

Submission to the Belém Mission to 1.5

By Conservation International
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Conservation International (CI) welcomes the opportunity to provide inputs to the Belém Mission to 1.5 ("the Mission"). Following the Global *Mutirao* decision at COP30, the Mission must support the pivot from negotiation to accelerated implementation of national-level climate action and international cooperation. An enhanced commitment by the international community to meeting the Paris Agreement goals and urgently tackling the global emissions gap must serve as the guiding element for this effort.

The Mission should focus on enabling countries to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), as these are the primary vehicles for national climate action. The Mission must support solutions to address the persistent policy fragmentation, capacity bottlenecks, and financing gaps that prevent countries from fully executing their strategies. In turn, by accelerating implementation, the Mission can unlock higher ambition needed to reach the 1.5-degree goal.

To meet the dual challenge of securing rapid country-level execution and enabling high-ambition targets, this submission focuses on actions needed to maximize the contribution of nature-based solutions (NbS) to the Mission. NbS are highly efficient and cost-effective solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while delivering biodiversity and sustainable development benefits. By organizing efforts around three mutually reinforcing pillars, Parties can simultaneously elevate their climate commitments and overcome structural bottlenecks to deliver local impact.

1. **Policy & Regulatory Realignment:** Embedding ecosystem valuation into macroeconomic planning, reforming nature-negative public subsidies and incentives, enforcing existing land-use laws, transitioning corporate supply chains to ecosystem-positive practices, and establishing integrated cross-sectoral architectures and streamlined planning cycles to facilitate targets translating into localized results.
2. **Finance for Nature:** Evolving multilateral financial frameworks to deliver concessional and debt-reducing capital for terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems, while scaling up innovative blended instruments like first-loss vehicles, debt-for-nature swaps, and operationalizing robust carbon markets including Article 6 and Jurisdictional REDD+ (JREDD+) market architectures.
3. **NbS for High-Ambition Climate Plans:** Structuring national climate plans around the "Protect, Manage, Restore" hierarchy, embedding quantifiable, science-based targets with cross-sectoral spatial safeguards, scaling Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), promoting inclusivity and participation.

1. Policy & Regulatory Realignment

Incentives and Subsidy Reform

Global climate ambition cannot be realized if public capital actively contradicts climate goals. Approximately USD 7.3 trillion is spent annually on actions that harm nature, which is 30 times more than total global funding for NbS. Developing economies face tight fiscal realities while spending an average of 6.9% of GDP on subsidies, many of which are environmentally harmful ([UNEP, 2026](#)).

A primary focus of the Mission must be supporting countries in identifying, phasing out, and/or reforming subsidies and incentives harmful to climate and nature through a just transition. Redirecting just 10% of the most distortive agricultural subsidies toward more sustainable production could increase global income by USD 2.4 trillion by 2040 and reduce sector emissions by 40% ([World Bank, 2026](#)). This systemic pivot directly operationalizes Article 2.1 of the Paris Agreement and fosters vital national-level synergies with [Target 18 of the Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

To operationalize this, the Mission must support countries in developing policies and plans to align national economic and agricultural planning with climate objectives. This includes implementing national regulatory frameworks, reallocating public procurement priorities toward nature-positive goods, and establishing clear timelines to phase out distortive land-use incentives by 2030, in line with the [Forest Roadmap](#) led by COP30 presidency.

Domestic Enabling Conditions

The Mission should support Parties to identify and uptake needed enabling conditions to implement their NDCs and NAPs, which can include:

- **Aligned National Planning and Public Budgets:** Mainstreaming nature finance by embedding ecosystem valuation directly into central macroeconomic planning, including improvements in science and data availability and robustness, national fiscal budget regulatory frameworks, and public procurement priorities.
- **De-risking Sustainable Supply Chains:** Utilize public and multilateral finance to develop trade and market incentives that transition agricultural and corporate supply chains away from deforestation and toward nature-positive, sustainable practices.
- **Strengthening mechanisms for good governance and enforcement:** Fully enforcing existing land-use laws in tropical countries could eliminate more than 40% of illegal commercial deforestation and save forest countries more than USD 17 billion per year of losses ([Forest Trends, 2018](#)). To support this, the Mission must help countries build robust, integrated domestic governance architectures. This includes inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms, benefit-sharing frameworks, centralized registries coordination mechanisms and standardized and high-integrity metrics (such as hectares under improved management) to ensure transparent tracking, while streamlining project approval cycles.
- **Land Tenure and Rights-Based Safeguards:** Securing formal land tenure and legally protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are fundamental domestic enabling policies required to unlock large-scale landscape mitigation and

adaptation. Land tenure insecurity is a primary driver of deforestation, land degradation, and the loss of critical carbon sinks ([IPCC, 2019](#)). In contrast, securing these rights yields profound ecological dividends: 91% of all lands managed and owned by Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and local communities (LCs) are in good or moderate ecological condition and they provide extensive environmental benefits beyond their borders. ([WWF et al., 2021](#)). Globally, up to 65% of total land area is managed under customary or communal tenure systems, yet governments formally recognize only about 15% of it ([IPCC, 2019](#)). This massive legal gap directly compromises community adaptive capacity and leaves ecosystems vulnerable to unsustainable land-use pressures. Additionally, all national planning must respect Free, Prior and Informed Consent in alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Maximizing Synergies Across the Rio Conventions

Despite increasing recognition that NbS acts as a bridge across global frameworks, inefficiencies and silos in the implementation of the three Rio Conventions are costing the world USD 10–25 trillion per year ([IPBES Nexus Assessment, 2024](#)). Currently, 81% of biodiversity-related finance also targets climate change, but only 21% of climate finance specifically targets biodiversity ([OECD, 2023](#)).

The Belém Mission to 1.5 must treat international cooperation not as a series of isolated pledges, but as a framework for aligned resource mobilization, enhanced policy coherence, and more efficient use of national resources needed to implement NDCs and NAPs, among other national planning and reporting burdens. The UNFCCC must drive structural cooperation to establish common planning, accounting, and better align reporting processes, linking NDCs and NAPs with The Convention on Biological Diversity National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and The Convention to Combat Desertification Land Degradation Neutrality targets. According to the [IPBES Transformative Change Assessment \(2024\)](#), adopting these highly synchronized approaches can generate **USD 10 trillion in economic value and 400 million jobs by 2030** while safeguarding water and food security.

2. Finance for Nature

Annual financial flows to NbS must increase from USD 220 billion to USD 571 billion by 2030 to meet global climate and biodiversity targets ([UNEP, 2026](#)). According to analysis from [IPCC AR6](#), the mitigation financing gap for the Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector is disproportionately higher than for other sectors. While overall biophysical financing needs are lower than for transport or energy, the AFOLU sector requires at least **10 times more annual finance flows** than currently allocated to stay on a 1.5°C pathway.

Currently, the AFOLU sector represents a massive structural paradox: while it possesses the potential to deliver up to one-third of the global mitigation needed by 2030, it receives a mere 2%¹ of climate finance ([CPI, 2025](#)). Coastal and marine ecosystems are even more neglected, receiving only 9% of total NbS investments ([UNEP, 2023](#)). The recent 2025 synthesis reports on

¹ Calculated based on data from the [Global Landscape of Climate Finance 2025 report](#) by the Climate Policy Initiative (CPI). Total global tracked climate finance for 2023 was USD 1.9 trillion. Total AFOLU sector allocation across mitigation, adaptation, and dual-benefit frameworks amounted to USD 38 billion.

[NDCs](#) and [Biennial Transparency Reports](#) have highlighted a growing integration of NbS, and ocean-based climate action in updated NDCs and NAPs. However, a severe mismatch remains between country ownership and the deployment of finance.

To scale up private capital and ensure the financial viability of NDCs and NAPs, the Mission should advocate for solutions that protect nature and its stewards.

Multilateral Architecture Reform

The Belém Mission to 1.5 must actively champion the evolution of multilateral financial frameworks to provide concessional and debt-reducing capital for nature-positive outcomes. Innovative and blended financial instruments² such as the following are essential:

- **Sovereign Debt-for-Nature Swaps and Performance-based Facilities:** To reduce sovereign debt stress and liberate fiscal space for NDC and NAP implementation.
- **Ecological Fiscal Transfers and National Payments for Ecosystem Services Schemes:** To mobilize public and private resources for regional and cross-boundary ecosystem protection.
- **Parametric Insurance Models:** To deploy pre-specified payouts triggered by weather events, insuring vulnerable coastal ecosystems and supporting rapid disaster recovery.
- **First-loss Capital and Early-stage Equity:** Provided directly by multilateral banks to de-risk climate-smart business models that the private sector currently deems too risky. To be effective, financial bodies, like the Green Climate Fund and Green Environmental Facility, must update their metrics to value long-term ecological returns, ensuring that nature-based projects are not misclassified as inherently high-risk investments.

Leveraging Article 6 and JREDD+ for High-Integrity NDC Implementation

To unlock robust private capital at the scale required to implement high-ambition, the Mission must support the rapid operationalization of high-integrity carbon market architectures. Alongside market-based mechanisms, Parties should encourage emerging contribution-based approaches that mobilize finance for mitigation beyond value chains, including support for nature-based solutions and jurisdictional programs and contribute to national climate goals.

- **Prioritizing REDD+ Nesting Rules:** The Mission should support Parties should establish clear nesting frameworks that integrate project-level activities into national or subnational JREDD+ baselines, and develop national forest monitoring systems capable of meeting the demands of an evolving carbon market. Nesting helps strengthen environmental integrity by improving accounting consistency and managing risks associated with leakage, reversals, and double-counting, while providing greater assurance that investments contribute to real, additional and durable mitigation outcomes that support host-country NDC goals.
- **Building Robust Article 6 Infrastructure:** The Mission should advocate for dedicated readiness resources to help developing nations build the domestic technical capacity needed to manage Article 6.2 and 6.4 mechanisms. This includes constructing transparent national carbon registries, establishing clear criteria for Corresponding

² See more information on financial instruments that protect nature in [Conservation International's report \(2024\)](#)

Adjustments to ensure atmospheric integrity, creating national authorization processes, setting up centralized validation and verification bodies, ensuring that the rules being developed under the Article 6.4 Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism do not create an undue burden or unintendedly exclude carbon credits from nature from the mechanism.

- **Scaling Up Non-Market Approaches (Article 6.8):** Recognizing that market mechanisms are not suitable for all forest and marine ecosystems, international cooperation must actively deploy Article 6.8. Non-market approaches should be utilized to channel public, concessional, and multilateral funding toward core enabling environments—such as the formalization of collective land-tenure security and the enforcement of existing environmental laws—creating an enduring foundation for nature-positive outcomes without tradeable credits.

Direct Finance and Rights for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

A systemic mismatch persists between local climate stewardship and the actual deployment of international climate capital. While global metadata indicates that 58% of the world's remaining intact forest landscapes are maintained on lands managed by Indigenous Peoples ([WRI, 2023](#)), less than 1% of global climate finance directly reaches these frontline custodians ([CPI, 2023](#)). To translate this recognition into operational country execution, international cooperation must establish explicit pathways to strengthen local self-governance and de-bureaucratize funding pipelines. The Mission should support the creation of dedicated funding windows that route climate finance directly to IP & LC-led organizations, minimizing heavy intermediary transaction costs. The Tropical Forest Forever Facility is a prime example, using a global investment pool to provide predictable, non-debt annual payouts to tropical nations for keeping forests standing, while structurally mandating that 20% of funds flow directly to IPs & LCs.

3. NbS for High-Ambition Climate Plans

Ecosystem-based Adaptation

[UNEP's Adaptation Gap Report](#) highlights that the adaptation finance gap for developing countries is now estimated at USD 284–339 billion per year until 2035. Alarmingly, debt instruments—particularly non-concessional loans—increasingly dominate adaptation finance (58% on average), forcing vulnerable countries into an "adaptation investment trap" where rising climate disasters compound national indebtedness. The Mission should emphasize the ability of Ecosystem-based Adaptation strategies to close the adaptation finance gap equitably by recommending Parties:

- **Embed locally relevant EbA interventions in national climate action:** Ecosystem-based Adaptation is an approach that uses nature's crucial role in reducing the threat of climate-induced disasters (such as flooding, droughts, and wildfire) to build a more resilient environment, helping people to better adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. [Emerging global-level analysis](#) by Conservation International identifies regions where specific EbA interventions are best suited to reduce the vulnerability of people to the climate impacts experienced in their ecosystems. By increasing awareness and uptake of EbA, policymakers have the potential to leverage nature to further advance the implementation of NAPs.

- **Deliver concessional, non-debt financing for green-gray infrastructure:** To protect vulnerable island states and coastal nations, countries must aggressively shift away from defaulting to carbon-intensive gray infrastructure. The Mission must accelerate the availability and provision of concessional, non-debt financing for green-gray infrastructure solutions (such as coral reef and mangrove restoration integrated with conventional engineering) to protect vulnerable coastlines and watersheds from systemic flooding, erosion, and sea-level rise.

Strengthening the Design of Climate Plans

To ensure effective, country-level execution, the Mission should support countries to identify and implement specific structural approaches that can be integrated to strengthen the design and implementation of their NDCs and NAPs:

- **Set quantifiable targets and spatial safeguards:** High-ambition NDCs and NAPs must include science-based, and measurable commitments, such as hectares protected or carbon stored. Furthermore, these frameworks must extend into non-AFOLU sectors by integrating nature into urban resilience and setting spatial planning safeguards to ensure renewable energy infrastructure deployment does not compromise high-value ecosystems.
- **Operationalize the natural climate solutions (NCS) hierarchy:** When designing sectoral policies within the AFOLU and non-AFOLU sectors, the strategic framework should enforce the NCS Mitigation Hierarchy: Protect, Manage, Restore. This framework optimizes resource allocation based on cost-effectiveness, immediacy of carbon benefits, and ecological co-benefits
- **Enable participatory planning:** Develop a whole-of-society approach for the NDC and NAP enhancement process to ensure it incorporates local and traditional knowledge and fosters collective understanding, buy-in, and commitment to implementation in a gender-responsive, transparent manner ([Nature4Climate Coalition, 2024](#)).

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