

# **The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation's position paper ahead of the UN biodiversity conference (COP17) in Yerevan, Armenia, 19-30 October 2026**

## **1. Background**

Half of the period leading up to 2030 has now elapsed since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). The Framework contains ambitious targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, yet implementation remains far too slow. This is particularly true in Sweden. Despite ambitious international commitments, both Sweden's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the recently adopted proposal for a National Restoration Plan lack sufficient ambition and concrete measures.

For Sweden to contribute meaningfully to achieving the global targets, a clear increase in ambition, stronger governance, and significantly faster implementation of measures to conserve and restore nature are required. The world's forests are under growing pressure from agriculture, logging, and increasing demand for minerals needed for the energy transition. The greatest rates of deforestation occur in tropical countries<sup>1</sup>, while challenges in boreal forests are more often linked to the conversion of natural forests into monoculture plantations.

Developments are equally concerning in Europe and Sweden, where many species and habitats, both in forest and marine environments, continue to have an unfavourable conservation status. The oceans are threatened by overfishing, resource extraction, infrastructure development, and climate change. According to the FAO, 37.6 per cent of the world's fish stocks are overfished.<sup>2</sup> Healthy forests and oceans are essential for biodiversity, climate stability, and human well-being.

COP17 is a crucial arena where governments must assume responsibility and take action for biodiversity, the climate, and the fulfilment of human rights, not least the right to a clean, safe, healthy, and sustainable environment. COP17 must therefore become an implementation-focused COP, where the first global review leads to concrete decisions that accelerate efforts towards nature's recovery.

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<sup>1</sup> Key findings | Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025.  
<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/2dee6e93-1988-4659-aa89-30dd20b43b15/content/FRA-2025/key-findings.html>

<sup>2</sup> FAO. 2026. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2026 – Blue Transformation: turning vision into impact. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd8357en>

## 2. The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation's positions

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation urges the Parties to focus on the following ten priorities:

**1. Make the global review action-oriented**

The first global review must identify where the world is falling behind, analyse the underlying causes, and lead to concrete actions. Monitoring and reporting should be used to strengthen implementation, rather than becoming ends in themselves.

**2. Strengthen accountability for implementation**

Countries must be held accountable for translating their commitments into national policy, governance, and financing. COP17 should strengthen mechanisms for monitoring, transparency, and accountability through to 2030.

**3. Secure adequate and equitable financing**

Implementing the KMGBF requires substantially greater resources. Financing must be long-term, equitable and predictable, while environmentally harmful subsidies are phased out. Although financing for Indigenous Peoples and local communities has increased somewhat, they are often still denied meaningful influence over decision-making and control over how resources are allocated and used. Achieving the 2030 targets will require stronger regulations to ensure that companies take responsibility for their impacts on nature and people. Clear requirements for monitoring, transparency and accountability must be in place when harm occurs. Financial markets must also be redirected so that investments contribute to conserving and restoring ecosystems rather than driving their loss.

**4. Implement the framework through a rights-based approach**

Human rights must be embedded throughout the implementation of the Framework. To achieve this, structural barriers to participation must be addressed, and the specific risks faced by environmental and human rights defenders (EHRDs) must be recognised, including criminalisation and shrinking civic space resulting from alliances between states and corporate actors. Indigenous Peoples' rights, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), gender equality, youth participation and the protection of environmental defenders must be central elements of implementation.

**5. Strengthen the participation of indigenous peoples, local communities, women, youth, and civil society**

Recognising and respecting the rights, knowledge systems and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to conservation, while ensuring their meaningful participation in decision-making, implementation and monitoring, is

essential for achieving the long-term protection of biodiversity.<sup>3</sup> Successful implementation depends on the meaningful participation of those affected by decisions. Their knowledge, experience and rights must be an integral part of decision-making, implementation and monitoring.

#### **6. Mainstream biodiversity across the entire economy**

The biodiversity crisis cannot be resolved through conventional conservation policies alone. To achieve the goals of the KMGBF, biodiversity considerations must be integrated into policies, regulatory frameworks and investments across agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, trade and the financial sector.

#### **7. Strengthen corporate responsibility for biodiversity**

Businesses, investors and financial actors have a central role to play in implementing the KMGBF. To reduce impacts on biodiversity, climate and human rights, requirements for due diligence, transparency and accountability must be strengthened. This is also an important component of implementing KMGBF Target 15, which aims to strengthen the responsibility of businesses and financial institutions for their impacts on biodiversity.<sup>4</sup> COP17 should therefore promote measures requiring companies to identify, prevent, manage and disclose risks and adverse impacts within their operations and value chains, in line with UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPR)<sup>5</sup> and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct<sup>6</sup>.

#### **8. Strengthen implementation for marine and coastal ecosystems**

The global review<sup>7</sup> shows that marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems are underrepresented in countries' commitments and implementation efforts compared with terrestrial ecosystems. At the same time, commitments and financial resources remain insufficient and inadequate to address the scale of the challenge. COP17 should therefore contribute to strengthened implementation for marine and freshwater environments through increased overall resources for implementation, improved

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<sup>3</sup> Programme of work on Article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity related to indigenous peoples and local communities to 2030.

<https://www.cbd.int/traditional/doc/cbd-8j-brochure-en.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> KMGBF Target 15, Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts. <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/15>

<sup>5</sup> UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, 2011.

[https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, 2023.

[https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises-on-responsible-business-conduct\\_81f92357-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises-on-responsible-business-conduct_81f92357-en.html)

<sup>7</sup> Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/5611/c35f/aa96bdcd816f5952d586a777/sbstta-28-02-add1-rev1-en.pdf>

monitoring and reporting, and more ambitious measures to promote sustainable fisheries, ecosystem restoration and the protection of marine ecosystems.

**9. Ensure that climate policy and biodiversity policy reinforce one another**

Climate change and biodiversity loss are closely interconnected crises. Climate action should simultaneously benefit nature, while biodiversity measures should contribute to climate adaptation, resilience, and sustainable development.

**10. Prevent false solutions**

COP17 should promote actions that deliver genuine and long-term benefits for nature. Measures that displace environmental problems, legitimise continued exploitation, or risk creating new ecological and social harms, so-called false solutions, must be avoided. COP17 should prioritise financing mechanisms and policy instruments that deliver measurable, long-term and equitable outcomes for biodiversity. Particular attention should be given to strengthening the responsibility of financial actors to identify, prevent and manage risks related to deforestation, forest degradation, climate impacts and human rights violations, in line with the ambitions of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)<sup>8</sup>.

**From Ambition to Implementation**

The world already possesses the goals, indicators and processes required to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. COP17 must therefore focus on turning ambition into implementation and delivering the political decisions needed to achieve the 2030 targets.

At the national level, Sweden's incoming government must demonstrate, through concrete action, its commitment to the global framework and rapidly implement ambitious measures to achieve the 2030 targets. Sweden's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan should be revised to align with the ambitions of the KMGBF and be complemented by clear targets, effective policy instruments and adequate financing.

At the same time, the Government should ensure the ambitious implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation<sup>9</sup>, accelerate the protection of valuable terrestrial and marine ecosystems, strengthen species protection and the management of threatened species, and ensure that agricultural, forestry and fisheries policies contribute to the conservation and restoration of biodiversity. Sweden must also phase out incentives and subsidies that drive biodiversity loss and significantly increase investments in the protection, restoration and long-term management of valuable ecosystems.

Only through such an increase in ambition can Sweden make a credible contribution to achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and reversing biodiversity loss before 2030.

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU) 2023/1115. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1115/oj/eng>

<sup>9</sup> Regulation (EU) 2024/1991. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1991/oj/eng>

## Related Policy Documents

This document sets out the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation's positions on issues related to the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP17). The organisation's substantive policy positions can be found in the following documents.

### **Policies**

The organisation's long-term and overarching positions are set out in its policy documents. The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation has policies covering the following areas:

- Sustainable Economic Development
- Climate, Energy and Transport
- Forests
- Agriculture
- Seas and Freshwater
- Hazardous Chemicals
- Hunting and Wildlife Management
- Minerals
- The Global Compass

All current policy documents can be found on the organisation's website, [naturskyddsforeningen.se](http://naturskyddsforeningen.se).

### **Position papers**

A position paper contains the organisation's more detailed positions on specific, defined issues. All current position papers can be found on the organisation's website, [naturskyddsforeningen.se](http://naturskyddsforeningen.se).

### **Consultation responses**

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation responds annually to a large number of public consultations at national, regional, and local levels. The national organisation's consultation responses are also published on [naturskyddsforeningen.se](http://naturskyddsforeningen.se).

### **Reports**

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation's reports are available on [naturskyddsforeningen.se](http://naturskyddsforeningen.se).