

Third regional dialogue on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors in Europe and Central Asia: Enhancing policy coherence and institutional capacity

3–4 December 2025

Hybrid event in Yerevan, Armenia

Best Western Plus Congress Hotel

Ongoing crises are among the biggest short- and long-term risks the world is expected to face in the coming decade. **Sustainable agrifood systems** offer a vital pathway to address biodiversity loss while ensuring food security, nutrition and climate resilience, building on the outcomes of the 2021 First Regional Dialogue to foster a complex ecosystem approach, integrate biodiversity for food and agriculture into a broader context, and align policies.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), offers a road map for harmonious co-existence with nature and emphasizes the importance of meeting human needs through the sustainable use of biodiversity. **Agrifood systems are crucial to the framework's implementation**, and over half of the 23 global targets directly depend on them. Realizing at least half of these targets by 2030 demands direct action from the food and agricultural sectors.¹

Parties to the CBD were invited to submit their **national biodiversity strategies and action plans**² (NBSAPs) in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and are invited to submit their **national reports**³ by 28 February 2026. It is against this critical backdrop that the Second Regional Dialogue in 2023 strengthened regional awareness of these targets and shared knowledge on tools for raising the profile and integrating biodiversity for food and agriculture into NBSAPs. To date in the Europe and Central Asia region, 19 parties to the CBD (35 percent of FAO Member Countries in Europe and Central Asia) have **submitted their revised NBSAPs**.

Engaging in the CBD process encourages countries to better define the transformative role of their agrifood sectors while ensuring coherence with national priorities and commitments – including as reflected in their NBSAPs, nationally determined contributions and land degradation neutrality targets – and leveraging synergies across all levels for more effective action.

Governments play a crucial role in driving transformative change – major shifts in how societies are organized, regulated and governed – to achieve global goals for living in harmony with nature, as emphasized in the Transformative Change Report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.⁴ However, the effectiveness of current government actions is often hindered by a disconnect between the scale of biodiversity challenges and the fragmented jurisdiction of individual institutions, as well as by insufficient financial and other resources. This fragmentation reinforces the earlier recommendation from the dialogues to encourage coordination and cooperation across agricultural and other economic sectors.

¹ **FAO**. 2024. *Delivering on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through agrifood systems*. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd2893en>

² Under decision 15/6, parties were requested to submit revised and updated NBSAPs by or during the COP 16 meeting, held in 2024. Decision 16/1 urges parties that have not yet done so to revise or update their NBSAPs promptly.

³ In decision 15/6, parties are requested to submit their seventh national report by 28 February 2026.

⁴ **IPBES**. 2024. *Summary for Policymakers of the Thematic Assessment Report on the Underlying Causes of Biodiversity Loss and the Determinants of Transformative Change and Options for Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. O'Brien, K., Garibaldi, L., Agrawal, A., Bennett, E., Biggs, O., Calderón Contreras, R., Carr, E., Frantzeskaki, N., Gosnell, H., Gurung, J., Lambertucci, S., Leventon, J., Liao, C., Reyes García, V., Shannon, L., Villasante, S., Wickson, F., Zinngrebe, Y., and Perianin, L. (eds.). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11382230>

Given the greater effectiveness of initiatives that address more indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, involve diverse collaboration and foster multilevel transformative change, the Transformative Change Report highlights the importance for **mainstreaming biodiversity in agrifood sectors; integrating biodiversity into sectorial policies** and decision-making; **transforming economic systems** by internalizing environmental costs and reforming harmful incentives; and **engaging a wider range of actors and coalitions**. These actions directly address the key recommendation from the previous regional dialogues to follow the inclusivity principle and engage stakeholders with multiple interests.

These efforts aim to ensure food security while safeguarding biodiversity, reducing emissions and strengthening adaptation and resilience, in line with the [FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31](#) and its Priority Programme Areas, the [FAO Strategy and Action Plan for Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors](#), and the [Agri-NBSAPs Support Initiative](#).

Building on this background, the outcomes of the first and second regional dialogues and the subsequent review of the Regional Action Plan on Mainstreaming Biodiversity (2022–2023) in the Second Dialogue – and as a preparatory step towards the Seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (COP 17) – the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia is organizing a **third regional dialogue on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors in Europe and Central Asia**.

OBJECTIVE

This dialogue aims to strengthen countries' capacities to **accelerate the integration of biodiversity into agrifood systems**, enabling them to fulfill their commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and to prepare countries to champion biodiversity mainstreaming in the upcoming COP 17 negotiations.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **Best practices** are shared and **opportunities** identified for the increased uptake of biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices across the region.
- National institutional actors are better equipped to **integrate** biodiversity considerations across the agrifood, climate, nutrition and development agendas and to mobilize and optimize **finance** for NBSAP implementation.
- **Dialogue and engagement** among government agencies and stakeholders are facilitated to improve policy coherence for biodiversity, climate, land and water management and food, nutrition and livelihood security benefits.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture and the CBD focal points of Member Countries in the Europe and Central Asia region.
- Representatives of farmers, smallholders, small-scale producers, rural and local communities, researchers, civil society, the private sector and technical experts, including representatives of youth and women.
- Representatives from United Nations agencies and other partners.

LANGUAGE

The event will be held in Armenian, English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be available.

All times are Yerevan Time (GMT+4)

DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1

GMT+4	Moderation:	Tania Santivanez , FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
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13:30-14:00	Participant registration	
14:00-14:40	Opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBD COP 17 Presidency - Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia - Kaveh Zahedi, Director Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO - Raimund Jehle, FAO Representative in Armenia and Regional Programme Leader, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
	Introduction to the Third Regional Dialogue and the importance of biodiversity for food and agriculture in the region	Tania Santivanez , Agricultural Officer, Regional Biodiversity Focal Point and Coordinator of the Regional Priority Programme on Managing natural resources sustainably and preserving biodiversity in a changing climate, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
	Keynote address	Critical role of agrifood systems in achieving the goals of Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – Sakhile Silitshena , Director of the Science, Society and Sustainable Futures Division, Secretariat of the CBD

Session 1.1. NBSAPs – a blueprint for integration with agrifood systems

Moderator: **Frédéric Castell**, Senior Natural Resources Officer, Biodiversity mainstreaming unit, Office of Climate, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO

14.40–16.10	Introduction	Global Biodiversity Framework: key agrifood related targets - Frédéric Castell , Senior Natural Resources Officer, Biodiversity mainstreaming unit, Office of Climate, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO
	Countries' panel discussion: Regional stocktake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Biodiversity for food and agriculture – Tatyana Novikova, National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center on the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, Tajikistan > Plant genetic resources and seed systems – Gordana Đurić, Professor, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Banja Luka & Nagoya Protocol ABS National Focal Point for Bosnia and Herzegovina
	Technical presentation	Agri-NBSAPs and FAO support to countries - Frédéric Castell , Senior Natural Resources Officer, Biodiversity mainstreaming unit, Office of Climate, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO
	Q&A	Audience
	Key takeaways	Yuriy Nesterov , International Livestock Specialist, FAO Subregional Office for Central Asia
	Coffee break	

Session 1.2. Policy coherence – aligning the Rio Conventions nexus

Moderator: **Botagoz Nartayeva**, Country Programme Coordinator, FAO Armenia

16.30–18.00	Keynote	Breaking the silos: integrated governance for biodiversity, climate and food – Pamela McElwee , Professor of Rutgers University and co-chair of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Nexus Assessment
	Panel discussion: Regional stocktake	> Intersectoral coordination and the whole-of-government approach – representative of the European Union

		<p>> Multifunctional landscape governance and Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems – Khadicha Suyarova, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan</p> <p>> Intersectoral governance for soil biodiversity in the European Union – Joint Research Centre of the European Commission</p>
	Technical presentation	Addressing the biodiversity-nutrition-climate nexus: FAO support for countries – Hugo Bourhis , Nutrition climate change and biodiversity consultant, FAO
	Q&A and country reflections	Audience
	Key takeaways	Alvina Avagyan , National Biodiversity Consultant, FAO Armenia
19.00	Dinner	

Day 2

Session 2.1. Integrating agrifood systems and biodiversity to deliver the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Moderator: **Anna Kanshieva**

Facilitators: **Alvina Avagyan, Hugo Bourhis, Anna Kanshieva, Yuriy Nesterov, Gulmira Urmanbetova**

09.00–12.00	Guided breakout: Bridging agrifood systems and biodiversity	<p>THE LAB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agri-NBSAP Action Mapping (KMGBF targets 4,7,10) 2. Policy Alignment and Stress Test <p>-All participants</p>
	11:00-11:30 Coffee break	
	Summary of discussions outcomes	<p>THE LAB:</p> <p>The harvest – reporting and synthesis</p> <p>-Group reporters</p>

Session 2.2. From filling gaps to unlocking new forms – bridging the biodiversity finance gap

Moderator: **Anna Kanshieva**

12.00–13.00	Technical addresses	<p>> Optimizing public budgets for agrifood system transformation with environmental payoffs – Marco V. Sánchez, Deputy Director, Agrifood Economics and Policy Division, FAO</p> <p>> Integrating ecosystem approaches into agricultural public expenditure analysis for policy coherence in the AFOLU sector - Alethia Cameron, Economist, Agrifood Economics and Policy Division, FAO</p>
	Sharing of countries' experiences	Representatives of Armenia and Kyrgyzstan
	Key takeaways	Gulmira Urmanbetova , Project Coordinator for Green Agriculture Initiative, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

13.00– 13.15	Conclusions and Next steps	CBD COP 17 Presidency Raimund Jehle , FAO Representative in Armenia and Regional Programme Leader, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
	Lunch	

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