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BIODIVERSITY BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Insights from the World Bank
and EU Conservation Initiatives
in Protected Areas



THURSDAY,
MAY 23, 2024



7:30 - 9:00 AM (EDT)
13:30 - 15:00 PM (CEST)

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Biodiversity Beyond Boundaries:
Insights from the World Bank and EU Conservation Initiatives
in Protected Areas

AGENDA

BIODIVERSITY BEYOND BOUNDARIES: Insights from the World Bank and EU Conservation Initiatives in Protected Areas

Date: 23 May 2024

Time: 7.30 – 09.00 am (EDT) | 13.30 – 15.00 (CEST)

Connection links:

For World Bank audience:

<https://worldbankgroup.zoom.us/j/98552262427?pwd=eTdKYjBzUUQxL1I3TTlrZ2pLMmcyQT09>

For external participants (registration required):

https://worldbankgroup.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GuiWxMfft6OeU3KayiSkPw

Meeting language: English.

Background

Healthy biodiversity and ecosystems provide essential services like air and water purification, carbon absorption, and climate regulation, crucial for sustaining economies and human wellbeing. Yet, pollution and unsustainable use of land and water resources have led to the global loss of biodiversity — declines in animal and plant species, ultimately threatening ecosystems and humanity. In October 2022, at the Conference of the Parties (COP-15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Kunming, China, countries committed and defined a path to reversing the dramatic decline of biodiversity and ecosystem services worldwide. Just two months later, in December 2022 in Montreal, the governments further pledged to restore 30% of land and water by 2030.


Among landscape restoration efforts, protected areas are critical for maintaining ecosystem balance, preserving habitats, building resilience to climate change, providing global food security, maintaining water quality, conserving natural resources, and driving economy.

Organized by the World Bank and the European Commission, this learning event marks International Biodiversity Day and explores how World Bank-supported landscape and wetlands restoration efforts in Europe's Eastern Partnership countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine; in the Amazon; and globally as well as the EU initiatives aim to contribute to healthy habitats and improve ecosystems and biodiversity.

Time, am (Washington DC)	Item
7:30–7:40	<p>Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 min for each speaker):</p> <p>Valerie Hickey, Global Director for Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy, World Bank (in-person or pre-recorded)</p> <p>Gérald Audaz, Head of the Economic Development, Green and Digital Transitions Team, DG NEAR, European Commission</p>

07:40–08:25	<p>Best practices on preserving biodiversity - Presentations (15 min for each speaker)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Role of EU4Environment Program in Advancing Biodiversity</i> Fisseha Tessema Abissa, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice in Europe and Central Asia, World Bank • <i>Conserving biodiversity within a Landscape Approach in the Amazon</i> Ana Maria Gonzalez Velosa, Senior Environmental Specialist, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice in Latin America and Caribbean, World Bank • <i>Unlocking finance to sustain biodiversity: Examples of EU's Initiatives</i> Magdalena Kouneva, Team Leader for Green and Sustainable Finance, DG NEAR Unit A5 Blended Finance and EU Guarantees, European Commission
08:25–08:40	<p>Discussant</p> <p>Ruth Tiffer-Sotomayor, Senior Environmental Specialist, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice, World Bank</p>
08:40–08:55	<p>Q&A</p>
08:55–09:00	<p>Closing Remarks:</p> <p>Sanjay Srivastava, Practice Manager, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice in Europe and Central Asia, World Bank</p>

About the speakers:

	<p>Valerie Hickey is a Global Director for Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy (ENB) at the World Bank. Prior to that she was a manager for Advisory and Operations in the Climate Change Group, where she oversaw the implementation of the World Bank's commitments on climate change, climate mainstreaming and climate finance, and before that the Practice Manager for ENB in Latin America and the Caribbean where she managed a cross-sectoral team that supported countries and communities on issues related to climate change, sustainable forest management, integrated conservation and development, integrated coastal zone management, fisheries, pollution management and environmental health, environmental economics and environmental risk management.</p> <p>Nineteen years ago, Valerie joined the World Bank as a specialist in East Asia and the Pacific, working on environment and rural development projects in Cambodia, China and Lao. Valerie has since worked across the Bank's regions providing design and implementation support to a variety of operations, including in fragile states, where she led the Bank's environment portfolio in Haiti following the earthquake in 2010. After joining the World Bank's global team, Valerie became chair of the blue economy, biodiversity and wildlife crime communities of practice and convened the Bank's deep technical expertise in pursuit of providing policy advice and implementation support to accelerate the role of natural resource management in getting people out of poverty and into the middle class. Valerie also managed the Bank's natural resources and environment risk management</p>
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	<p>portfolio across Europe and Central Asia. Before joining the World Bank, Valerie worked for World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society and the US National Park Service where she worked on invasive species programs in Lake Mead, the reservoir to the Hoover Dam. Valerie holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy from Duke University.</p>
	<p>Gérald Audaz is a development cooperation professional with over 15 years of experience. He started his professional life working for civil society organisations with a strong focus on industrial relations. He joined the European Commission in 2008. He worked for 10 years in the EU Southern Neighbourhood where he was Team Leader responsible for EU bilateral cooperation with Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Mr. Audaz started as a Team Leader in charge of EU cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries in 2022 where he now oversees EU regional cooperation in the fields of economic development, connectivity and digital and green transitions. He also served in two EU country offices in Sierra Leone and Tunisia. During his career, Mr. Audaz developed a strong expertise in the fields of Public Financial Management, support to the private sector and trade integration. He holds a Master's degree in Political Science and recently graduated in Corporate Finance and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME) financing.</p>
	<p>Magdalena Kouneva is a team Leader for green and climate finance in the Blended Finance and EU Guarantees team in DG NEAR of the European Commission. She has over 15 years' experience in development finance in developing and emerging markets and in innovative partnerships for financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</p>
<p>[add headshot]</p>	<p>Fisseha Tessema Abissa, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice, in Europe and Central Asia, World Bank [add]</p>
	<p>Ana Maria Gonzalez Velosa, Senior Environmental Specialist, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice in Latin America and Caribbean, World Bank. Ana Maria has worked since 2008 at the World Bank in conservation and sustainable development projects in the regions of Africa and Latin America. She is currently the coordinator of the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program and manager of several projects in countries in the Amazon region. Previously she worked in her home country, Colombia, in multiple research, public, and civil society organizations. Ana Maria is an economist with master's degrees in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics from Universidad de los Andes and International Development from George Washington University.</p>
	<p>Ruth Tiffer-Sotomayor is Senior Environmental Specialist at the Global Environmental Unit of the World Bank. She has more than 25 years of experience working in the conservation of biodiversity, restoration of ecosystems (terrestrial, freshwater/wetlands and costal) and on environmental assessments of large infrastructure development. Ruth has managed World Bank projects on fisheries, forest conservation and landscape restoration, water resources, climate change adaptation, and mining remediation, among others. She co-leads Global Program of Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience and the NBS Invest program for Least Developed countries. Ruth is an ecologist and an expert on tropical and freshwater ecosystems and leads the World Bank Biodiversity Expert Technical</p>

	<p>Group. Before joining the Bank, Ruth worked with the government of Costa Rica in the National Protected Area System. Ruth has a master's in science on Natural Resources Management from the State University of New York and Syracuse University and a master's degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Rioja, Spain.</p>
	<p>Sanjay Srivastava is Practice Manager for the Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy (ENB) Global Practice for Europe and Central Asia (ECA). He leads a large team and Bank's engagement in lending and advisory support to promote green growth, nature-based solutions, biodiversity and forest conservation, growing the blue economy, as well as managing environmental risks across the Bank's lending operation. Previously, he served as Practice Manager for ENB in West and Central Africa. Sanjay brings vast global experience in devising environmental strategy and policy dialogue related to sustainable development, as well as hands-on experience supporting complex environmental interventions in several developing countries. He is a trained environmental engineer and a global leader in sustainable development with more than 30 years of applied international experience, including 18 years in Africa and South Asia region. Prior to joining the Bank, Sanjay worked in the private sector (natural resource management consulting), the public sector (environmental research utility), for a bilateral donor (clean technology financing), and a non-governmental organization (conservation advocacy).</p>