media and financial institutions) is crucial to the achievement of the NBSAP's mission.

2.10 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The transboundary nature of several environmental issues calls for cooperation between several countries. Malta stands committed to continue strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other CBD Parties and EU member states, thus advancing progress in biodiversity conservation at a regional and global level.

03. Strategic Framework

3.1. VISION TO 2050

Malta's NBSAP to 2030 is driven by a long-term vision to 2050 as established in the National Strategy for the Environment. The vision asserts that:

"Malta's biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and sustainably used for the benefit of nature, people and climate"

3.2. MISSION TO 2030

The mission of the NBSAP to 2030, which strives towards the 2050 vision, is:

"To put Malta's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of the planet and people, by

stepping up national efforts to effectively respond to the biodiversity crisis"

3.3. TARGETS AND ACTIONS

The following Strategic Framework guides fulfilment of the NBSAP to 2030's mission. It outlines five policy areas where action is necessary. Under each policy area, targets to be achieved by 2030 are presented. Nested within each target are actions whose implementation contributes to the achievement of each target. Actions are generally time-bound; where a timeline is not provided it is assumed that implementation is ongoing, by 2030.





POLICY AREA 1: CONSERVING AND RESTORING NATURE

TARGET 1:

By 2030, 30% of Maltese land and 30% of the Maltese Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) are legally protected and form part of the comprehensive and ecologically representative National Ecological Network. As part of this effort, the management of Natura 2000 sites is strengthened.

ACTION 1.1:

By 2024, a plan is developed to ensure the declaration of 30% of Maltese land and 30% of the Maltese FMZ as protected areas, by 2030.

ACTION 1.2:

Conservation objectives and measures for terrestrial and marine Natura 2000 sites are established and revised as necessary.

ACTION 1.3:

Adequate site management, under a range of governance types, is in place for all Natura 2000 sites and supported through systems for training and information sharing.

ACTION 1.4:

By 2024, a standard system for the evaluation of management effectiveness of Natura 2000 sites is developed and assessments are carried out periodically.

TARGET 2:

Ecosystems, including their key habitats and species, are conserved, the conditions of ecosystems is known and appropriate management measures are

implemented. The status and trend of key habitats and species is known and shows no deterioration, with 60% of species of Community interest, and 35% of habitats of Community interest showing a favourable conservation status, or at least show a positive trend.

ACTION 2.1:

Conservation measures for terrestrial and marine Natura 2000 sites are implemented in line with priorities established in the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

ACTION 2.2:

By 2027, climate proof action plans are established, with tailored measures required to maintain or improve the conservation status of the habitats and species.

ACTION 2.3:

Mapping exercises are carried out for the assessment of ecosystems and their services (MAES) and the identification of ecological corridors.

ACTION 2.4:

Systematic legal and scientific reviews of key habitats and species groups are carried out, to ensure an adequate strict species protection regime and the conservation of key habitats.

ACTION 2.5:

A comprehensive national policy framework on pollinators is set up and implementation is initiated by 2027 to protect, conserve, and manage pollinators by tackling pressures and threats and address knowledge gaps, amongst others.

ACTION 2.6:

A comprehensive national policy framework is developed to protect and enhance soil and its biodiversity, and to improve monitoring, thus contributing to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

ACTION 2.7:

Rehabilitation of wildlife is carried out through the successful running of a rehabilitation centre.

ACTION 2.8:

In order to achieve good status in ground, surface, coastal and marine waters, thus enabling resilient and fully-functioning ecosystems, integrated water resources management is applied. This is done through the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

ACTION 2.9:

By 2024, a National Biodiversity Surveillance and Monitoring Framework is formulated to coordinate sustained surveillance and scientific monitoring of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems.

TARGET 3:

By 2030, degraded ecosystems, in particular those with potential for climate change adaptation and mitigation, are under restoration or rehabilitation to ensure their integrity, structure, function, and connectivity.

ACTION 3.1:

Priority areas of degraded terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems are identified by 2024, and relevant restoration and rehabilitation projects are implemented. This is done in line with environmental principles, and with specific focus on ecosystems most vulnerable to climate change and ecosystems with the highest potential to mitigate climate change.

ACTION 3.2:

Collaboration with nurseries and botanic gardens is strengthened to ensure sufficient native plant stocks free from pests and diseases for restoration, forestation, and green infrastructure initiatives.

ACTION 3.3:

A comprehensive national policy framework on forestation in line with the EU Forest Strategy, including the National Trees and Woodland Strategy and Action Plan and related guidelines, are set up and implemented to achieve ecologically-sensitive forestation, habitat connectivity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation of genetic resources, ecosystem restoration and the implementation of an integrated approach on fire management, control and prevention.

ACTION 3.4:

Forestation is addressed by providing incentives to plant indigenous trees and remove IAS and by supporting projects by NGOs, local councils, and the private sector, which follow the relevant guidelines and are in line with the policy framework.

TARGET 4:

By 2030, genetic diversity of native species, as well as species used for food and feed and their wild relatives and landraces, is safeguarded for improved resilience of biodiversity and food security.

ACTION 4.1:

Measures for the protection of genetic resources are established and implemented.

ACTION 4.2:

Ex situ conservation measures are used to safeguard the genetic diversity of endemic species, relevant protected species, species used for food and feed and their wild relatives/landraces.

ACTION 4.3:

The number of inventoried genetic resources in databases is increased.

ACTION 4.4:

Indicators and genetic methods for analysing and monitoring genetic variation in species of special concern for ecosystem services or conservation are developed and implemented. This is supported by scientific research that addresses knowledge gaps.

ACTION 4.5:

Access to national genetic resources is regulated through the National Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).



POLICY AREA 2: ADDRESSING THE DRIVERS OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS

TARGET 5:

By 2030, the impacts of land degradation and land and sea use change on biodiversity are reduced by strengthening the relevant tools.

ACTION 5.1:

Policy on spatial planning, including marine spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, is revised as necessary, while strengthening alignment with the NSE's and NBSAP's objectives.

ACTION 5.2:

The potential adverse effects of projects, operations, and activities on biodiversity are assessed through the environmental screening mechanism, including Environment Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Appropriate Assessments (AAs), as per relevant national legislation and EU guidelines. Systematic monitoring is set up to assess the level of implementation and effectiveness of the recommendations of EIAs and AAs."

ACTION 5.3:

A framework policy to address landscapes is strengthened to conserve landscape characteristics

that are significant, inter alia, for the conservation of biodiversity.

ACTION 5.4:

A comprehensive national policy framework on desertification, land degradation and drought, including Malta's UNCCD National Action Plan (NAP) is set up and implemented to mitigate threats to Maltese biodiversity and to strive to achieve land degradation-neutrality.

TARGET 6:

By 2030, the introduction and establishment of new invasive species is prevented by managing the appropriate priority pathways of introduction and spread. Invasive alien species that are already established are timely identified and prioritised for eradication or control. By 2030, 50% of the most harmful invasive alien species affecting protected areas are duly managed.

ACTION 6.1:

The recommendations of the *National Strategy for Preventing and Mitigating the Impact of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Maltese Islands*, and related action plans for the management of priority pathways are implemented.

TARGET 7:

By 2030, there is an increase in coordinated and strategic application of nature-based solutions, including blue green infrastructure, so as to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and noise abatement, while ensuring ecosystem resilience and supporting urban biodiversity.¹⁰

ACTION 7.1:

Interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity are recognised and integrated into policy tools ensuring that mitigation and adaptation measures integrate nature-based solutions and avoid negative impacts on biodiversity.

ACTION 7.2:

Greening initiatives are set up to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, while improving, amongst others, access to green spaces, ecological coherence and connectivity, urban biodiversity, and pollution levels, particularly noise and air pollution.

TARGET 8:

By 2030, pollution from all sources, inter alia, excess nutrients, pesticides, chemicals, plastics, noise, and light, is prevented, controlled or minimised to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity, in line with EU and international commitments.

ACTION 8.1:

The Long Term Waste Management Plan 2021-2030 and the Single-Use Plastic Products Strategy for Malta 2020 – 2030 are implemented, thus contributing to the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, such as littering and marine litter.

ACTION 8.2:

A system for gathering data for the removal of marine litter is developed by 2024 and implemented to ensure a systematic, concerted, and appropriate removal of marine litter.

ACTION 8.3:

The National Action Plan on Sustainable Use of Pesticides is updated and successfully implemented so as to reduce the impacts of plant protection products on ecosystems, in line with EU commitments.

ACTION 8.4:

An updated Nitrates Action Programme is adopted by 2027 to address the reduction of pollution from excess nutrients and their negative impact on ecosystems.

ACTION 8.5:

Chemicals policy is strengthened to improve the protection of the environment and human health.

ACTION 8.6:

Provisions related to noise and light reduction defined in conservation measures for terrestrial and marine species are successfully implemented.

ACTION 8.7:

By 2027, quiet areas are delineated on land while taking into consideration the harmful effect of noise on wildlife.

ACTION 8.8:

Suitable policy tools and a systematic monitoring regime to adequately address the impact of light pollution on biodiversity are set up and implemented accordingly.

¹⁰ Strengthening ecosystem resilience, restoration of carbon sinks, and studies on the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change are addressed under Targets 2, 3, and 19 respectively.



POLICY AREA 3: USING BIODIVERSITY SUSTAINABLY

TARGET 9:

By 2030, harvesting, trade, use, capturing and killing of wild species are at sustainable levels, and in line with national legislation and international obligations.

ACTION 9.1:

By 2024, relevant policy documents on the capture, killing, and exploitation of wild species are developed or updated to provide the recommendations on the management and sustainable use of relevant species.

ACTION 9.2:

The relevant legislation on trade of protected species and their specimens (dead or alive) and invasive alien species, is strengthened to enable more effective coherent implementation and compliance.

ACTION 9.3:

By 2024, the mechanism for the keeping of wild animals in zoos is strengthened in line with Directive 1999/22/EC.

TARGET 10:

By 2030, uptake of sustainable agricultural practices, including organic farming, increases significantly.

ACTION 10.1:

By 2027, Malta's CAP Strategic Plan contributes to the conservation of biodiversity by promoting and implementing agri-environmental and climate commitments (AECCs), which encourage agro-ecological practices, such as organic farming, and support high diversity landscape features through non-productive investments.

ACTION 10.2:

As means to strengthen environmental stewardship in agriculture, management agreements for agricultural land are established by 2027, thus supporting biodiversity and improving water and soil management.

TARGET 11:

By 2030, fishing, aquaculture, and other extraction activities in the marine environment are managed sustainably, thus reducing negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats.

ACTION 11.1:

By 2027, the policy framework related to fishing is strengthened to ensure that scientifically sound data collection frameworks are in place for all fishing activities.

ACTION 11.2:

Fish stocks are maintained and restored to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield by conserving fisheries resources, protecting marine ecosystems and collaborating with the European Commission and other EU and Mediterranean countries.

ACTION 11.3:

The issue of bycatch and discards of protected species is addressed by improving monitoring and data reporting, developing mitigation measures and promoting their application on-site.

ACTION 11.4:

By 2024, Malta's Aquaculture Multiannual National Plan is reviewed and updated to ensure good-management practices and aqua-environmental measures for sustainable management of the aquaculture sector. This includes promotion and incentivisation of organic aquaculture.

ACTION 11.5:

Relevant screening or assessments are carried out, as appropriate, before extractive activities in the marine environment, other than fishing, take place, to prevent detrimental effects on the environment.

TARGET 12:

By 2030, potential adverse impacts of biotechnology on biodiversity, and associated risks to human health, are prevented, managed and controlled.

ACTION 12.1:

The National Biosafety Framework Strategy is updated by 2027 to take into account new obligations, emerging issues and new techniques, and implemented accordingly.

ACTION 12.2:

The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol is implemented, as applicable, to ensure the safe transport, handling and use of living modified organisms.

TARGET 13:

By 2030, biodiversity continues to be recognised as one of the key components of human well-being and health, and for integration into decision-making. Benefits of biodiversity to human well-being and health are promoted by improving access to green spaces.

ACTION 13.1:

Appropriate risk assessment of animal disease epidemics in Malta and their potential pathways are conducted by 2027, to determine whether further management and control measures are necessary.

ACTION 13.2:

By 2027, the National Portfolio of Actions on Environment and Health, which acknowledges the relationship between a healthy natural environment and human health, is adopted and implemented, and supported by the implementation of greening initiatives."

ACTION 13.3:

By 2027, the National Portfolio of Actions on Environment and Health, which acknowledges the relationship between a healthy natural environment and human health, is adopted and implemented, and supported by the implementation of greening initiatives.



POLICY AREA 4: MAINSTREAMING AND AWARENESS RAISING

ACTION 13.4:

By 2027, country walks are promoted and enhanced for their health benefits and are used as opportunities for environmental education.

TARGET 14:

By 2030, incentives that are either favourable or neutral to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are increasingly promoted and work to redirect incentives harmful to biodiversity is strengthened.

ACTION 14.1:

Market-based instruments are introduced to incentivise a shift in investments towards circular economy, as well as value chains and infrastructure that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and implementation of the Polluter Pays Principle. These include economic incentives that promote the internalisation of environmental costs, fiscal instruments, deposit-refund systems, environmental labelling, and finance towards environmental initiatives, amongst others.

ACTION 14.2:

A review is carried out to identify any incentives that are harmful to the environment and biodiversity and, if applicable, recommendations for reforms are made.

TARGET 15:

By 2030, pressures on biodiversity from economic activities are reduced, while positive impacts are increased, by mainstreaming biodiversity across the private sector. This supports the transition towards sustainable technologies and practices, including along the supply, trade, and value chains.

ACTION 15.1:

Biodiversity is mainstreamed within financial institutions and businesses, guided by the CBD Long-term Strategic Approach to Mainstreaming Biodiversity. The private sector is encouraged to value their impacts and dependencies upon natural capital, including biodiversity, and disclose them in non-financial statements in order to better integrate natural capital into decision-making.

ACTION 15.2:

Action by the private sector, including private finance, is facilitated and encouraged to contribute towards biodiversity conservation, *for instance* by promoting the benefits of eco-certification, establishing market-based instruments (links with Action 14.1), and recognising biodiversity champions through annual awards, and promoting the CBD Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People to encourage commitments and pledges by the private sector.

TARGET 16:

By 2030, biodiversity considerations are promoted into relevant policies, regulations, plans, programmes, strategies and accounts, ensuring that biodiversity values are mainstreamed across the public sector.

ACTION 16.1:

The values of biodiversity and ecosystem services are further integrated in national policies, and planning processes, such that biodiversity is increasingly mainstreamed.

ACTION 16.2:

The relationship between the environment and the economy informs decision-making.

ACTION 16.3:

By 2027, Green Public Procurement (GPP) is widely employed and supported through a GPP National Action Plan, which contributes towards biodiversity objectives.

ACTION 16.4:

Environmental priorities are streamlined across the public sector by improving cooperation, inter-

sectoral planning and information exchange.

This is achieved by inter alia, strengthening direct communication channels, and setting up inter-institutional cooperation agreements and committees.

TARGET 17:

By 2030, audience-targeted programmes on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) are expanded to cover a wider range of biodiversity-related topics. This ensures that residents have relevant information, awareness and capacities for sustainable development and lifestyles that are in harmony with nature.

ACTION 17.1:

A comprehensive biodiversity communication work plan, which includes a variety of biodiversity-related topics, is developed by 2024 and implemented by 2030 to raise awareness.

ACTION 17.2:

By 2027, environmental sustainability, including biodiversity protection, is further integrated into the national education system.



POLICY AREA 5

ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION AND COOPERATION

TARGET 18:

By 2030, the role of voluntary bodies, local councils, and society in the implementation of Malta's NBSAP is strengthened.

ACTION 18.1:

Citizen science projects are promoted to engage and encourage public participation and collaboration in scientific research and monitoring. By 2027, guidelines to facilitate centralisation of data from citizen science projects are developed.

ACTION 18.2:

Synergistic partnerships between national entities, local councils, NGOs, including relevant cooperatives and associations, are established to support environmental projects and initiatives while nurturing a sense of stewardship. Such partnerships may be supported by environmental funds and incentives.

TARGET 19:

By 2030, quality data and information is collected and made accessible to decision makers and public for the effective management of biodiversity.

ACTION 19.1:

Working partnerships with research institutions are developed or strengthened in order to undertake research and pilot studies that improve

the understanding of biodiversity, including its interlinkages with climate change, and are in line with policy demand.

ACTION 19.2:

Officials involved in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and trained in the use of best practices, so as to assist the fulfilment of national compliance and implementation requirements of the EU Environmental Acquis and MEAs.

ACTION 19.3:

Malta's Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) is maintained and updated as relevant and acts as a one-stop shop for access to biological information on species and habitats. As part of the CHM, a National Biodiversity Database incorporating updated red data lists and serving as a mechanism for maintaining and organising data on biodiversity is launched by 2027.

ACTION 19.4:

Efforts to preserve and transfer traditional knowledge, such as agricultural and fishing practices, ethnobotanical and agrobiodiversity knowledge, are supported through sponsorships and other kind of collaborations.

TARGET 20:

The trend on expenditure on biodiversity is maintained.

ACTION 20.1:

Appropriate funding and resources for the implementation of the NBSAP and its ancillary plans and policies, is ensured through the mobilisation of resources from all sources, within the Government's consolidated fiscal plan.

ACTION 20.2:

Official Development Assistance to third countries is provided for biodiversity programmes, where possible, addressing the objectives of the CBD in line with the National Implementation Plan on Official Development Assistance Policy.

TARGET 21:

By 2030, compliance with and enforcement of biodiversity-related legislation is strengthened to ensure more timely and effective interception and deterrence of illegalities.

ACTION 21.1:

By 2027, a formal multi-agency cooperation framework and a centralised system for reporting environmental illegalities, is set up to strengthen environmental enforcement and consolidate the work of environmental enforcement agencies.

ACTION 21.2:

By 2027, biodiversity-related legislation is evaluated and updated as necessary in order to promote environmental compliance and deter environmental

crime. This may include a variety of tools and instruments to achieve the targeted compliance desired.

ACTION 21.3:

By 2027, aspects related to environmental liability are strengthened.

ACTION 21.4:

Compliance and enforcement are rendered more effective by compiling relevant plans and providing relevant information about enforcement actions, as appropriate.

ACTION 21.5:

Environment justice system, *inter alia* tribunals and courts, is strengthened particularly in relation to environmental enforcement and liability.

TARGET 22:

By 2030, the implementation of the NBSAP is ensured through its effective monitoring and evaluation, with the active support of the relevant stakeholders.

ACTION 22.1:

Timely and periodical evaluation of the effectiveness of the NBSAP are carried out in line with international obligations.

ACTION 22.2:

An NBSAP Forum is organised annually to share progress and ensure stronger collaboration between key stakeholders involved in the NBSAP implementation.

04. Concluding Remarks

Implementation of the NBSAP will require collective action across all sectors and at all levels. Indeed, its successful implementation relies on the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. Moreover, concerted action will be supported by enabling conditions and adequate means of implementation, which are embedded within Targets and Actions. These include:

- Mobilisation of sufficient resources;
- Capacity building and development;
- Knowledge generation, management and sharing;
- Technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer and innovation.

To ensure that the NSBAP to 2030 fulfils its mission, review of implementation will be undertaken according to international obligations. To assist such a review, a monitoring framework composed of CBD, EU and national indicators will be used to assess progress and fulfill CBD reporting obligations.

Malta's NBSAP to 2030 is a living document. Therefore, following the evaluation of experiences and results of reviews, it may be updated to ensure that the mission to put Malta's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 is achieved.





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