



Permanent Mission of the
International Union for Conservation of Nature
to the United Nations

Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development

General Debate

Statement delivered by the Permanent Observer of IUCN to the UN, Dr Sofie Jaffe

Sevilla, 2 July 2025

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, would like to express its gratitude to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Spain and the beautiful city of Sevilla for hosting this important conference.

The world economy today is built on a model that relies on the rapid overutilization of nature. Our financial system rewards short-term gains over long-term sustainability and places little or no value on the ecosystem services that fundamentally support all economic activity and life on Earth. The wealth from this extractive economic model is unequally distributed, exacerbating inequalities at a time when the world's population, especially the most vulnerable, is increasingly impacted by the costly and devastating consequences of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

Business as usual is unsustainable and it cannot continue – what is needed is not a marginal change but a fundamental transformation. We need to shift from the current linear, extractive and polluting business model to a global economic and financial system that enables a nature-positive, net-zero and circular economy.

A whole-of-economy approach to mainstreaming biodiversity into all sectors is urgently needed to achieve the agreed goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). We need to accelerate implementation of actions to achieve Target 18 of the GBF and reduce biodiversity harmful incentives by at least \$500 billion per year while scaling up positive incentives for biodiversity and mobilising resources for biodiversity from all sources, including public and private, and international and domestic. All fossil fuel subsidies should be phased out without delay to prevent the 1.5°C temperature rise threshold from being permanently breached. While it is imperative to reform current subsidy policies, these reforms may come with significant and challenging economic, ecological, and social trade-offs that need to be balanced. IUCN calls on all member states to assess options to reform subsidy policies to avoid harmful impacts on biodiversity and to incentivize nature-positive outcomes.

A recent IUCN report found that only 3.1% of total international financial assistance targeted biodiversity as an objective. This needs to be scaled up to support the ecosystem services that, in turn, support the global economy. Furthermore, in line with Target 19 of the GBF,

increases in biodiversity funding are needed to mobilize \$200 billion per year, including the commitment of at least \$ 30 billion per year by 2030 in international flows.

IUCN stresses the need to scale up financing for sustainable agriculture and food systems that systematically integrate high integrity Nature-based Solutions (NbS). This will ensure the provision of key ecosystem services for food and water security.

We need to scale up efforts to leverage private sector financing for financing mechanisms linked to measurable and verifiable conservation outcomes. It is imperative that increased funds are made more easily and directly accessible to indigenous peoples and local communities. We welcome the commitments made in this regard in the Sevilla Outcome Document and call on all member states to take swift action for its full implementation.

Rolling out and scaling up biodiversity financing requires the cooperation of a multitude of stakeholders, including scientific organizations who provide data and knowledge. A fragmented data landscape increases greenwashing risks, further jeopardizing the accurate identification of sustainable investments. IUCN therefore emphasizes the need for the use of consistent and robust data, standards, and tools such as the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, IUCN Red List of Ecosystems, the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas, and the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions.

We stand ready to support these efforts and invite you all to the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi in October to continue discussions on how to achieve the paradigm shift needed to protect people and planet.

Thank you
