

### German Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity

Germany, national scale – status: ongoing

**Abstract:** The Federal Action Plan supports the implementation of nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate and biodiversity at scale, through the conservation and restoration of a wide range of ecosystems in Germany. It aims to improve the condition and resilience of ecosystems and strengthen their contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Until 2026, four billion euros are earmarked for the Action Plan's implementation. This will demonstrate a new norm of tackling the twin crisis of biodiversity loss and climate change in synergy.

**Keywords:**

Biodiversity, Ecosystem Restoration, Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, Floodplains, Forests, Peatlands, Soils, Seas, Urban Ecosystems, Resilience, Synergies



Case study country (Map created with mapchart.net)

#### Objectives of measure and challenges addressed

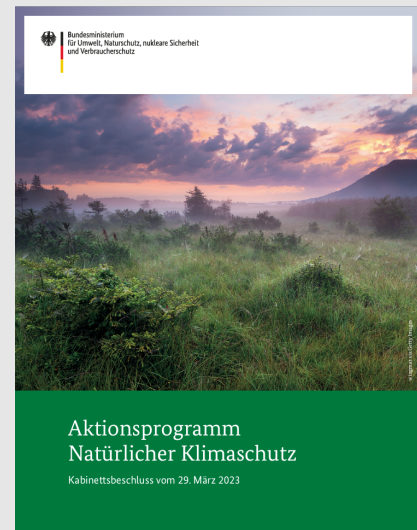
The Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate and Biodiversity aims to improve the condition and resilience of ecosystems in Germany and to strengthen their climate-related services. It will support the implementation of NbS for climate and biodiversity at scale through a variety of measures, such as rewetting peatlands, restoring water bodies and floodplains and protecting seas, forests and soils, among others. For its implementation, the German government has earmarked four billion euros in total between 2022-2026.

The Action Plan primarily addresses the interconnected challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change. It recognizes that NbS will play a substantial role in achieving the German government's goals regarding biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. Moreover, NbS measures addressing the need to adapt to the impacts of the climate crisis will increase the resilience of ecosystems and contribute to disaster risk reduction primarily in Germany, but also globally in the frame of international cooperation. At the same time, the Action Plan will contribute to human well-being and create economic incentives for NbS.

### Description of measure

The Action Plan comprises 69 measures in a total of ten fields of action:

- 1) Protection of intact peatlands and rewetting
- 2) Near-natural water balance with vibrant rivers, lakes and floodplains
- 3) Seas and coasts
- 4) Wilderness and protected areas
- 5) Forest ecosystems
- 6) Soils as carbon sinks
- 7) Nature-based solutions in settlement and transport areas
- 8) Data gathering, monitoring, modelling and reporting
- 9) Research and capacity building
- 10) Cooperation in the EU and the global community



**Front page of the Action Plan**  
 (<https://www.bmu.de/download/aktionsprogramm-natuerlicher-klimaschutz>)

As an example, measures in the peatland action field include the implementation of the National Peatland Protection Strategy and the establishment of a Federal Programme on Climate Action through Peatland Protection, aiming at comprehensive rewetting. Together with the German federal states, solutions for accelerating planning and approval procedures for peatland rewetting projects will be developed. Moreover, the Action Plan will support the development of new value chains, e.g. for paludiculture and marketing of the produce, as well as the phasing out of peat extraction and use, among other measures.

The Action Plan will be embedded in a range of other national policies. Measures which especially influence the emissions balance of the land use sector will also be part of the German Climate Action Programme. The Action Plan's measures will be harmonised with the updated National Biodiversity Strategy, the German Sustainable Development Strategy, the National Water Strategy, the National Peatland Protection Strategy and the German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change, among others.

While most measures will be implemented within Germany, the Action Plan also aims to support and promote NbS for climate and biodiversity through international cooperation.

### How does this measure contribute to transformative change for nature?

The Action Plan will contribute to transformative change for nature in several ways:

Firstly, by setting NbS high on the German federal policy agenda and actively demonstrating the new norm of tackling the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change in synergy.

Secondly, with four billion euros in total earmarked for its implementation until 2026, the Action Plan is backed by substantial financing. As a result, the total federal funds available



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per year for nature conservation in Germany will increase up to 20-fold in comparison to 2020.

Thirdly, this unprecedented upscaling of financial resources will accelerate implementation and enable the Action Plan to achieve significant and transformative changes locally, implementing NbS at scale throughout Germany. This has the potential to significantly change the mind set towards nature and climate protection and to encourage nature-friendly innovations.

### Organisations involved

The Action Plan was developed in lead by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) as a political programme of the German government. The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) has the function of a coordination centre for its implementation.

### Stakeholder involvement and community engagement

To ensure that the measures of the Action Plan are effective, the German Ministry for Environment conducted a consultation among all relevant stakeholders in administrations and associations (especially at federal state level), as well as land managers, land owners and other affected groups. Local knowledge holders were invited to share their experiences and nature conservation organisations were specifically addressed. As part of the participation process, around 120 submissions and more than 1,000 online comments were reviewed in detail. The process also helped forge a broad alliance for implementation, including landowners, nature conservationists and other local stakeholders.

### Outcomes to date

The Action Plan was adopted by the German Federal Cabinet on March 29, 2023. Where possible and feasible, implementation is planned to begin immediately.

### On-going or future monitoring

The Action Plan addresses the topic of “Data gathering, monitoring, modelling and reporting” in a dedicated field of action. A key measure in this field is, for example, the development of a concept for assessing the impacts of the Action Plan’s implementation on biodiversity conservation, as part of the German nationwide biodiversity monitoring programme. Further relevant measures are listed in the field of action “Research and capacity building”. For instance, the Action Plan aims to create a better data basis for recording and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions in the land sector, and will foster research to improve the modelling of terrestrial and marine ecosystems. A first evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan is planned for 2025.

### Conflict potentials / trade-offs

The concept of synergies stands at the core of the Action Plan, as it aims to implement NbS that produce benefits for both biodiversity and climate. Yet its measures will also result in changes of certain land use systems and directly or indirectly affect a wide range



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of stakeholders. It is therefore important to address potential trade-offs and conflicts of interest.

Limited land availability will likely be a key issue in this context. Areas used for restoration projects (e.g. rewetting a formerly drained peatland) will often no longer be available for the original land use (e.g. intensive agriculture) – even though there are often options to minimize trade-offs with land users (e.g. through wet use of peatlands / paludiculture).

The Action Plan builds on an intensive dialogue and participation process with relevant stakeholders. It aims to reduce conflicts and find ways to minimize trade-offs and maximize co-benefits in its implementation.

### Costs and resource needs

The costs for implementing the Action Plan will be covered by its dedicated budget with resources from the climate and transformation fund (see below).

The German government aims to make a lasting contribution to climate change mitigation, recognizing that long-term measures beyond 2026 will be necessary to achieve the climate targets in the LULUCF sector and reach its national goal of climate neutrality by 2045. This implies a long-term need for further financial resources.

### Financing sources, mechanisms and instruments

The Action Plan is supported by a new financing programme for NbS for climate and biodiversity. A new budget item was established in the climate and transformation fund to this end. A total of four billion euros is available until 2026 for implementing the Action Plan. In this way, the German government has fundamentally reorganised financing of NbS for climate and biodiversity.

The Action Plan was deliberately designed to promote the voluntarily implementation of its measures. Its approach is to provide financial incentives to initiate a fundamental structural change. At the same time, however, legal and structural obstacles that impede its successful implementation are to be identified and overcome. A review and, if necessary, adjustment of regulatory provisions is therefore one of the flanking elements within the Action Plan.

### On-going or future maintenance and management

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Action Plan's outcomes, appropriate mechanisms will have to be set up. Means to secure finances beyond 2026 are already being pursued.

### Lesson learnt and recommendations

*Not applicable yet.*

### Transferability of solutions, results and experiences

The implementation of the Action Plan's measures will yield valuable knowledge and experiences on how to effectively scale up NbS for climate and biodiversity. These approaches and solutions are likely to be transferable within Germany (across regions and federal states) and possibly to other countries in the EU and worldwide.



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As part of the field of action “Cooperation in the EU and the global community”, Germany aims to promote NbS and support their ambitious implementation through bilateral or multilateral cooperation measures, including the exchange of knowledge and experience. Germany could support partner countries in the development of their own Action Plans for NbS for climate and biodiversity or other policies that foster transformative change for nature by integrating climate and biodiversity objectives.

Many of the German Action Plan’s outcomes will also contribute to achieving EU nature restoration targets for 2030 and beyond. To implement the upcoming EU legal instrument for nature restoration, Germany will develop a National Nature Restoration Plan which will build strongly on the Action Plan. The topic of nature restoration provides many further opportunities for an exchange of knowledge and experiences among EU member states and across the global community, e.g. in the context of the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework or the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.

### Lead contact(s)

German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV).

### Publications and weblinks

The German Federal Action Plan on Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity (Aktionsprogramm Natürlicher Klimaschutz – ANK):

<https://www.bmuv.de/download/aktionsprogramm-natuerlicher-klimaschutz>

English summary of the Action Plan:

[https://www.bmuv.de/fileadmin/Daten\\_BMU/Download\\_PDF/Naturschutz/ank\\_kurzfassung\\_en\\_bf.pdf](https://www.bmuv.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Naturschutz/ank_kurzfassung_en_bf.pdf)

More about Nature-based Solutions for Climate and Biodiversity / BMUV-website:

<https://www.bmuv.de/natuerlicher-klimaschutz>

More about biodiversity and climate / BfN-website: <https://www.bfn.de/thema/klimawandel>

### Authors and acknowledgements

This factsheet was prepared in April 2023 by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) as an illustrative example for transformative change for nature, to be distributed through the ENCA network.

**Imprint:** This factsheet was published in 2023 by the European Network of Heads of Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA Network) as an illustrative example for transformative change for nature.

Transformative change is defined as "a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values", in accordance with the Global Biodiversity Assessment by IPBES (2019).

For more information, see: <https://www.encanetwork.eu/interestgroups>