



ENACT NbS Accelerator Pathways

Summary Brief



Executive summary

The *ENACT Partnership NbS Accelerator Pathways Report (2025)* presents a unified framework for accelerating **nature-based solutions (NbS)** as transformative instruments to tackle the converging global crises of **climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation**. Fragmented and siloed responses have so far proven insufficient. The report argues that only **systemic, integrated, and inclusive approaches** anchored in NbS can deliver the scale of transformation needed to meet the ambitions of the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the UNCCD Land Degradation Neutrality targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

NbS serve as a unifying framework linking these agendas by delivering co-benefits for people, nature, and the economy. When mainstreamed across the six ENACT systems -**agriculture and food, human settlements, natural and modified ecosystems, green-grey infrastructure, water systems-**, and **cross-cutting enablers** such as finance, governance, and inclusion, NbS can drive deep structural change.

The ENACT Partnership was established to bridge the persistent gap between ambition and implementation. Acting as a global coordination platform, ENACT connects governments, civil society, financiers, and technical partners to align efforts, share knowledge, and mobilise resources for large-scale NbS deployment. It supports countries in embedding NbS into **NDCs, NBSAPs, and NAPs**, directly contributing to the **COP30 “Plans to Accelerate Solutions”**.

Drawing on systems thinking, the report explains how transformation occurs by activating **leverage points** across governance, finance, and society. NbS can reconfigure institutions and values, redirect capital flows, and shift production and consumption systems toward reciprocity with nature. The report measures this **transformative potential** through four dimensions: depth (systemic change in institutions and values), scope (application across scales and sectors), speed (rate of adoption), and limits (overcoming ecological, social, and financial barriers).



Across the six pathways, case studies illustrate how NbS catalyse system-wide transformation. NbS are central to the COP30 Action Agenda, providing integrated pathways to address climate, biodiversity, and development goals. In **agriculture and food systems** (Axis III), NbS restore land, promote sustainable production, and strengthen food security. In **human settlements** (Axis V), they enhance resilience, equity, and well-being through nature-integrated urban design. For **forests, oceans, and biodiversity** (Axis II), NbS advance global restoration and protection targets by bridging ecosystem action and sustaining livelihoods. In **green-grey infrastructure and water systems** (Axis IV), they offer cost-effective, resilient alternatives to grey infrastructure and support climate adaptation. Finally, across **cross-cutting systems** (Axis VI), strong governance, coherent finance, and inclusive participation are essential to scale NbS. Together, these approaches enable just, regenerative transformations that align global climate and biodiversity action.

The report's **recommendations** are organised under four pillars:

- 1. Setting up for transformational change** – institutionalise leverage-point analysis, adaptive governance, and cross-system pilots.
- 2. Policy coherence and governance** – align NbS with global frameworks, create cross-ministerial units, and empower local authorities.
- 3. Transformative finance** – phase out harmful subsidies, expand innovative instruments, and link finance to measurable outcomes.
- 4. Whole-of-society approaches** – secure Indigenous rights, gender inclusion, and participatory governance for legitimacy and equity.

In conclusion, NbS are **central to achieving the integrated vision of COP30**, linking climate, biodiversity, and land restoration under one regenerative agenda. With political will, inclusive governance, and innovative finance, NbS can shift the global development paradigm from fragmentation to transformation, ensuring resilience, prosperity, and justice for people and the planet.



01

Introduction

The world is facing a convergence of crises like climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation that are accelerating and deeply interlinked. Fragmented, siloed policies have so far failed to address their systemic nature. The report argues that only **integrated, transformational approaches** can deliver the scale of change required to achieve global goals under the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the UNCCD Land Degradation Neutrality targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are presented as a unifying framework that aligns these agendas by delivering co-benefits for people, climate, and ecosystems. They contribute directly to international targets for emission reduction, ecosystem restoration, land neutrality, and resilient cities. When implemented across priority ENACT systems – agriculture and food, human settlements, natural and modified ecosystems, green-grey infrastructure, water systems, and cross-cutting enabling systems – NbS can catalyse structural change.

The **ENACT Partnership (Enhancing Nature-based Solutions for an Accelerated Climate Transformation)** was created to bridge the persistent gap between ambition and implementation. Acting as a global coordination platform, ENACT connects governments, civil society, financiers, and technical partners to align efforts, share knowledge, and mobilise resources for large-scale NbS deployment. It supports countries in embedding NbS into **NDCs, NBSAPs, and NAPs**, and in advancing the **COP30 “Plans to Accelerate Solutions”**.

Targeted at policymakers, negotiators, and practitioners, the report provides actionable pathways and case evidence for transforming NbS from scattered pilots into **systemic, scalable, and inclusive strategies**.



02

Accelerating policy, finance and implementation

Global crises, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, and food insecurity, are interconnected symptoms of the same unsustainable socio-economic systems. Addressing them effectively requires **transformational change**, defined by **IPBES** as deep, system-wide shifts in economic, technological, and social structures, including the norms and goals guiding human-nature relations.

Chapter 2 applies **systems thinking** to show how interventions across multiple sectors can generate reinforcing benefits. Transformation occurs by targeting **leverage points** – strategic areas where small policy or behavioural changes can trigger broader systemic impacts. These may include reforming subsidies, reconfiguring institutions, or redefining development goals around reciprocity with nature.

Transformation unfolds across three interconnected dimensions: 1) **views** – shifts in values and world-views about humanity's relationship with nature; 2) **structures** – reforming institutions, policies, and governance systems; and 3) **practices** – changing social behaviours, production, and consumption patterns. Progress in one dimension reinforces the others, creating a cycle of change. The process must be guided by **equity and justice, pluralism and inclusion, reciprocity with nature, and adaptive learning**, principles that ensure transformation is fair, inclusive, and resilient.

NbS embody these systemic qualities. By addressing environmental, social, and economic challenges together, NbS can reconnect people and eco-systems, mobilise diverse knowledge, and reshape governance and finance systems. When well-designed, NbS can transform the structures and values underpinning economies, aligning ecological restoration with equity and regeneration.

The **transformative potential** of NbS can be measured through four dimensions:

- **Depth** – the extent of systemic change in values and institutions;
- **Scope** – how widely NbS are applied across sectors and scales;
- **Speed** – the rate of adoption and diffusion; and
- **Limits** – the degree to which ecological, social, and financial barriers are overcome.

Maximising these dimensions moves NbS from incremental improvements to large-scale systemic transformation.

Transformational governance demands integrated, transparent, and inclusive institutions that bridge silos and coordinate across levels. Policies must embed NbS in **NDCs, NBSAPs, and NAPs**, supported by coherent **spatial planning, public procurement**, and **legal mandates** for ecosystem restoration.

Transformative finance must redirect capital away from activities that degrade nature and toward those that regenerate it. This includes **phasing out harmful subsidies**, expanding **blended and green finance**, and building capacity in financial institutions to integrate NbS into portfolios.

Finally, transformation depends on **whole-of-society participation**. Securing Indigenous rights, ensuring gender inclusion, enabling community-led governance and do so through shared values of reciprocity and regeneration are vital to building legitimacy and long-term success. NbS succeed when they restore ecosystems and empower people simultaneously, fostering a shared sense of stewardship and justice.

03

Analysis of acceleration pathways for NbS

Chapter 3 of the report translates the ENACT Partnership's systems framework into six acceleration pathways that show how NbS can deliver transformative change across interconnected systems: agriculture and food systems; human settlement systems; stewardship of natural and modified ecosystems; green-grey infrastructure; water systems; and cross-cutting systems such as governance, finance, and inclusion.

Each pathway identifies leverage points, namely policy, financial, and institutional entry points, that can shift systems toward sustainability, resilience, and equity. Case studies demonstrate how NbS can be scaled through integrated design, co-benefit optimisation, and inclusive governance.

NbS are central to transforming **agriculture and food systems**, corresponding to **Axis III of the COP30 Action Agenda**, by delivering land restoration, sustainable agriculture, resilient and adaptive food systems, and equitable food security and nutrition for all. In practice, regenerative approaches such as agroforestry, soil restoration, and sustainable livestock management enhance productivity while sequestering carbon and improving livelihoods. Examples such as Madagascar's agroforestry programme and Germany's peatland restoration demonstrate how co-innovation and adaptive management generate both ecological and social benefits, advancing the goals of sustainable production and just rural transitions.

In **human settlements**, aligned with **Axis V of the Action Agenda**, NbS enhance climate resilience and improve health and well-being, supporting COP30's emphasis on adaptation and equity. Urban NbS such as green corridors, restored wetlands, and nature-inclusive architecture reduce

flood and heat risks while improving liveability, as demonstrated in Vienna's Biotope City and Rotterdam's Climate Adaptation Strategy.

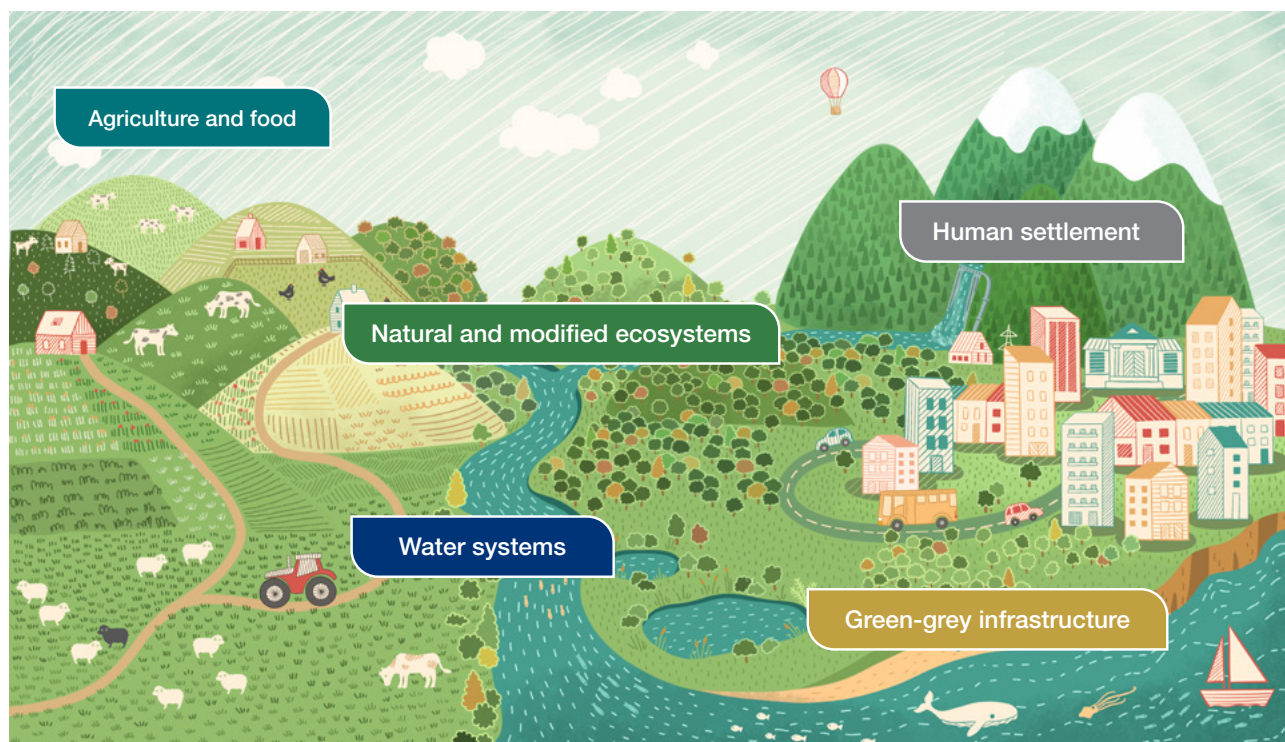
NbS also play a pivotal role in **stewarding forests, oceans, and biodiversity**, corresponding to **Axis II of the Action Agenda**, by supporting the GBF targets for restoration and conservation. Interventions such as forest restoration, peatland protection, and blue carbon conservation in Costa Rica and Southeast Asia sustain biodiversity, carbon sinks, and livelihoods. These approaches align with global priorities to halt deforestation, reverse ecosystem degradation, and restore oceans and coastal ecosystems.

In **green-grey infrastructure and water systems**, related to **Axis IV of the Action Agenda**, NbS offer cost-effective, resilient, and adaptive alternatives to grey infrastructure, supporting multi-level governance and resilient urban development. Hybrid solutions, like Barcelona's Green Corridor and Gola Maggiore's wetland restoration in Italy, illustrate how ecological and engineered systems can work together to deliver climate resilience, mobility, and improved water management. The Netherlands' Room for the River programme further demonstrates how adaptive spatial planning and ecosystem restoration prevent floods while revitalising landscapes and communities.

Finally, in **cross-cutting systems**, linked to **Axis VI of the Action Agenda**, NbS require strong governance, state capacity, and institutional strengthening to enable a just societal transformation. They must be underpinned by mainstreaming in finance and investment, and can drive the bioeconomy and green innovation, creating jobs and economic opportunities. Initiatives such as Peru's Alto Mayo

Landscape Finance Strategy and Japan's subnational NbS frameworks exemplify how coherent finance, participatory governance, and inclusive decision-making enable large-scale, sustainable implementation.

Together, these pathways illustrate how NbS can move from scattered initiatives to **systemic, multi-sectoral transformations**, embedding nature at the core of economic planning, urban design, and national policy frameworks.



System	Drivers / Enablers for accelerating NbS uptake systemically
Agriculture and food	- Financial returns - Regulatory and incentives frameworks - Awareness and learning - Co-benefits / outcomes
Human settlements	- Strategic urban planning - Green infrastructure integration - Innovation for circular urban design and smart technologies - Co-creation and co-ownership
Natural and modified habitats	- Strategies and binding targets - Indigenous land tenure - Adequate funding - Climate co-benefits
Green-grey infrastructure	- Stable and diverse funding - Early and meaningful community engagement - Political and institutional commitment and regulatory adaptation - Transdisciplinary expertise and local technical capacity - Cross-sectoral collaboration
Water systems	- National and local planning frameworks - Long-term monitoring - Long-term funding commitments - Relevant stakeholder engagement - Transdisciplinary expertise and local technical capacity

04

Recommendations: what actions to take

Chapter 4 of the report translates insights per system into an actionable roadmap. It identifies four strategic priorities: embedding transformational change in institutions; ensuring policy coherence across sectors and scales; mobilising finance at unprecedented scale; strengthening inclusive participation; and linking monitoring and adaptive learning to transformative potential. Each recommendation directly supports COP30's ambition to integrate NbS into the global climate agenda and to operationalise the principles of just and inclusive transformation.

The recommendations of the report are organised under four interconnected pillars – **transformational change**, **policy coherence and governance**, **finance**, and **whole-of-society approaches** – each designed to enhance the four dimensions of transformative potential: **depth**, **scope**, **speed**, and **limits**.

1 Transformative change

The report emphasises that NbS must be conceived as **systemic transformations**, not as technical or isolated fixes. Governments and partners are urged to **institutionalise transformational analysis** and the **identification of leverage points** in all major NbS programmes. This involves mapping where small shifts in governance, planning, or finance can catalyse large-scale systemic impacts. For instance, the Netherlands' *Room for the River* programme demonstrates how integrating spatial planning, stakeholder participation, and adaptive infrastructure can turn flood control into a holistic resilience strategy.

To ensure continuous improvement and resilience, NbS should adopt **adaptive, learning-oriented governance**, a flexible approach that evolves through monitoring, feedback, and stakeholder co-innovation. The German peatland restoration initiative exemplifies how adaptive management strengthens learning loops and accelerates progress.

Equally, all NbS should include **robust trade-off and synergy analyses**, ensuring that ecological, economic, and social objectives reinforce rather than undermine each other. Barcelona's *Green Corridor* shows how balancing multiple objectives can deepen benefits and minimise unintended harms.

Finally, transformational change depends on **cross-system pilot programmes** that integrate multiple sectors, such as agriculture, water, and urban systems, to demonstrate scalable models. Vienna's *Biotope City* illustrates how linking urban design, social inclusion, and climate adaptation can create new blueprints for resilient, nature-positive cities.

2 Policy coherence and governance

Transformative governance requires a deliberate move from fragmented, siloed policymaking to **integrated and ambitious frameworks** that embed NbS into long-term planning. The chapter calls for countries to **align national policies** with the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring NbS serve as unifying mechanisms across these agendas. Spain's integrated biodiversity and climate strategies exemplify this coherence.

To operationalise this vision, governments should create **cross-ministerial NbS transformation units** mandated to coordinate between environment, agriculture, finance, and infrastructure departments. Rotterdam's *Climate Adaptation Strategy* demonstrates how such coordination accelerates policy uptake and broadens implementation.

Legally binding measures are also key to shifting from voluntary initiatives to institutional mandates. The *Hamburg Green Roof Strategy* shows how regulatory obligations can entrench NbS in urban planning, expanding both the scope and permanence of change.

Finally, **empowering local and subnational authorities** is essential for context-specific implementation. Japan's guidance for subnational NbS planning illustrates how local adaptation can thrive under a coherent national framework.

3 Transformative finance

Transforming finance is central to mainstreaming NbS. The report calls for a fundamental shift from short-term, incremental funding to **systemic financial transformation** that rewards long-term, nature-positive outcomes. Governments and investors must **phase out harmful subsidies** and redirect public and private capital toward NbS. Peru's *Alto Mayo Landscape Finance Strategy* shows how reorienting capital flows can trigger landscape-scale change.

Scaling **innovative financial instruments**, including blended finance, green and blue bonds, biodiversity credits, and insurance-linked products, is vital to close the funding gap. Costa Rica's seed capital and SME support for ecosystem-based adaptation demonstrate how innovative instruments can de-risk investment and enable rapid scaling.

Finance should also be **performance-based**, linking funding directly to measurable environmental and social outcomes such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity recovery, or equity gains. The *Forest Resilience Bond* in California provides a model for outcome-linked investment that deepens impact and accelerates replication.

Finally, systemic change depends on **capacity-building within financial institutions**. Governments and development banks must invest in technical training and tools to help financial actors design and assess NbS-aligned products. Costa Rica's Development Banking System shows how mainstreaming NbS into lending portfolios can address institutional barriers and unlock private capital.

4 Whole-of-society approaches

The fourth pillar of transformation is **social inclusion and equity**. NbS must become instruments of social transformation, embedding justice, participation, and shared benefit into their design and implementation. The report calls for institutionalising **participatory governance** in all major NbS projects, ensuring that Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and youth have meaningful decision-making power. The *Madagascar agroforestry initiative* and *Thailand's Inclusive Conservation Initiative* exemplify how community-led approaches can shift power relations, build legitimacy, and enhance resilience.

Securing land tenure and rights, including the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), should be a precondition for all NbS investments. The *British Columbia 2 Billion Trees* programme demonstrates how embedding Indigenous participation and tenure security enhances large-scale restoration success.

Mainstreaming **gender-responsive and socially inclusive approaches** is also essential. Projects such as Germany's *peatland restoration* and Costa Rica's *SME adaptation support* highlight how targeting marginalised groups both strengthens social equity and improves environmental outcomes.

Lastly, the report calls for **investment in education, knowledge sharing, and co-production of knowledge**. Integrating Indigenous and local knowledge into education systems and NbS curricula can shift cultural values and accelerate innovation. The Thailand and Madagascar cases show how community-led learning networks help diffuse new practices and sustain transformation.

5 Linking to transformative potential

Each of these recommendations is explicitly linked to the **four dimensions of transformative potential** introduced in Chapter 2 of the report. By deepening values and institutions, widening the scope of action across systems, increasing the speed of adoption, and overcoming social, ecological, and financial limits, these recommendations provide a clear operational framework for achieving transformational change.

In essence, **transforming NbS implementation requires embedding systemic thinking into governance, aligning finance with sustainability, and mobilising society-wide participation**. Together, these actions can move the world from fragmented pilot projects to coherent, large-scale transformation. The ENACT Partnership's roadmap provides policymakers, funders, and practitioners with a practical agenda to deliver on COP30's call for just, inclusive, and nature-positive transformation.

05

Conclusion

The ENACT Partnership NbS Accelerator Pathways Report delivers a clear message for stakeholders supporting global climate action: Nature-based Solutions are indispensable to achieving the intertwined goals of climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. Yet their potential will only be realised through structural, not incremental, change. Governments must embed NbS at the heart of national climate strategies, align finance and policy instruments across sectors, and mobilise all parts of society toward shared objectives.

The urgency is profound. By 2030, the world must both halve emissions and reverse biodiversity loss. NbS offer a rare opportunity to address these imperatives simultaneously. They are not mere environmental interventions but vehicles for transforming economies, governance systems, and social contracts. For COP30, this means that Parties can position NbS as central pillars of the “Plans to Ac-

celerate Solutions,” leveraging them to deliver adaptation, mitigation, and equity in one integrated framework.

The path forward requires political will, innovative finance, and inclusive governance. Embedding NbS into long-term national plans, supported by blended finance and robust monitoring, will translate global commitments into tangible action. Equally, ensuring that NbS respect Indigenous rights, gender equality, and local knowledge will make them socially just and durable.

If Parties act decisively, NbS can become the defining instruments of the coming decade, a bridge between the goals of the Paris Agreement, the Global Biodiversity Framework, and the UNCCD’s land restoration targets. They can help realise the vision of COP30 through 2030: a world in which humanity’s relationship with nature is not extractive but regenerative, ensuring resilience, prosperity, and justice for all.

