



WHC White Paper

Beyond Target 15

Aligning Corporate Nature Actions to the Global Biodiversity Framework

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Message from our sponsor:



Promoting a Nature-Positive Future

Cemex recognizes the vital role biodiversity and healthy ecosystems play in sustainable development, providing essential benefits like clean air, water, and climate mitigation. Acknowledging the environmental impacts of industrial activities, such as mineral extraction and cement production, Cemex has been committed to biodiversity conservation for over three decades.

Cemex's nature-positive approach encompasses habitat mapping, ecosystem restoration, quarry rehabilitation, and initiatives that embed circularity principles into our operations while reducing our reliance on natural resource extraction. A notable example of our biodiversity work in action is the El Carmen Nature Reserve, our transboundary conservation site spanning over 130,000 hectares across the Mexico-United States border.

With the goal of reversing and halting biodiversity loss by 2030, Cemex's nature-positive future is focused on enhancing biodiversity in and around quarry sites, developing biodiversity action plans, and ensuring rehabilitation plans are in-place for all active quarries. We are proud to have 35 programs certified by the Wildlife Habitat Council, including multiple actions advancing biodiversity conservation and training programs. These

activities are among Cemex's 60 sites spanning six countries with third-party conservation certifications.

Cemex advocates for the importance of providing businesses with regulatory certainty to address nature loss, drive innovation, mobilize investments, and encourage transparent reporting. To this end, the company supports the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to protect and restore biodiversity.

We call for policymakers to:

- Create and enforce national policies with financial and fiscal incentives to promote conservation initiatives to achieve the United Nations' 30x30 plan
- Increase public-private partnerships and cooperation to protect and regenerate ecosystems
- Support ecosystem restoration policies to enhance biodiversity and nature-based solutions

Our commitment to a nature-positive future is fundamental to our comprehensive Future in Action sustainability program. At Cemex, we are setting the pace to build a better, more sustainable future.

Vicente Saiso
Vice President - Sustainability
Cemex

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Introduction

Since 1970, the abundance of wildlife populations has declined by 69%.¹ In order to address the ongoing global biodiversity crisis, the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) met in Montreal, Canada in December 2022. This meeting was designed to develop a set of global goals that would halt and reverse biodiversity loss. After 12 days of deliberation, 188 countries adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The GBF explicates four overall outcomes to reach by 2050: protecting and restoring nature, responsibly maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, sharing monetary and non-monetary benefits fairly and investing and collaborating to ensure the GBF is equitably accessible. In addition to these four main goals, the GBF also includes a list of 23 targets to achieve by 2030.

Much of the corporate focus following COP15 has been on Target 15 of the GBF, which directs businesses to assess, disclose and reduce their

biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts. But Target 15 is not the only target that companies can contribute to, and the negative business impacts on nature should not be a company's sole focus. Following the voluntary implementation of the GBF, many companies may choose to develop corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability reports that include positive impacts on nature as well.

Early adoption of the GBF is a promising start; however, on-the-ground action supporting nature-related commitments is critical for widespread impact. Corporations around the world have been implementing nature-positive actions for decades. These actions can and will continue to contribute to these businesses meeting various targets of the GBF.



This white paper illustrates how on-the-ground corporate conservation actions align with various targets of the GBF. Many of the highlighted companies and programs have been engaged in these efforts for years, demonstrating how existing voluntary initiatives can help businesses achieve global targets.

The Role of Businesses at COP16



At the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in the Fall of 2024 in Cali, Colombia, parties will determine how the GBF's goals and targets can align to national action plans, as well as address financial resources and ensure that implementation is accessible for all countries. COP16 is also the private sector's opportunity to bring a unique perspective to governmental representatives as they develop and update the national action plans that will impact upcoming regulations. By bringing evidence of existing projects that already align to the GBF's targets, companies engaging in corporate conservation can provide examples for other organizations to follow suit.

Managing Land to Reduce Biodiversity Loss

Target 1 of the GBF, “Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss,” focuses on ensuring that land and sea areas are under effective management and spatial planning processes to halt the loss of areas with high biodiversity importance.

As stated previously, biodiversity loss is a significant issue with major implications on global ecosystems, economies and human well-being. Five of the major drivers of biodiversity loss, as identified by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), are land use changes, species exploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive species.² Particularly in biodiversity hotspots around the world, such as the Atlantic Forest in South America and the forests of Mesoamerica, effective and responsible management of land and spatial planning ensure that biodiversity is preserved and uplifted.

Target 1 addresses not only effective land management strategies, but also the spatial planning of these locations, which takes into consideration the human uses of an area. Effective spatial planning and land management lead to a balance between the

developmental, socioeconomic and environmental needs of the managed land.

Biodiversity uplift refers to a positive change in an area’s biodiversity conditions. Measuring biodiversity has proven to be more complicated and challenging than measuring mitigation efforts such as carbon sequestration, but a number of metrics can help contribute to the quantification of biodiversity, including species richness, habitat quality, degree of connectivity, etc. The GBF has identified several top-line indicators for Target 1, including the Red List of Ecosystems, the extent of natural ecosystems and the percent of land and seas that are covered by biodiversity plans.



GM works to support the restoration of the páramo ecosystem, a well-known biodiversity hotspot.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION GM | BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

The páramo ecosystem is a well-known biodiversity hotspot. This high-altitude grassland biome is located in the Andes Mountains of Ecuador, Peru and Colombia, and it serves as a crucial source of water for surrounding ecosystems and communities while also housing numerous rare and endemic species. It is estimated that over 80% of the flowering plants species found in the páramo ecosystem are not found anywhere else on earth.³ Like many other ecosystem types worldwide, the páramo is facing pressures as a result of climate change and increased development, putting the ecological and biodiversity services provided by this important ecosystem at risk.

As part of its environmental efforts in Bogotá, Colombia, automaker GM has instituted several projects that directly support the restoration and biodiversity of the páramo ecosystem. Through a partnership with conservation organizations, GM works to restore degraded ecosystems in the Canoas Metropolitan Park, a 140-hectare protected area located just outside Bogotá. Seventy-five hectares of the

park have been rehabilitated or are in the process of restoration, with over 100,000 trees planted since the beginning of the park's restoration in 2015.⁴

GM volunteers participate in annual planting days at Canoas Metropolitan Park, where they not only sow species but also gain knowledge on the value of ecosystem restoration, species identification and plant maintenance. Evaluations indicate that the employees who participated felt empowered by their contributions and requested additional similar activities. The combination of GM's on-the-ground restoration and educational efforts help to support the biodiversity of a threatened biodiversity hotspot and participated in hands-on activities that educated employees on the importance of these measurements as well as technical plant identification and maintenance.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2016

CERTIFIED GOLD



The pollinator gardens at Kenvue's Guelph manufacturing plant demonstrate how conservation efforts can start small and still be successful.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION
KENVUE | ONTARIO, CANADA

Corporate land management efforts to halt biodiversity loss do not have to take place in global hotspots or span across multiple hectares; these efforts can start small and local and still be impactful.

Kenvue's manufacturing plant in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, includes a 25-acre area of mowed turf on-site. In both corporate and residential settings, lawns create a monoculture of plant species that does not contribute meaningfully to local biodiversity; they do not offer adequate habitat for key pollinators and other wildlife, in addition to the water and energy resources required to maintain them. With this information in mind, in 2018, Kenvue stopped mowing a large part of the lawn to allow it to naturalize. Two years later, the area was converted into a native wildflower meadow, with more than 60 species of native plants — including wildflowers, trees, shrubs and grasses —planted, totaling approximately 300 new plants installed.

One of the objectives of Kenvue's meadow conversion was the support of pollinator species. Therefore the

team also included several habitat enhancements. Pots were prepared for burrowing bees to build nests in, and fallen trees were left in place for the use of cavity-nesting bees. Water features consisting of shallow plates of pea gravel and water also help to meet pollinators' basic needs.

Robust monitoring has indicated the thriving biodiversity in this managed area. The number of species observed annually increases, with nine wildlife species observed in 2021, ten in 2022 and thirteen in 2023. There was also a higher abundance of species, such as the common eastern bumble bee and monarch, in 2023 over the first two years of the project. Finally, the number of individuals has steadily increased each year, with 60 observed in 2021, 90 in 2022 and 140 in 2023. The consistent increases in species and individuals indicates an increase in biodiversity in this restored ecosystem.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2021

Restoring and Conserving Ecosystems

The restoration of degraded ecosystems, as well as their continued conservation, supports two targets of the GBF: Target 2, “Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems” and Target 3, “Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas.” Restoration and conservation are crucial for the support of biodiversity, as decades of industrialization and development have degraded terrestrial landscapes and marine ecosystems. Not only are natural resources such as trees and water sources affected, but as are the ecosystem services these resources provide. From increased flooding to erosion to air and water quality impacts, the degradation of ecosystems has severe effects on the wildlife and humans that inhabit them.

Ecological restoration is the process of initiating and accelerating the recovery of a disturbed ecosystem. Restoration can include reclamation or rehabilitation of a degraded site. While the specific methods of ecological restoration vary by ecosystem type, the process is comprised of three phases: planning, implementation and monitoring. To successfully complete each phase, it is important to approach ecological restoration with the input

of knowledgeable partners, strong stakeholder engagement and metrics or goals to be met.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

BOEING | CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

Until 2006, Boeing’s Santa Susana Field Laboratory in Canoga Park, California, was a rocket engine testing and nuclear research site. Rocket testing began at the 2,850-acre facility in 1947, with 17,000 tests conducted over its almost 60 years of operation.⁵ While the technology honed at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory shaped decades of innovation and energy, the ecological impacts of these efforts led to a degraded landscape that Boeing has since worked to restore.

Once testing at the site ceased, Boeing began planning for the restoration and conservation of the area, going beyond regulatory requirements. Beginning in 2017, Boeing entered into a voluntary conservation easement that permanently preserves the area for wildlife, with 900 acres serving as habitat. This easement aligns with local goals as well as a California state initiative to preserve 30% of land.



Mountain lions drink from a watering hole at Boeing's Santa Susana site.



In addition to the regulated soil and groundwater clean-up, Boeing's long-term remediation plan also includes stormwater management. To address stormwater discharge through more natural means, Boeing installed an engineered biofilter and two biowalls, exceeding regulatory requirements on the site's remediation. The biofilter removes contaminants from runoff using natural processes such as plant uptake and soil infiltration. Boeing also opted to plant only native species endemic to the area, rather than standard erosion control seed mixes, resulting in the installation of over 10,000 container plants.

Stakeholder engagement has been a key part of the remediation efforts, with Boeing involving community ornithologists, herpetologists, stormwater experts and others in the plans and maintenance of the site. Community members will continue to be involved in the site's remediation, with the goal to ensure the area remains as open and preserved wildlife habitat.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2012

CERTIFIED GOLD

The protection of land and sea helps ensure vital resources remain preserved for future generations of humans and wildlife. In addition to land conservation, the GBF targets also focus on marine and coastal ecosystems. Currently, only 1% of the world's oceans are specifically protected,⁶ while they host more than 250,000 known species.⁷ Efforts to conserve and support these biodiversity-heavy but largely unprotected ecosystems are crucial and can help companies align with this target.

A common theme throughout the GBF is a respect for Indigenous communities. Local wisdom has historically been undervalued by the scientific community, but traditional knowledge passed down through generations of Indigenous peoples can provide important insight into conservation efforts. The use of qualitative methods, such as interviews, are often a useful tool in collaborating with Indigenous communities where traditional knowledge has been passed down orally.⁸ Building strong connections and partnerships with Indigenous peoples provides multiple benefits, including increased social license to operate (SLO) and additional knowledge-sharing opportunities.



Team members from Freeport-McMoRan work with local Indigenous communities to learn more about the rare New Guinea singing dog.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

FREEMPORT-MCMORAN | PAPUA, INDONESIA

Several actions at Freeport-McMoRan's (FCX) PTFI site align with Targets 2 and 3 of the GBF, from restoring a degraded ecosystem to building connections with local Indigenous communities. Located in the Grasberg minerals district of Indonesia, PTFI mines copper, gold and silver. The Grasberg mine was first discovered in 1988 and contains some of the world's largest copper and gold deposits.⁹

The nearby Ajkwa Estuary contains several mangroves that have been impacted by both mine-related and natural sedimentation.¹⁰ It is estimated that 20% of the world's mangrove population has been lost since the 1980s.¹¹ FCX's mangrove reforestation work in the Ajkwa Estuary helps address this biodiversity loss while protecting coastal health and resilience.

The PTFI site itself spans thousands of acres across a variety of ecosystems, mangrove forests among them. PTFI manages nearly 730 hectares of mangrove ecosystem and has consistently exceeded planting requirements by installing up to five times the number of required propagules. Two species of mangrove were

chosen to help revegetate the islands of the estuary while providing benefits for native wildlife.

PTFI also conducts a research project on the New Guinea singing dog. Found in the mountains of Papua, this canid bears many similarities to the highland wild dog, an ancient breed thought to be extinct in the wild. PTFI's research focuses on determining whether these two wild dogs are of the same species or if they are taxonomically distinct.

In addition to genetic and behavioral analysis, PTFI has also sought local wisdom on the New Guinea singing dog. Specifically, team members work with local community members by incorporating indigenous knowledge about this rare species into the team's research efforts. Papuan culture reveres the New Guinea singing dog as an "ancestor" and "landlord" to which locals pay tribute. Through in-depth interviews with members of four tribes co-located with the dogs' habitat, PTFI has gained valuable traditional knowledge about its behavior and history as well as its deep connections to the Indigenous Papuan people.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2011

CERTIFIED GOLD

Protecting Species of Concern

Target 4 of the GBF, “Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts,” focuses on the protection of species of concern. Species loss is a significant issue that has widespread effects on ecosystems — from breakdowns in the food chain to decreased ecosystem services to a loss of biodiversity.

Beyond these ecological impacts, human economies also suffer when species extinction occurs. The GBF has helped make businesses more aware of not only their impacts on nature, but also their dependencies. Every industry relies on some element of nature to support their outputs, and many depend on the resources provided by a specific flora or fauna. For example, the threatened state of global pollinator populations has dire impacts on agriculture production. Therefore, addressing species extinction by working to support local species of concern supports the balance of the ecosystem as well as the company’s specific economic dependencies.

While laws exist regarding the protection of species of concern, such as the U.S. Endangered Species Act or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), businesses can move beyond regulations to contribute to the recovery and protection of species of concern in many ways.

Loss of habitat is one of the primary factors behind species loss. By creating, managing or enhancing habitat for species of concern through the installation of specific structures or the restoration of historic habitat, corporate landowners can meet the needs of these species. As habitat fragmentation is another major driver of species loss, increasing connectivity between habitats is also an important consideration for species of concern on corporate lands. Additionally, collecting data on the presence of a target species of concern can help provide important insight into the status of a threatened or endangered population, which can then be used to support larger-scale scientific research or citizen science initiatives.



The California gnatcatcher is just one of more than 30 species of conservation importance that WM works to protect.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION
WM | CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

In Corona, California, 680 acres of land surrounding the WM El Sobrante Landfill are conserved for wildlife habitat. The currently operating landfill can process up to 70,000 tons of waste each week,¹² and it comprises 468 acres, which, upon closure of the landfill, will be added to the wildlife preserve. In addition to the habitat conservation efforts at El Sobrante, WM also works to protect over 30 species of conservation importance, including species of concern such as the least bell's vireo, the Stephens' kangaroo rat, the California gnatcatcher and the many-stemmed dudleya.

Habitat loss has greatly impacted these animal and plant species, so WM has gone beyond conservation plan requirements to create and maintain thriving habitat. For example, the Stephens' kangaroo rat is a nocturnal rodent listed as threatened both at the federal and state level. In order to combat habitat loss, WM created native wildflower meadows to provide suitable habitat for these rodents.

Meanwhile, the many-stemmed dudleya, a rare succulent endemic to southern California, is also threatened due to habitat loss. WM's seeding of rocky outcroppings with many-stemmed dudleya, along with maintenance such as weeding and supplemental watering, exceeds the requirement to merely transplant the species. Monitoring of both threatened plant and animal populations has shown that these habitat restoration efforts have proven successful, an outcome that also meets Target 1 of the GBF.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2003

CERTIFIED GOLD

Responsibly Managing Wildlife Populations

The responsible and sustainable management of wildlife populations support several targets of the GBF: Target 5, “Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species,” Target 9, “Manage Wild Species Sustainably To Benefit People,” and Target 4, “Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts.” By engaging in anti-poaching education and managing human-wildlife interactions, corporations can protect crucial species while ensuring the safety and well-being of local communities.

Poaching, or the unauthorized hunting of a species on private property or specifically reserved areas, leads to species decline and cascading effects on the ecosystem. Poaching often supports illegal wildlife trade in the form of medicine ingredients, pets, jewelry, fur, etc. Poachers may contribute to this global trade, or they may harvest species for local sale and consumption only.

Poverty is often a key driving factor in poaching, and demand for illegal wildlife trade products will support poaching as long as sustainable and lucrative alternatives are not available. Many forms

of anti-poaching enforcement do not address the underlying socioeconomic factors that lead many residents to engage in poaching. Rather, research indicates that community-based efforts to educate community members on the value of targeted species, as well as provide alternatives, comprise a more effective strategy than top-down, militarized anti-poaching enforcement. Inclusive anti-poaching efforts involve the community, thus working to address the root causes. Community-focused anti-poaching initiatives can take the form of educational events that empower — and in some cases, even employ — community members to become protectors of the target species.¹³

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

CEMEX | BARAHONA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Cemex Las Salinas & Laguna Cabral quarry is located within the Corredor Biológico La Florida-Las Salinas, an important biological corridor in the Dominican Republic. This region includes a variety of ecosystems such as wetlands and dry forests, and two endemic and threatened iguana species — the rhinoceros iguana and Ricord’s iguana — in part due to the impact of poaching. Locals in the area harvest



Cemex hosts education events in the Dominican Republic to draw attention to the plight of threatened iguana species in the area.

and consume the rhinoceros iguana, with many of the iguana hunters in the area being teens or young adults.

Recognizing these areas are difficult to patrol for anti-poaching, Cemex employees collaborated with a local NGO to utilize an education-based approach. Together, they hosted education events for both children and adults at community centers and schools on the threatened iguana species in the area (also relating to the protection of endangered species - GBF Target 4). Younger learners were engaged through learning strategies such as games, eco-theatre, costume and drawing contests. Students gained an understanding of the iguana and its importance to the region, building a sense of pride for the species and its protection.

Post-event evaluation showed that more than 50% of sampled students increased in their knowledge of the targeted iguana species as well as their appreciation for them, broadening the reach and impact of Cemex's anti-poaching efforts.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2017

CERTIFIED GOLD

In some situations, human-wildlife interactions can be dangerous for both parties, as well as having negative outcomes for the wildlife species. Often, in order to provide adequate habitat and resources for wildlife, an increased number of species come into close proximity to humans. Taking concrete actions to manage these interactions keeps both humans and animals safe, while contributing to Target 4.

Some programs implement wildlife safety practices such as patrols that are alerted when wildlife venture closer to operations, ecopassages that allow wildlife to avoid road mortality and — in cases where specific populations have expanded beyond the carrying capacity of the ecosystem or when outbreaks of infectious disease occur — opportunities for sustainable hunting. Sustainable hunting is a valid wildlife population management practice that can help to curtail excessive population growth, reduce human-wildlife conflicts and provide economic benefit for humans.



Vulcan Materials manages a herd of white-tailed deer at its Villa Rica Quarry in Georgia.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION
VULCAN MATERIALS COMPANY | GEORGIA, U.S.A.

The official mammal of the state of Georgia is the white-tailed deer, which ranges across the state through various marsh and forest habitats. They are considered among the most economically significant game species in the state,¹⁴ and while their populations once reached near-extinction in Georgia, their numbers now exceed 1 million.¹⁵

In order to support this important local species, the Vulcan Materials Villa Rica Quarry manages a herd of white-tailed deer. A key part of the management activities at the quarry involves enhancing the habitat by planting native plant food plots to provide plentiful food resources for the deer, thereby reducing their need to travel into other areas and potentially face road mortality or other dangerous interactions. Supplemental feeding during the winter ensures that the herd can find adequate food throughout the year, and water ponds and a creek on-site meet provide the

herd's water needs as well. A trail camera provides insight into the behaviors and status of the deer population, and several fawns have been observed, indicating that the herd is growing.

A limited number of hunting permits are provided for employees to sustainably control the growth of the deer population. One of Villa Rica's goals in this project is to focus on harvesting older individuals, reducing the competition for resources with younger deer. Since the project's inception in 2018, two white-tailed deer have been harvested from the Villa Rica Quarry.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2017

Controlling Invasive Species Through Sustainable Means

The sustainable control of invasive species by the private sector supports two targets of the GBF: Target 6, “Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact” and Target 7, “Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity.” Invasive species are one of the major threats to biodiversity worldwide, as their encroachment pushes out native species and contributes to a monoculture of species rather than a healthy diversity.

When addressing the infringement of invasive flora and fauna, corporate conservation programs must consider effectiveness of the available methods as well as the potential harm to other parts of the ecosystem. Integrated pest management is a practice that utilizes sustainable approaches for identifying and addressing pest-related issues. This science-based method relies on understanding the pest’s lifecycle and determining the most

effective combination of actions to interrupt it without causing excessive collateral damage to the environment and other wildlife. Integrated pest management techniques are applicable across ecosystem types, from large-scale forestry to small gardens.

Examples of integrated pest management practices include selecting and managing crops to deter pest usage, monitoring pest populations and using biological controls such as the introduction of predators. When the use of integrated pest management strategies also reduces the need for chemical herbicides or pesticides, pollution levels decrease, thereby addressing Target 7 as well.



Matador Ranch & Cattle uses biological controls to reduce abundant and widespread spotted knapweed.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

MATADOR RANCH & CATTLE | MONTANA, U.S.A.

Owned by Matador Ranch & Cattle, Beaverhead Ranch is an operational cattle ranch in Dillon, Montana, covering approximately 200,000 acres. Among the ranch's many conservation-focused strategies are its use of biological agents to control invasive knapweed on the property.

Spotted knapweed, while native to Europe and Asia, was introduced to North America in the late 1800s through a combination of agricultural seed contamination and ship ballast. This invasive plant can now be found in every county in Montana and produces up to 4,000 seeds per plant.¹⁶ Because of spotted knapweed's abundance and widespread seed dispersion, Montana state law requires control of this noxious weed. Matador Ranch & Cattle's efforts satisfy this regulation while going beyond requirements by reducing the use of chemical controls.

Following a successful pilot project in 1996, Beaverhead Ranch opted to release two types of weevils that feed

on knapweed: knapweed root weevils and lesser knapweed flower weevils. Weevil releases took place in 2017 and 2018, with observations indicating that increased population sizes were necessary in 2019.

One of the ranch's goals in utilizing biological controls is to reduce the use of chemical herbicides, thereby reducing impact on local watersheds as the ranch is located in a riparian area. The use of a biological agent to control an invasive plant species, rather than a pesticide, not only aligns to this site-specific goal, but to Targets 6 and 7 of the GBF as well. Between 2019 and 2022, monitoring showed 67% of plants had flower bore damage and 20% had root bore damage. This promising data, along with continued monitoring, will inform the future of Matador Ranch & Cattle's sustainable knapweed control on-site.

WHC-CERTIFIED SINCE 2022

CERTIFIED GOLD

Developing Urban Green Spaces for Climate Change Resilience, Biodiversity and Human Well-Being

Target 8 of the GBF, “Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience” and Target 12, “Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity,” are both satisfied through the use of nature-based solutions (NbS). The United Nations Environment Assembly defines nature-based solutions as “actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits.”¹⁷ A popular NbS that is particularly well-suited to urban areas lacking green space is urban forestry that addresses stormwater runoff while supporting biodiversity.

As mentioned previously, the GBF prioritizes respectful recognition of Indigenous communities’ wisdom and rights. The private sector can expand this community-first approach to collaborate with its neighboring local communities, especially in urban locations. The impacts of land degradation

are exacerbated for urban areas where industry is concentrated and, particularly in the U.S., decades of discriminatory policies (e.g. 'redlining') mean that communities of color bear the brunt of increased air and water pollution and lack of green space. Land conservation efforts, along with NbS, represent an opportunity for the private sector to listen to and address community needs while supporting the biodiversity and ecology of an urban region.

Native plantings, such as in an urban forest or community garden, offer a myriad of climate change resilience impacts, such as mitigation of the urban heat island effect, air quality improvements, flood prevention and erosion control. Community gardening and urban forestry also benefit biodiversity by providing habitat and food sources for local wildlife. Lastly, the community element of forestry and gardening efforts plays a key role in supporting human health and well-being. Research has shown that mental health is improved by connection with nature and working together to implement a project like a garden or urban forest improves community cohesion.



Community gardening and urban forestry benefit both wildlife and human health.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

ALKEBU-LAN VILLAGE | MICHIGAN, U.S.A.

Alkebu-Lan Village began in 1978 as a martial arts training organization for local African American youth in Detroit, Michigan.¹⁸ After decades of wide-ranging impact on the community, this program expanded its offerings in 2000. From athletics and wellness to youth leadership and tutoring, this important community institution meets locals' needs across various service areas.

To build strong community connections, team members at the ArcelorMittal Tailored Blanks (AMTB) facility in Detroit approached Alkebu-Lan Village about projects the company could support. After identifying a community garden as a need, several planting events were held in 2022 with on-the-ground support of volunteers from local companies including WM, General Motors, DTE and AMTB. Corporate foundations WM Think Green and DTE Foundation also provided funding support. This collaboration resulted in the planting of 45 native trees and 200 native plugs on land next to the Alkebu-Lan Village community garden that would support pollinators in the garden. The

long-term goal is for the area to become an open-air farmers' market, allowing the trees to provide a vegetative buffer from air and noise pollution in the industrial area.

A Call to Action for Corporate Landowners

As proven through WHC's 36 year tenure supporting private sector actions for nature, corporate conservation activities have a multitude of long-term positive impacts on biodiversity, communities, habitats, species and a company's bottom line.

From large-scale land restoration efforts to hyperlocal community plantings, every act of conservation matters. By continuing to invest in these actions and scaling up nature-positive activities, companies can further contribute to global goals, such as the targets of the GBF, while focusing on the positive impacts that business can have on nature.

Companies can begin or enhance efforts by creating a corporate-wide strategy that includes site-based conservation actions in reporting. Emerging frameworks such as the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) and the Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) — as well as bespoke strategies developed to meet a company's specific needs — provide a methodology for corporations to set specific targets for actions that benefit nature. Starting this process can allow a corporation to assess and prioritize conservation activities.

Utilized the following strategies and tactics to ensure corporate nature-positive actions align to the targets of the GBF:

- Use land management and spatial planning methods to reduce the loss of biodiversity.
- Restore degraded ecosystems and preserve the restored areas for wildlife habitat.
- Protect local species of concern by restoration and habitat connectivity, and contribute to research initiatives on affected species.
- Manage wildlife populations and reduce human-wildlife interactions through the provision of anti-poaching education and the use of sustainable hunting.
- Control invasive species via integrated pest management and other sustainable methods.
- Uplift biodiversity, build climate change resilience and support community well-being in urban spaces with nature-based solutions such as urban forestry.
- Seek WHC Certification, a rigorous, third-party standard that recognizes and incentivizes voluntary conservation activities, and provides an enterprise-wide view of on-the-ground actions.

Endnotes

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