



Trade and BioTrade's contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and synergies with the other Sustainable Development Goals

Technical cooperation outcome



Geneva, 2025

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This publication has been edited externally.

UNCTAD/TCS/DITC/INF/2025/3

Acknowledgements

This document was prepared, under the overall supervision of Luz María de la Mora, Director of the Division on International Trade and Commodities of UNCTAD, and the guidance of Lorena Jaramillo, by a team consisting of Vicente Paolo Yu III, Lorena Jaramillo, Soledad Leal, Chantal Line Carpentier and Theodoros Koukis. The document also benefited from inputs from Luz María de la Mora, Graham Mott and Marianne Kettunen.

UNCTAD gratefully acknowledges the support of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) in the development of this document under the programme, Global BioTrade Programme: Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development.

This document was edited by David Einhorn.

For further information on the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative, please visit
<https://unctad.org/biotrade> or contact the BioTrade team at biotrade@unctad.org.



Abbreviations

ABS	Access and benefit-sharing
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP	Conference of the Parties
CTE	Committee on Trade and Environment (WTO)
EDB	Environmental Database (WTO)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross domestic product
IEA	International environmental agreement
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ITC	International Trade Centre
iWG	Informal working group on trade and biodiversity statistics
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
Nagoya Protocol	Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (CBD)
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans
PES	Payment for ecosystem services
P&C	(BioTrade) Principles and Criteria
RTA	Regional trade agreement
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TESS	Forum on Trade, Environment and the SDGs
TPR	Trade Policy Review (WTO)
TraBio	Trade and Biodiversity statistical tool (UNCTAD)
TRIPs	Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (WTO)
UEBT	Union for Ethical BioTrade
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VSS	Voluntary sustainability standards
WTO	World Trade Organization



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Executive summary

This paper explores how trade can support biodiversity objectives in the KMGBF and the SDGs

Trade that integrates environmental and social considerations can play a significant role in achieving biodiversity goals outlined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

More specifically, trade in biodiversity-based products offers a comprehensive approach to the sustainable use of biodiversity beyond conservation efforts by creating jobs for the poorest, improving livelihoods in remote and rural areas, and supporting rural development, economic diversification and growth. Trade conducted under BioTrade Principles and Criteria (P&C) ensures alignment with the KMGBF and co-benefits with the three dimensions – social, economic and environmental – of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially poverty alleviation through new business opportunities and business models that include benefit-sharing.

This paper provides an overview of the trade and biodiversity linkages and of how trade can support biodiversity objectives in the KMGBF and the SDGs. It highlights specifically how UNCTAD's BioTrade Initiative, through its P&C, has been an enabler for transforming trade to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and to build sustainable livelihoods. The P&C are a set of guidelines for governments, businesses and civil society to promote sustainability across the entire value chain of various biodiversity-based sectors. This initiative has contributed to economic empowerment, including women and youth, rural development, economic diversification, and biodiversity conservation in over 80 countries.

This paper further details BioTrade's contribution to CBD processes, and how it can support the KMGBF monitoring framework through its insights and statistical tools such as the Trade and Biodiversity (TraBio) statistical tool (UNCTADstat, n.d.-a).

In the concluding section, this paper identifies the following key findings:

- There are significant linkages between biodiversity and trade, particularly in sectors of vital importance for developing countries.
- Trade plays a role in biodiversity conservation, the KMGBF, and the achievement of the SDGs, including poverty alleviation and livelihoods.
- BioTrade serves as a positive example of how trade can be leveraged to conserve biodiversity while generating social and economic benefits.
- Trade can further contribute to achieving the KMGBF targets and its monitoring framework by integrating BioTrade and BioTrade programmes into the KMGBF framework.

UNCTAD aims to continue providing support and capacity-building to member States, in particular developing countries, for a comprehensive and coherent approach that aligns trade and trade-related measures to foster the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. UNCTAD's efforts simultaneously aim to enhance resilience, social inclusion, poverty alleviation and gender equality through its three pillars: consensus-building, research and technical assistance.



Chapter 1

Introduction



Introduction

The global biodiversity crisis extends beyond environmental concerns and has far-reaching impacts on food and human security, as well as rural and economic development, worldwide. These impacts are further exacerbated by climate change (IPBES, 2019; UNEP and TESS, 2023; United Nations, 2023a). Biodiversity is an indispensable natural asset providing essential resources to sustain humankind (UNCTAD, n.d.-a). Over 4.3 billion people – more than half the world's population – depends on biodiversity for their livelihoods (CBD et al., n.d.). This dependency is particularly pronounced in rural areas, where three-quarters of moderately and extremely poor people live (Castaneda et al., 2016). The degradation of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity is disproportionately affecting these communities with poverty and inequality implications.

With 1 million species currently at risk of extinction, and biodiversity loss expected to accelerate through 2050 (IPBES, 2019), the effects on economies are significant. For example, losing the pollination services of bees and other wild pollinators, and a decline in fisheries and forestry, could reduce global gross domestic product (GDP) by an estimated US\$2.7 trillion annually by 2030 (World Bank, 2024). Biodiversity loss also affects trade and the global economy, with biodiversity-based-product trade accounting for 17 per cent of global trade in goods – valued at US\$3.7 trillion – and contributing approximately 7 per cent to the world's GDP in 2021 (UNCTAD, 2024a).

Recent discussions on trade and biodiversity, especially in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), increasingly recognize the importance of capturing synergies and reducing trade-offs with the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs), including through trade-related policies and the multilateral trading system (IPBES, 2019; UNEP, 2022; United Nations, 2023a; UNEP and TESS, 2023; Hughes and Grumbine, 2023). The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), a landmark outcome of recent multilateral negotiations under the CBD, aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. It sets out a global vision for living in harmony with nature by 2050, accompanied by four goals and 23 targets to be reached by 2030. This framework opens new opportunities for exploring how trade and trade-related policies and measures can support biodiversity objectives in synergy with other SDGs (UNEP and TESS, 2023). For trade to play this critical role, it must support rather than undermine biodiversity efforts.

Although the CBD does not require measures that are directly related to international trade, many of its provisions and those of its associated protocols are linked to the multilateral trading system (CBD Secretariat, n.d.-a).¹ For example, in June 2022, the members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) adopted the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies prohibiting harmful fisheries subsidies, and they are currently working on its second part. Another example relates to the Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which includes a requirement for the TRIPS Council to review TRIPS Article 27.3(b) dealing with the patentability or non-patentability of plant and animal inventions, and the protection of plant varieties. Moreover, the Doha Ministerial Declaration provides a mandate for WTO members to examine the relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the CBD, and the protection of traditional knowledge and folklore, among other issues (WTO Secretariat, 2022a, 2022b).

The global biodiversity crisis affects the environment, food security, human well-being, and rural and economic development worldwide

¹ For example, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (referred to as the Nagoya Protocol), and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress.

Additional links can be found in the discussions held in other WTO bodies such as the:

- Committee on Agriculture in Special Session, through discussions on subsidies
- Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), whose work programme includes the Environmental Database (EDB) (see Section 2)
- CTE in Special Session, where members have discussed the relationship between the WTO rules and specific trade obligations contained in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Other bodies, such as the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade provide members with a forum to share information on measures planned or adopted, including environmental measures, as well as specific trade concerns regarding other members' measures (Bellman et al., 2022). Finally, initiatives led by groups of WTO members such as the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions, the Informal Dialogue on Plastic Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade, and the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform are also explored as potential avenues for discussion of trade and biodiversity issues. For instance, some WTO members have suggested holding thematic sessions on the bioeconomy, blue economy and BioTrade; and holding discussions on issues such as ecotourism, the environmental impact of agricultural subsidies, and reducing the pollution of biodiversity marine ecosystems (UNCTAD, 2025; WTO, 2022, WTO Secretariat 2024).

Since the 10th session of UNCTAD Quadrennial Ministerial Conference (UNCTAD10) in 2000, the trade and biodiversity nexus has been recognized as part of the organization's mandate. Furthermore, the Bridgetown Covenant, adopted by the 15th session of UNCTAD Quadrennial Ministerial Conference (UNCTAD15) in 2021, recognized the challenges of biodiversity loss, the

importance of the KMGBF, and the role of trade in contributing to the 2030 Agenda (paragraphs 65, 73 and 127, respectively; see UNCTAD, 2021a).

Building on UNCTAD's mandate, this paper addresses an essential research gap at the intersection of trade, biodiversity and sustainable development, focusing on how trade can positively contribute to achieving the objectives of the KMGBF and SDGs. While many academic and policy discussions focus on the negative impact of trade on biodiversity (IPBES, 2019), less attention has been given to its potential as an enabler of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Aimed at CBD parties and other interested stakeholders, this paper seeks to raise awareness and enhance understanding of the multifaceted linkages between trade and biodiversity, moving beyond conservation aspects only. It specifically addresses how trade, through initiatives like UNCTAD's BioTrade Initiative, can (i) become an enabler for sustainable livelihoods and economic and trade diversification, and (ii) help achieve the KMGBF goals and targets, including through sustainable use and benefit-sharing. Moreover, the paper emphasizes BioTrade's role in aligning trade with biodiversity objectives, as well as social and economic goals. The analysis was completed after the Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the CBD that took place in Cali, Colombia, in 2024, and before the resumed sessions of the COP16, held in February 2025, where the decisions on the monitoring framework and the Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Review Mechanism for KMGBF were adopted.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the trade and biodiversity relationships and how these relationships are addressed in biodiversity and trade agreements. Section 3 reviews how trade can support the KMGBF and SDGs. Section 4 specifically looks at the role of BioTrade in enabling biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods, with examples from UNCTAD's BioTrade Initiative. Section 5 concludes and summarizes the findings of the paper.





Chapter 2

The multifaceted relationship between trade and biodiversity



The multifaceted relationship between trade and biodiversity

The relationship between trade and biodiversity is complex and marked by mixed interactions. Trade can lead to overexploitation, habitat changes, pollution and the spread of invasive species. But it can also provide pathways for biodiversity conservation through sustainable use of biodiversity and sustainable agriculture-forestry practices that also alleviate poverty through benefit-sharing and inclusion of marginalized communities into value chains, thus providing an incentive for local communities to sustainably use the resources (Lenzen et al., 2012; Kuik et al., 2018; IPBES, 2019; European Parliament, 2020; OECD, 2021; IPBES, 2023; Skoczek 2023).

Research, including studies from UNCTAD, points to positive outcomes when trade and biodiversity objectives are aligned. These benefits stem from policy packages and measures that promote the sustainable collective management of natural resources (e.g. fisheries quotas), establish clear property rights, promote exports of biodiversity-based products and services, implement voluntary sustainability standards and guidelines, and provide incentives for sustainable supply chains and benefit-sharing schemes (Ferreira, 2004; McWhinnie, 2009; UNCTAD, 2017a, 2017b, 2024c, n.d.-b; Chesnokova and McWhinnie, 2019; European Parliament, 2020; OECD, 2021).

Trade, biodiversity and economic growth

About 30 per cent of the global biodiversity footprint is embedded in international commodity trade (Irwin et al., 2022).

International trade, including in biodiversity-based products and services, can be an important source of employment, livelihoods and export revenue for many communities and countries, and can also incentivize and generate revenue for environmental conservation (UNCTAD, 2024b).

According to UNCTAD's Trade and Biodiversity (TraBio) statistical tool,² in 2021 global trade of biodiversity-based products was valued at US\$3.7 trillion and represented 17 per cent of global exports (UNCTAD, 2024a). Key traded economic sectors at the global level heavily dependent on biodiversity include agriculture (trade flows valued at around US\$1.5 trillion in 2022) (WTO Secretariat, n.d.-a), fisheries (around US\$195 billion in 2023) (FAO, 2024), forestry (over US\$309 billion in 2022) (FAO, n.d.), and wildlife (estimated at US\$323 billion in 2017) (CITES, 2022; TRAFFIC, 2017). These sectors of special importance to developing countries are also highly vulnerable to biodiversity loss (UNEP and TESS, 2023; TESS, Nature Finance and UNEP, 2024; UNCTAD, n.d.-a) and climate change.

To be sustainable, trade should generate social, economic and environmental benefits through the legal and traceable commercial exchange of goods and services, thereby contributing to the SDG and biodiversity objectives (UNCTAD, et al., 2020). Sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products, for example, would imply compliance, where relevant, with the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and/or the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (Nagoya Protocol).

² For further information, see the online database (UNCTADstat n.d.-a) and the visualization tool (UNCTADstat n.d.-b).



Sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products helps **conserve ecosystems and supports Indigenous Peoples and local communities' livelihoods**

To deliver change at the scale necessary, the KMGBF puts a strong emphasis on the transformation of economic sectors responsible for the ongoing degradation and loss of biodiversity (IPBES, 2019; UNEP and TESS, 2023). Incentivizing the sustainable use and trade of biodiversity-based products and services can play a crucial role in conserving biodiversity and its ecosystem services while supporting the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (UNCTAD et al., 2019). Such trade creates income for people and communities – particularly in biodiversity-rich areas – motivating them to conserve and wisely use biodiversity, guaranteeing their source of livelihoods (UNCTAD, 2021b). Thus, promoting sustainable trade in these sectors can reduce and/or mitigate the negative impact of trade on biodiversity and comply with national and international laws (CBD Secretariat, 2011a; Naeem et al., 2016; FAO 2018a, 2018b; Future Earth and GEOBON 2022; UNCTAD 2024a).

Moreover, empowering local communities through sustainable trade helps build social resilience, enabling them to protect biodiversity-rich areas and secure rights to their natural resources (CBD Secretariat, 2019). This can be an opportunity for developing countries, as sustainable trade can diversify their economies, reduce reliance on traditional sectors, and support diversification into additional biodiversity-based sectors.

Ensuring that trade supports biodiversity and livelihoods also expands market opportunities by tapping into the growing global demand for “natural” and “green” products (UNCTAD, et. al, 2020) and addressing consumer concerns about the biodiversity and the social impacts of sourcing biodiversity-derived ingredients (UEBT, 2024).

Biodiversity in trade agreements

The inclusion of environmental provisions in regional trade agreements (RTAs) reflects a growing recognition of the need to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability. Through such provisions, parties to a RTA highlight shared objectives such as the protection of biodiversity and the preservation of forests. At the multilateral level, the WTO's EDB illustrates the extent and type of measures and policies pursued by WTO members to achieve their environmental objectives. According to the World Bank, 51 RTAs include provisions to protect forests and/or preserve biodiversity, and 78 per cent of them were signed after 2005 (Abman et al., 2021). RTAs with forest protection and biodiversity conservation provisions generally have stronger enforcement mechanisms. These RTAs often contain references to MEAs, particularly the CITES and the CBD, and call for cooperation on biodiversity conservation, the regulation of trade in endangered species, and the sustainable use of biological resources.³

Trade in biodiversity-related agreements

Most international environmental agreements (IEAs) encompass trade-related provisions (Morin et al., 2023). These IEAs include the:

- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes
- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
- CITES
- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemical and Pesticides
- Minamata Convention on Mercury, in four subject areas (security, fisheries, biodiversity, agriculture).

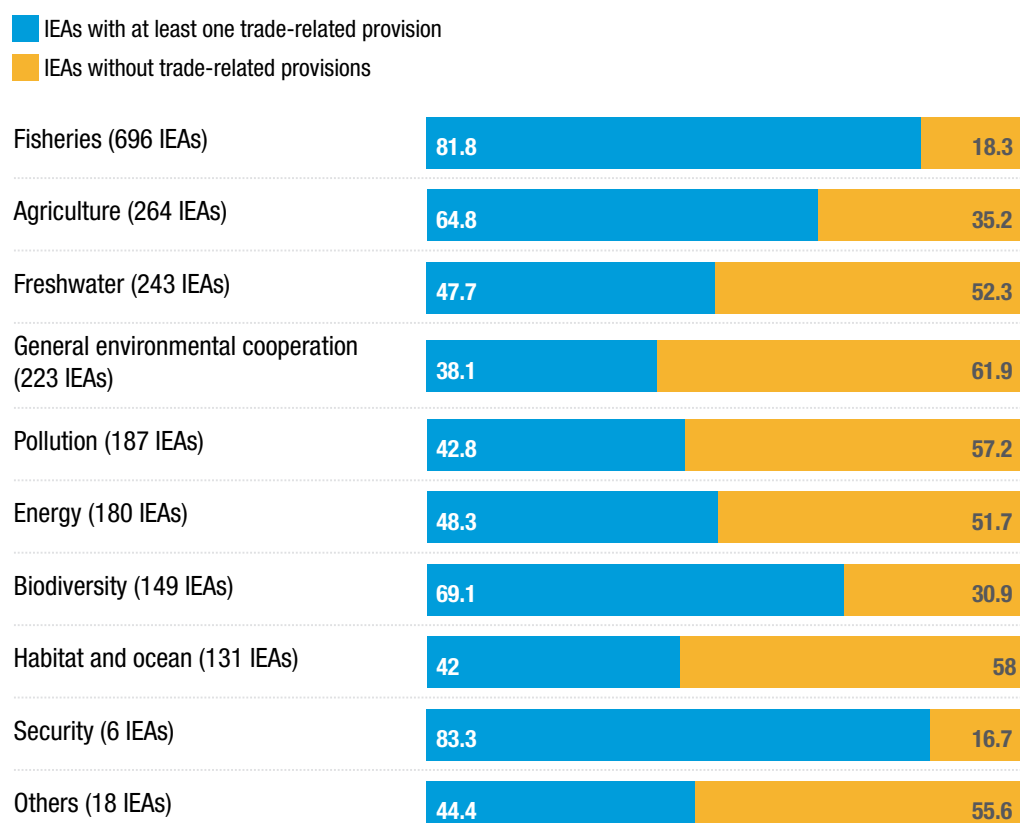
³ For example, Article 11.8.2 of the EFTA-Philippines Free Trade Agreement refers to the CITES among the instruments relevant to endangered timber species to promote the sustainable management of forest resources (EFTA, 2016).

Recent research indicates that 1,279 IEAs have at least one trade-related provision (which amounts to 61 per cent of all IEAs coded).

Moreover, out of 149 biodiversity-related agreements identified, 69 per cent have at least one trade-related provision (figure 1) (Morin et al., 2023).



Figure 1.
Share of international environmental agreements (IEAs) containing at least one trade-related provision by IEA subject area



Source: Morin et al. (2023).

Biodiversity-related trade measures notified by WTO members

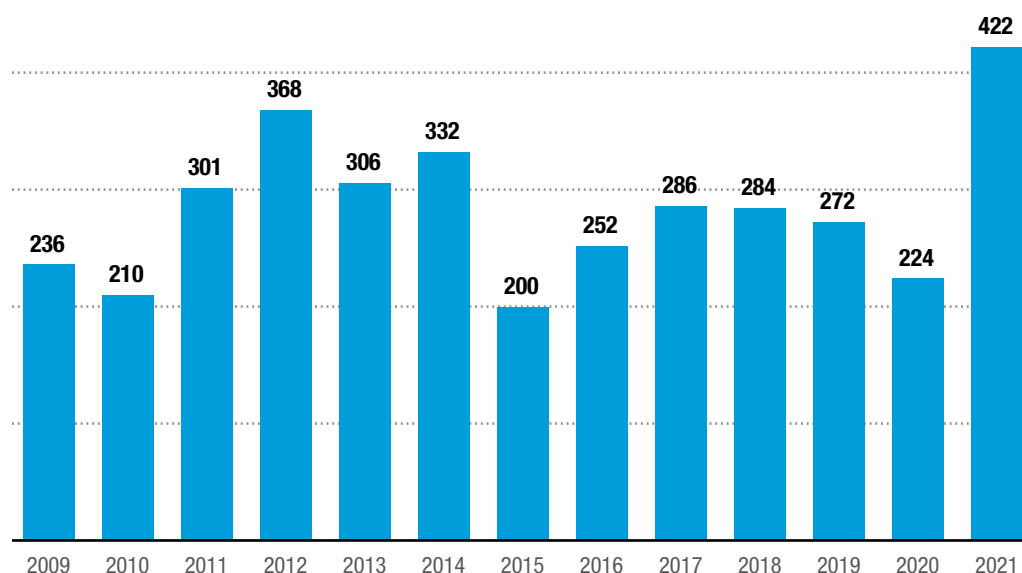
The WTO's EDB compiles notifications submitted by its members regarding environment-related measures and information shared in the context of Trade Policy Reviews (TPR). Between 2009 and 2021, 114 WTO members notified one or more measures linked to biodiversity for a total of 3,693 measures (21.9 per cent

of all EDB measures), with 422 measures notified in 2021, a record-high, as shown in figure 2 (WTO Secretariat, 2023). Of these measures, 1,520 were notified by WTO developing members and 113 by least developed members, together representing over 40 per cent of all measures reported. Nearly 56 per cent of such notifications were submitted by 10 WTO members, including the European Union and its member States (579), the United States of America (419), Australia (274), Canada (151) and New Zealand (127) (WTO Secretariat, 2023).





Figure 2.
**Biodiversity-related measures notified to the Environmental Database,
2009–2021**



Source: WTO Secretariat (2023).

Biodiversity-trade links in regional and multilateral instruments **enhance policy coherence, collaboration and inclusive and sustainable economic growth to tackle the biodiversity crisis**

In addition to notifications, the EDB also includes information contained in the TPRs.⁴ Since 2009, nearly 95 per cent of the 215 WTO TPRs have included biodiversity-related trade policies, measures, or sectoral references. A total of 1,159 biodiversity-related TPR entries were recorded in the EDB (figure 3), with nearly 84 per cent originating from developing members and least developed members. The top five WTO member entry contributors are the European Union (39), Japan (32), United States of America (28), Peru (24), and Canada (22) (WTO Secretariat, 2023).

The most common type of trade policy measures or instruments addressing biodiversity considerations presented in table 1 are technical regulations or specifications (23.9 per cent), grants and direct payments (19.9 per cent), and import licenses (19.1 per cent) (WTO Secretariat, 2023).

The links between biodiversity and trade in regional and multilateral instruments offer opportunities for enhanced policy coherence and further collaboration, which is essential to create a mutually reinforcing relationship between trade, biodiversity, and inclusive and sustainable economic growth to tackle the biodiversity crisis. Action by all stakeholders is needed to ensure that trade indeed protects biodiversity by promoting sustainability across the entire value chain (UNCTAD, 2024a). At UNCTAD's 7th BioTrade Congress, which had the theme "Global Governance for Trade and Biodiversity", participants discussed ways to strengthen the interface between trade policies and the environmental agenda, including biodiversity. Some key topics that emerged from the discussions are outlined below (UNCTAD, 2025):

- As part of ongoing reforms, integrating biodiversity as a central focus in the WTO agenda through consensus and member-driven political will.

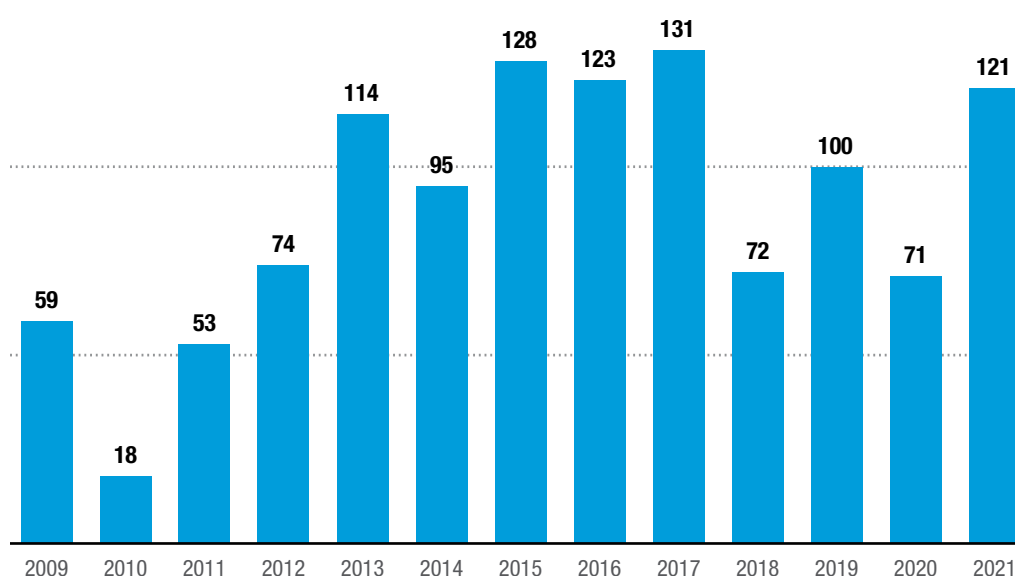
⁴ The TPR reports offer an opportunity to understand the type and evolution of policies and measures undertaken by WTO members to pursue environmental objectives, including biodiversity conservation. For further information, see Lim et al. (2020).



- Implementing new mechanisms for biodiversity integration following up on the G20 Initiative on bioeconomy under Brazil's presidency, through dedicated CTE thematic sessions and WTO Trade and Environment Week events for broader stakeholder engagement.
- Strengthening the economic case for biodiversity in trade by emphasizing how environmental degradation diminishes economic returns and by integrating environmental safeguards into trade agreements.
- Developing trade mechanisms that enhance the value of products preserving original genetic resources of plants and animals.



Figure 3.
Number of biodiversity-related Trade Policy Review entries by year, 2009–2021



Source: WTO Secretariat (2023).



Table 1.
Top 10 types of biodiversity-related measures, 2009–2021

Harmonized type of measures	Number of measures	Share (per cent)
Technical regulations or specifications	884	23,9
Grants and direct payments	735	19,9
Import licences	704	19,1
Ban/prohibition	562	15,2
Conformity assessment procedures	392	10,6
Non-monetary support	364	9,9
Export licences	330	8,9
Risk assessment	217	5,9
Regulation affecting movement or transit	136	3,7
Loans and financing	60	1,6

Source: WTO Secretariat (2023).





Chapter 3

The role of trade in supporting the SDGs and KMGBF



The role of trade in supporting the SDGs and KMGBF

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs is a global call for action that addresses a wide range of critical issues facing humanity through the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in an interconnected manner. These issues range from ending poverty and hunger through to health and wellbeing, reducing inequality, economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, clear water and sanitation, life on land, life below water, and climate action.

Recent assessments and reviews find that most countries face considerable challenges in meeting the SDGs, with the current rate of progress too incremental and fragmented to achieve the goals by 2030 (e.g. United Nations, 2023a, 2023b). This is especially the case for food security, inequality and environmental SDGs that are regressing, including conservation of life (biodiversity) and below water and on land (SDGs 14 and 15) (United Nations, 2023b).

The biodiversity/trade-related goals are reflected in the SDGs within the broader context of environmental and social considerations. For example:

- **SDG 8** (Decent Work and Economic Growth) promotes sustained, inclusive economic growth, with trade as a key driver, while not harming the environment (Obrecht et al., 2021).
- **SDG 12** (Responsible Consumption and Production) encourages sustainable consumption and production patterns, which can directly influence the trade of biodiversity-based products (Obrecht et al., 2021).
- **SDG 14** (Life Below Water) and **SDG 15** (Life on Land) emphasize the need for conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, as well as terrestrial ecosystems (Obrecht et al., 2021).

The literature on SDG interlinkages shows that SDGs 14 and 15 also seem to be most negatively affected by progress in other areas (United Nations, 2023a), highlighting the urgent need for approaches that respect – and deliver for – the three dimensions of sustainable development, and that consider tradeoffs and co-benefits among the goals and targets.

Considering the above, the KMGBF is crucial, as it is entirely dedicated to halting biodiversity loss, restoring ecosystems, and ensuring equitable access and benefit-sharing (ABS) through four overarching goals that set out a vision for biodiversity by 2050 and 23 targets for 2030 (table 2).

Trade and trade-related policies

The review of the KMGBF targets by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Forum on Trade, Environment and the SDGs (TESS) finds that trade can support the delivery of all the targets (UNEP and TESS, 2023). Several of the targets identify actions that are directly related to trade policies and measures. For example, trade policy is directly relevant to:

- Target 5 (Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species) to control illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade and to support sustainable trade
- Target 6 on reducing the introduction of invasive alien species
- Target 17 (Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology), by implementing measures that prevent the intentional or accidental spread of living modified organisms deriving from biotechnology through trade.





Table 2.
Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework goals and targets

Goals	Goal A Protect and restore Goal C Share benefits fairly		Goal B Prosper with nature Goal D Invest and collaborate
	Reducing threats to biodiversity	Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing	Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming
Targets	1: Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss	9: Manage wild species sustainably to benefit people	14: Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level
	2: Restore 30 per cent of all degraded ecosystems	10: Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry	15: Businesses assess, disclose and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts
	3: Conserve 30 per cent of land, waters and seas	11: Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people	16: Enable sustainable consumption choices to reduce waste and overconsumption
	4: Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts	12: Enhance green spaces and urban planning for human well-being and biodiversity	17: Strengthen biosafety and distribute the benefits of biotechnology
	5: Ensure sustainable, safe and legal harvesting and trade of wild species	13: Increase the sharing of benefits from genetic resources, digital sequence information and traditional knowledge	18: Reduce harmful incentives by at least \$500 billion per year, and scale up positive incentives for biodiversity
	6: Reduce the introduction of invasive alien species by 50 per cent and minimize their impact		19: Mobilize \$200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including \$30 billion through international finance
	7: Reduce pollution to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity		20: Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity
	8: Minimize the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience		21: Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action
			22: Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all
			23: Ensure gender equality and a gender-responsive approach for biodiversity action

Source: CBD Secretariat (n.d.-b).

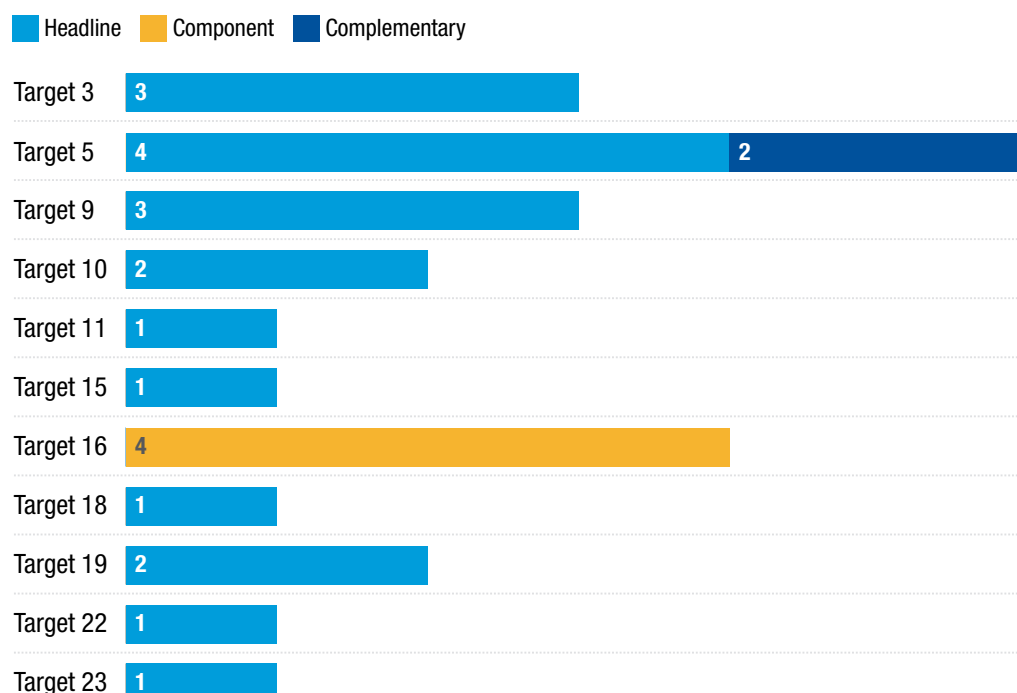
Discussions on subsidies in the trade policy arena, such as those taking place in the WTO, have direct bearing on the delivery of Target 18 on reducing harmful incentives. Similarly, finding solutions to the unresolved relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the CBD could facilitate the attainment of Target 13 on increasing the sharing of benefits from genetic resources, digital sequence information and traditional knowledge. Target 14 on integrating biodiversity in decision-making and Target 15 on

businesses' assessment, disclosure and reduction of biodiversity-related risks may have concrete implications in the trade domain. These implications extend to how countries develop, pursue and implement international trade policies, including those related to commodity-specific supply chains.

For other targets, trade-related policy coordination and/or having trade-related policies and measures in place could significantly support their achievement (UNEP and TESS, 2023).



Figure 4.
KMGBF indicators linked to trade-related activities



Source: UNCTAD (2024g).

Note: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

For example, Target 10 on enhancing biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry would directly benefit from having trade-related policies and measures in place that support sustainable supply chains. For instance, trade preferences or market access concessions could be granted for goods complying with specific biodiversity-related sustainability requirements. Similarly, rewards could be offered for mandatory or voluntary standards or certification schemes in order to encourage sustainable land-use and resource management through trade, while avoiding unnecessary barriers to trade and reporting and monitoring compliance costs. These measures can offer positive “spillover” benefits for the delivery of a range of other targets, including those on restoration and conservation (Targets 2, 3

and 4) and minimizing the impact of climate change (Target 8). Technical assistance and capacity-building that integrate biodiversity-related goals and considerations for sustainable trade, including through aid for trade, could contribute to the delivery of the targets on resource mobilization (Target 19), and capacity-building and transfer of technology (Target 20).

Moreover, the informal working group (iWG) on trade and biodiversity statistics convened by UNCTAD has identified 11 of the 23 KMGBF targets as having indicators with linkages to trade and other stages of the value chain, such as production, transformation and consumption (figure 4).⁵ The iWG also identified one headline indicator under Goal B linked to those activities.

UNCTAD's informal working group (iWG) on trade and biodiversity statistics has identified **11 of the 23 KMGBF targets as having indicators with linkages to trade and other stages of the value chain**

⁵ The iWG on trade and biodiversity statistics was convened by UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative and Statistics Service on 23 November 2023. It comprises over 80 members from developed and developing countries, as well as United Nations agencies. This iWG aims to develop a framework for data collection and analytical capacity for informed decision-making on trade in biodiversity-based products, including considering its environmental and socio-economic impact.

Synergies between KMGBF trade and trade-related policies and SDGs

The synergies between the SDG goals and the Aichi biodiversity targets (the predecessor of the KMGBF targets) were highlighted in an UNCTAD report (2017a). Trade is mainstreamed into the SDGs and identified as a means of implementation in Goal 17, but it is also cross-cutting with other SDGs (e.g. SDGs 2, 8, 9 and 10) and the biodiversity-related goals (e.g. SDGs 14 and 15) (UNCTAD, 2016a; WTO, 2018; UNCTAD, n.d.-c; UNDESA, n.d.; WTO Secretariat, n.d.-b).

Table 3 shows the close relationship between KMGBF goals and targets and their corresponding SDGs, as well as how trade-related policies and measures contribute to meeting those targets.

Well-structured trade policies, trade agreements, voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) and certification schemes help reduce pressures on biodiversity,

promote sustainable resource use, and ensure that economic benefits are shared fairly with local and Indigenous communities (UNCTAD, 2023a). By embedding sustainability principles within trade-related policies, the international community can drive progress toward the KMGBF targets as well as the SDGs through a balanced approach that fosters biodiversity conservation while promoting socioeconomic development (UNCTAD, 2024a), including through the BioTrade Principles and Criteria (P&C).

A significant body of experience in the design and implementation of trade-related policy measures and instruments for sustainable trade has been accumulated over recent decades, especially by BioTrade partners. This includes green public procurement, ABS regimes, incentives and subsidies, payments for ecosystem services, environmental standards and certification schemes (IPBES, 2019), and the inclusion of biodiversity consideration in RTAs and preferential trade schemes.

Well-structured trade policies, agreements, and voluntary sustainability standards **help conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, and ensure access and benefit-sharing**





Table 3.
Relationship between the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals and trade-related policies and measures

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Note: KMGBF: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; SDG: Sustainable Development Goal.

Examples of KMGBF goals/targets	Examples of relevant SDGs	Trade-related policies/measures	Contribution of trade to meeting KMGBF and SDG targets
KMGBF Goal A: Protect and Restore	SDG 14 Life Below Water SDG 15 Life on Land	Sustainable sourcing policies and measures (e.g., voluntary sustainability standards - VSS), certification schemes (e.g., Forest Stewardship Council for timber, Marine Stewardship Council for fisheries, Union for Ethical BioTrade, Rainforest Alliance, FairWild, others), tackling illegal wildlife trade	Encourages sustainable trade of biodiversity-based products, reduces overexploitation of ecosystems
KMGBF Goal B: Prosper with Nature	SDG 14 Life Below Water SDG 15 Life on Land SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production	Trade measures promoting VSS, eco-labelling, and exports of products sustainably sourced and from sustainable supply chains; protected area-based tourism. Policies to promote sustainable practices, VSS, agroforestry-based trade, sustainable fisheries management and trade, sustainable supply chains	Aligns trade with the conservation of biodiversity, eco-tourism revenues can support conservation efforts. Reduces environmental footprint of traded goods, supports sustainable production in trade
KMGBF Goal C: Share Benefits Fairly	SDG 1 No Poverty SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 15 Life on Land	Policies that support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and access and benefit-sharing agreements. Policies that support capacity-building, technology transfer	Implementing fair and equitable benefit-sharing schemes that directly benefit communities, support local economies through the trade of sustainably sourced and produced biodiversity-based products, such as those aligned with BioTrade Principles and Criteria
KMGBF Goal D: Provide Adequate Financial Resources for Biodiversity Conservation	SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals	Trade-related financial mechanisms (green bonds, payments for ecosystem services, financial and investment schemes for the trade of sustainably produced and sourced biodiversity-based products)	Mobilizes trade revenues for conservation, incentivizes private sector investment in biodiversity





Chapter 4

BioTrade as an enabler for sustainable trade in biodiversity



BioTrade as an enabler for sustainable trade in biodiversity⁶

UNCTAD has been facilitating the uptake of sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products and services since 1996 through its BioTrade Initiative in support of its mandates, including more recently the Bridgetown Covenant. BioTrade is defined as the collection, production, transformation and commercialization of biodiversity-based goods and services that meet specific social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria (UNCTAD, 2020). These BioTrade P&C support sustainable trade by guiding the implementation of activities by governments, businesses and civil society across various biodiversity-based sectors. The BioTrade Initiative seeks to support implementation of the CBD and works in line with its objectives, particularly on the trade-related aspects of Article 10 on sustainable use, Article 11 on incentive measures, Article 15 on access to genetic resources, and Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge. BioTrade aligns with the three objectives of the CBD: conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources (CBD Secretariat, n.d.-e).

UNCTAD's BioTrade Principles and Criteria

Since the mid-2000s, activities under the BioTrade Initiative have been carried out through the BioTrade P&C published in 2007 and updated in 2020 to better align with the SDGs, the Nagoya Protocol and the Paris Agreement, as well as to include lessons learned and experiences of BioTrade practitioners (UNCTAD, 2020).⁷

BioTrade P&C consist of seven principles and 25 criteria applicable to products and services based on terrestrial and marine and other aquatic biodiversity, reflecting the three dimensions of sustainable development. The seven principles are (UNCTAD, 2020):

- **Principle 1 - Conservation of biodiversity:** Activities should not only conserve biodiversity (species, habitats and ecosystems), but also contribute to restoring and enhancing it.
- **Principle 2 - Sustainable use of biodiversity:** Activities need to be based on adaptive management practices and measures to prevent or mitigate negative environmental impacts on aspects such as flora, fauna, soil, water, waste, energy and climate, and also strengthen climate resilience and adaptation of species and ecosystems.
- **Principle 3 - Fair and equitable sharing of benefits:** Benefits derived from the use of biodiversity, in the context of trade and research and development, should be shared fairly with all stakeholders, especially local and Indigenous communities. Even if no laws and regulations on ABS apply to BioTrade activities, principles of ABS established in internationally recognized agreements are recognized and respected.
- **Principle 4 - Socioeconomic sustainability (productive, financial and market management):** BioTrade activities must be based on solid business policies, procedures and practices and have systems in line with industry and market requirements,

BioTrade involves sustainably sourcing, producing, and commercializing biodiversity-based goods and services

⁶ Relevant resources for further consultation are UNCTAD (2017b, 2020, 2024d, and 2024e). Further information on UNCTAD's work under the BioTrade Initiative is available at: www.biotrade.org

⁷ The BioTrade P&C are built on the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity adopted by the CBD COP in 2004 (Decision VII/12, Annex II). They provide an important framework for guiding governments, the private sector and civil society practices on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in line with Articles 10 and 11 of the CBD (UNCTAD, 2015). More information is available at UNCTAD (n.d.-a).

**The BioTrade
P&C provide a
framework for
sustainable
trade in
biodiversity-
based products
and services**

including on quality management and supply chain traceability.

- **Principle 5 - Compliance with national and international regulations:** All BioTrade activities comply with the applicable rules under local, national and international legislation, including international agreements such as the CBD, the Nagoya Protocol, Human Rights and International Labour Organization Conventions, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea, among others.
- **Principle 6 - Clarity for the rights of actors involved:** BioTrade activities should promote and protect the rights of actors directly involved in the supply chain (complementing Principle 7 below), including their fundamental human rights, workers' rights, health and safety conditions, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, children and vulnerable groups.
- **Principle 7 - Clarity on the right to use and access natural resources:** Activities respect the tenure and rights to use or access natural resources as well as associated traditional knowledge. This not only considers the rights of actors involved in the BioTrade activity, but also those of their communities.

The P&C are also implemented considering a set of minimum eligibility requirements (box 1) and four different approaches: the value-chain approach, the adaptive management approach, the ecosystem approach, and the sustainable livelihoods approach (UNCTAD, 2020) (figure 5).

The P&C guide the different interventions under the BioTrade Initiative and its partners (UNCTAD, 2020). They provide a framework and guidelines for sustainable practices that support both conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.⁸ The P&C are implemented in different contexts by (i) assessing social, economic and environmental impacts of a project, company, or sector, (ii) guiding elements to be included in a policy, and/or (iii) evaluating supply chains for financial or market initiatives and verifying good practices (UNCTAD 2020).

The BioTrade P&C offer a coherent approach to transforming the provision of, and trade in, products and services based on biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNCTAD et al., 2020). They are implemented and fostered by government organizations, business associations, non-governmental organizations and companies in around 80 countries. For example, countries have incorporated BioTrade P&C in their policies and national strategies (e.g. Peru), while private companies have adopted them as part of their business-to-business programmes, marketing strategies, and traceability systems. The Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT) was created as a spin-off from UNCTAD to support businesses in their commitments to sustainable sourcing. The turnover from companies, associations and projects that are implementing BioTrade P&C and related schemes increased from US\$40 million in 2003 (UNCTAD, 2017a) to around US\$ 40 billion in 2023 (UNCTAD 2024f). Their positive impact on biodiversity, economic opportunities and social inclusion has also been highlighted in various studies and documents.⁹

⁸ CBD Article 2 defines sustainable use as “the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations” (CBD Secretariat, 2011b).

⁹ Examples of the impact of implementing BioTrade P&C and related schemes can be seen in UNCTAD (2001, 2012, 2017, 2023b, 2024c, 2024d, 2024e), Garcia et al. (2015), and CAF (2014). Additional information, including case studies, is available in Helvetas (n.d.), UEBT (n.d.), GIZ (n.d.-a, n.d.-b). Further information on Peru is available through its National BioTrade Strategy and its Action Plan 2025 (Ministry of External Trade and Tourism of Peru, 2024) as well as through documents of the Ministry of Environment (2015) of Peru and Maldonado (2023).



Box 1. BioTrade's minimum eligibility requirements

Terrestrial BioTrade activities	Marine or Blue BioTrade activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activity focuses on material from terrestrial and inland biodiversity (e.g. living species); • The activity does not include the extraction of minerals, such as sands, nor the extraction of metals, oil and gas, or the generation of energy; • The activity does not seek to use or develop genetically modified organisms; • The activity does not introduce or cause the introduction of invasive species, as well as it does not use or foster the use of these species where the activity is developed, unless is to control the population or mitigate its negative impacts on local ecosystems and actions are implemented to avoid its spread; • The activity does not collect, harvest, use, disrupt, or otherwise threaten endangered species, including those covered in CITES Appendix I and in national and regional endangered species lists; • The activity does not contribute to the degradation or transformation of terrestrial and inland ecosystems, such as deforestation of primary forests; • The activity does not use agrochemicals banned by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), listed in the Rotterdam Convention and in WHO Categories I and II, and/or banned in the relevant country(ies) where the activity takes place; • If the activities are done in protected areas or similar, these comply with the requirements defined in the regulations, plans, strategies or programmes applicable to these areas; • The organization ensures the respect for human rights and avoids immoral and illegal transactions in business operations; and • The activity must apply the precautionary approach, as defined in the Rio Principles and other related agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activity focuses on material derived from coastal and marine biodiversity (e.g. living coastal and marine species); • The activity does not include the extraction of minerals, such as sands, nor the extraction of metals, oil and gas, or the generation of energy; • The activity does not seek to use or develop genetically modified organisms; • The activity does not introduce invasive species, as well as it does not use or foster the use of these species, unless is to control the population or mitigate its negative impacts on local ecosystems; • The activity does not harvest/catch, use, disrupt, or otherwise threaten endangered species, including those covered in CITES Appendix I and in national and regional endangered species lists; • The activity does not contribute to the degradation or transformation of marine and coastal ecosystems, such as the draining of wetlands or the deforestation of coastal areas; • The activity does not incorporate or directly support any form of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing or other illegal activity; • If the activities are done in protected areas or similar, these comply with the requirements defined in the regulations, plans strategies or programmes applicable to these areas; • The organization ensures the respect for human rights and avoids immoral and illegal transactions in business operations; and • The activity must apply the precautionary approach, as defined in the Rio Principles and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (1995), <i>inter alia</i>.

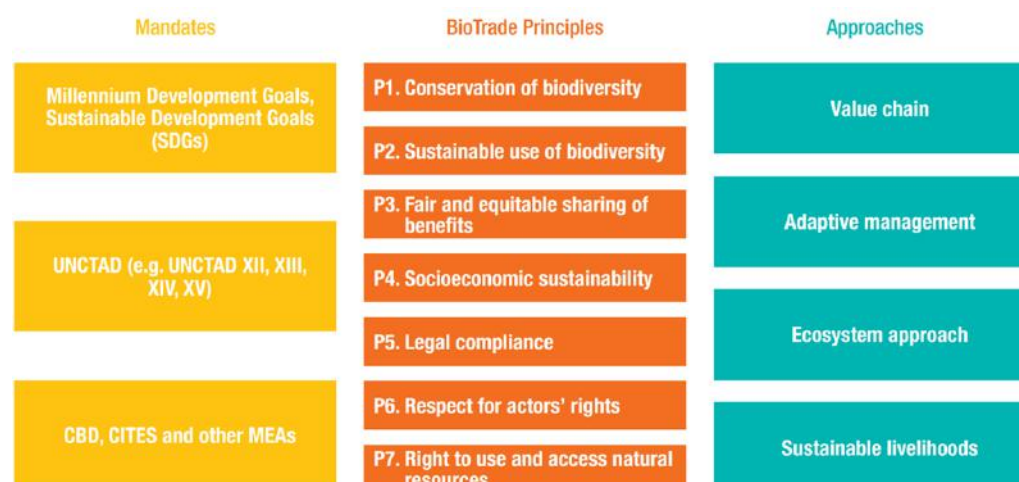
Source: UNCTAD (2020).

Note: CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.





Figure 5.
BioTrade conceptual framework with mandates, principles and approaches



Source: UNCTAD (2020).

Note: CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity; CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; MEA: multilateral environmental agreement.

BioTrade and the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biodiversity-related MEAs

The development of markets for biodiversity-based products creates important indirect incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of the components of biodiversity. Examples include mechanisms such as individual transferable fishing quotas, bioprospecting, and the commercialization of medicinal plants or other biodiversity-based products (CBD Secretariat, n.d.-c).

UNCTAD and its relationship with biodiversity-related trade

UNCTAD and the Secretariat of the CBD have a long-standing partnership since 1997 through UNCTAD's BioTrade

Initiative (UNCTAD, 1997) supporting implementation of the CBD through the uptake of sustainable trade of biodiversity-based products.

UNCTAD has also collaborated with other biodiversity-related MEAs, including CITES since 2001 and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) since 2002 (UNCTAD, 2017b). So, in addition to the CBD, the P&C are aligned with and support objectives and principles of other biodiversity-related MEAs such as CITES, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and Ramsar (UNCTAD, 2020). Several authoritative reports have recognized the work of UNCTAD and its partners.¹⁰

Recognition of BioTrade in the CBD context

The BioTrade Initiative has influenced the CBD processes. Its work has been

¹⁰ Recent examples include the IPBES assessment on the sustainable use of wild species that features work on BioTrade in several sectors (IPBES, 2022); and the UEBT Biodiversity Barometer, which is featured in the Dasgupta (2021).



referred to in several decisions of the CBD COP relating to business/private sector engagement, mainstreaming of biodiversity into sectors, sustainable use of biodiversity, cooperation, livelihoods and poverty eradication, and incentive measures (box 2) (CBD, 2010a; UNCTAD et al., 2019). Other CBD COP decisions referencing BioTrade relate to capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer and a clearing house mechanism, as well as those related to the Nagoya Protocol (UNCTAD, 2017a). Through the various decisions adopted by the CBD COP, CBD parties' understanding of BioTrade has evolved into a clear recognition of its importance as a driver for the sustainable use of biodiversity through the participation of the private sector. Countries such as Peru, Colombia and Ecuador were the first in expressing interest in the concept (Ministry of Environment of Peru, 2015).

BioTrade is especially recognized in the incentive measures (box 2) supporting the implementation of CBD's Article 11, as the BioTrade Initiative and its partners provide positive direct or indirect incentive measures relevant to private actors (UNCTAD, 2014; CBD Secretariat, n.d.-d).¹¹ Implementing BioTrade with its P&C creates market incentives for biodiversity-friendly products and promotes sustainable business models that benefit both biodiversity and the communities that depend on it (UNCTAD, 2016b; UEBT, 2020). It also encourages the private sector to invest in biodiversity conservation. For example, in Viet Nam, the investment of local companies working in BioTrade under the Regional BioTrade Project in the Mekong region increased from US\$29.000 to nearly US\$7 million in just two years (UNCTAD, 2024c).

Moreover, BioTrade-related references have also been featured in National Biodiversity and Action Plans (NBSAPs) produced before and after the adoption of the KMGBF in countries such as Ecuador (CHM, 2018), Namibia (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2014), Peru (Ministry of Environment of Peru, 2024) and Viet Nam (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, 2022).¹² As of 1 November 2024, UNCTAD's analysis of the national targets submitted by 119 countries to the CBD Secretariat revealed that seven countries reported the complementary indicator featuring BioTrade P&C under KMGBF Target 5 (box 2): Plurinational State of Bolivia, Hungary, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, and Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The TraBio and the BioTrade P&C tools could further help member States define their national targets.

Turnover of organizations implementing BioTrade P&C and related schemes grew from US\$40 million in 2003 to around US\$40 billion in 2023

¹¹ A positive incentive measure "is an economic, legal or institutional measure designed to encourage beneficial activities" (CBD Secretariat (n.d.-d)).

¹² CBD COP15 Decision 15/6 requested parties to revise and update their NBSAPs by CBD COP16 (CBD, 2022b). For parties not in position to do so, they were requested to submit national targets also by COP16. Nevertheless, only 44 updated NBSAPs were submitted, whereas 119 parties have national targets until 31 October 2024. The CBD COP16 Decision 16/1 urges parties not having done so to revise/update these as soon as possible (CBD, 2024).



Box 2.

Recognition of UNCTAD BioTrade in decisions of Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity

1. Business/private sector engagement:

- At COP8 (Decision VIII/17), a specific reference was made to UNCTAD's BioTrade Initiative "that further work on ways and means of supporting small and medium-sized enterprises with environmentally sound products, such as that developed by the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative, would help to promote good biodiversity practice among business and industry" (CBD, 2006).
- COP 9 (Decision IX/26) called for the continued "compilation and dissemination of information on the business case for biodiversity, including experiences generated in the framework of the UNCTAD Biotrade Initiative, through the clearing-house mechanism, the CBD newsletter on business, and mainstream business forums" (CBD, 2008a) and dissemination of "tools and best practice of companies involved in biotrade" (CBD, 2008a).
- COP 10 (Decision X/21) recognized the relevance of existing developments and work processes under various forums and relevant international organizations, including the BioTrade Initiative, and invited parties to "identify a range of options for incorporating biodiversity into business practices that take into account existing developments under various forums, including relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations, such...[as] the Biotrade Initiative of [UNCTAD]" (CBD, 2010b).
- COP12 (Decision XII/10) encouraged businesses to "increase, as appropriate, participation in and cooperation with the BioTrade Initiative of [UNCTAD], and initiatives of other organizations involved in biotrade, at the national, regional and global levels, that are committed to the sustainable use of biodiversity, sustainable harvesting practices, and access and benefit-sharing under the framework of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization" (CBD, 2014a).

2. Mainstreaming of biodiversity:

- COP 14 (Decision XIV/3) acknowledged "the work of various international organizations, relevant partner organizations and initiatives to advance biodiversity-related practices by businesses, such as that of...[UNCTAD] and its BioTrade Initiative" (CBD, 2018a).

3. Sustainable use of biodiversity:

- COP10 (Decision X/32) "Invites Parties, other Governments, and relevant international and other organizations to:... (e) Welcome and strengthen initiatives that link biodiversity, development, and poverty alleviation, for example the BioTrade initiative of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development" (CBD, 2010a).



4. Cooperation:

- COP 10 (Decision X/20) requested the Executive Secretary to continue cooperation on biotrade and other trade-related matters with UNCTAD (CBD, 2010c).
- COP 12 (Decision XII/6) called upon the BioTrade Initiative to “continue to strengthen its technical support to Governments, companies and other stakeholders to enable them to incorporate biotrade, as well as sustainable harvesting practices within national biodiversity strategies and action plans, as appropriate, highlighting the importance of biotrade as an engine for sustainable use of biodiversity and its conservation through the involvement of the private sector” (CBD, 2014b).
- COP 13 (Decision XIII/24) called upon the “Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions, in close collaboration with...[UNCTAD]...to continue to strengthen its work to enhance coherence and cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions, including in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and any follow-up to this strategic plan...” (CBD, 2016).
- COP 14 (Decision XIV/30) requested the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to further coordinate the “Caring for Coasts initiative with...[UNCTAD] in the context of its Blue BioTrade Initiative, in order to advance synergies in their work on the management and restoration of coastal ecosystems worldwide” (CBD, 2018b).

5. Livelihoods and poverty eradication:

- COP 10 (Decision X/6) encouraged “synergies between ongoing initiatives linking biodiversity, development and poverty eradication, such as...the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative...” (CBD, 2010d). COP 10 Decision X/32 on Sustainable use also invited “Parties, other Governments, and relevant international and other organizations to...[w]elcome and strengthen initiatives that link biodiversity, development, and poverty alleviation, for example the BioTrade Initiative of [UNCTAD]” (CBD, 2010a).

6. Incentive measures:

- COP 9 (Decision IX/6) invited the BioTrade Initiative to “continue its work on trade promotion for biodiversity-based products which are produced in a sustainable manner and compatible with the three objectives of the [CBD], through capacity-building, enhancing market access, promoting enabling environments and engaging relevant public and private actors” (CBD, 2008b). It also invited UNCTAD to “undertake...further studies on positive incentive measures at local, national, regional and international levels, their advantages as well as their potential limitations and risks, their cost-effectiveness, potential implications for biodiversity and indigenous and local communities, and their consistency with other international obligations...” (CBD, 2008b). In addition, it invited organizations such as UNCTAD to “promote scientific and technical cooperation among Parties on the design and implementation of incentive measures, including through international courses and workshops for the exchange of experiences, and to provide technical support, capacity-building and training...(c) For the promotion of biodiversity-based products which are produced in a sustainable manner (“biotrade”)” (CBD, 2008b).



- COP 10 (Decision X/44) welcomed UNCTAD's work on incentives and called upon it "to support the efforts at global, regional and national levels...in promoting positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and in assessing the values of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services, and invites them to continue and intensify this work with a view to raising awareness on, and promoting common understanding of...the promotion of positive incentive measures..." (CBD, 2010e).
- COP 11 (Decision XI/30) noted the "support of international organizations and initiatives, including...[UNCTAD] to efforts at the global, regional and national levels in identifying and eliminating, phasing out or reforming incentives that are harmful to biodiversity, in promoting positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, consistent and in harmony with the [CBD] and other relevant international obligations, and in assessing and mainstreaming the values of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services, and invites these and other relevant organizations and initiatives to continue and further intensify this work, including continued support for capacity-building at the national level" (CBD, 2012).

7. Monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF):

- COP 15 (Decision 15/5) included the BioTrade Principles under the KMGBF's Target 5 complementary indicator on "Trends of traditional and commercialization in biodiversity-based products that is sustainable and legal (in line with BioTrade Principles and/or CITES requirements)" (CBD, 2022a).

The relationship of BioTrade with the KMGBF and SDGs

BioTrade aligns closely with the goals and targets of both the SDGs and KMGBF. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, BioTrade contributes to 16 of the 17 SDGs (UNCTAD 2017b). As for the KMGBF, the BioTrade P&C are directly relevant to 9 of the 23 KMGBF targets and to Goal B, as can be seen in table 4.

Potentially relevant trade policy instruments and BioTrade contributions to the achievement of the KMGBF targets in synergy with the SDGs can be clustered along the three dimensions of sustainable development as well as cross-cutting issues of gender, climate change, and sustainable use (table 5).

The BioTrade Initiative and the KMGBF monitoring framework

As part of negotiations of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, UNCTAD steered and promoted collaboration among partners and other organizations to contribute to the negotiation process and implementation of the KMGBF. Among the several substantive submissions provided to the CBD's post-2020 KMGBF process were inputs based on the BioTrade Congresses, and two workshops held to aggregate the collective intelligence from partners and other stakeholders.¹³

During the CBD negotiations leading up to adoption of the KMGBF, BioTrade partners highlighted the importance of using indicators and the underlying data as essential foundations for successful implementation of the framework

¹³ Further information on the submissions made are available under "Documents: Joint submissions" in UNCTAD (n.d.-a).





Table 4.
Examples of the contribution of UNCTAD's work on trade and biodiversity, including BioTrade, to achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets

KMGBF goal and target	UNCTAD contribution
Goal B	UNCTAD's Trade and Biodiversity (TraBio) statistical tool provides information for the complementary indicator: Trends in the legal trade of medicinal plants.
Target 5	The BioTrade Principles and Criteria (P&C) are featured under the complementary indicator: Trends of trade and commercialization in biodiversity-based products that is sustainable and legal (in line with BioTrade P&C and/or CITES requirements).
Target 8	The BioTrade P&C provide guidance on implementation of BioTrade activities regarding climate change, including mitigation, resilience and adaptation under Principle 2. Particularly, criterion 2.3 emphasizes the need to strengthen resilience and adaptation of species and ecosystems to the hazards of climate change, and criterion 2.2 requires implementing measures to prevent or mitigate the negative environmental impact of the activities, including in relation to the global climate and energy consumption.
Target 9	Implementation of BioTrade P&C, particularly Principles 2 and 3, requires BioTrade activities to sustainably use biodiversity, and promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits along the value chain actors.
Target 10	Principle 2 of the BioTrade P&C focusing on the sustainable use of biodiversity has been applied to the agro-industry sector, including cultivation.
Target 13	Principle 3 of the BioTrade P&C that promotes the equitable sharing of benefits derived from the use of biodiversity has been applied by long-term partnerships throughout supply chains, complying with the requirements under the Nagoya Protocol.
Targets 14, 15, 18	Mainstreaming of biodiversity into decision-making processes is conducted across government (e.g. biodiversity and trade policies and strategies; scale-up of positive incentives; Peruvian National Committee for the Promotion of BioTrade) and businesses (UEBT's Biodiversity Action Plans; dependencies and impacts on biodiversity).
Target 19	Mobilization of resources to biodiversity through partnerships, for example with private actors, development banks or investors (e.g. Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean).
Target 21	The TraBio statistical tool includes data on trade flows and indicators of biodiversity-based products in more than 190 economies from 2010 until the most updated information available. (See box 3 for more detail on how UNCTAD's Trade and Biodiversity statistical tool contributes to the KMGBF.)
Targets 22 and 23	At the core of BioTrade P&C is the commitment to empower actors involved in the activities, fostering the participation, consultation and informed decision-making of all value-chain actors, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities and women to ensure that their concerns and circumstances are understood and met.

Sources: UNCTAD (2020; n.d.-a).

Note: CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; KMGBF: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; UEBT: Union for Ethical BioTrade.

(UNCTAD et al., 2020). A monitoring framework with clear indicators is fundamental to monitor biodiversity loss, as recognized in Article 7 of the CBD.

In addition to the KMGBF complementary indicator featuring BioTrade (see point 7 in box 2), other indicators proposed by UNCTAD and partners and included as KMGBF complementary indicators are:

- Trends in the legal trade of medicinal plants under Goal B; and
- The number of countries incorporating trade in their national biodiversity policy under Target 5.





Table 5.
How the BioTrade Principles and Criteria contribute to meeting the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Area	SDG targets	KMGFBF targets	Examples of relevant trade policy instruments	Examples of potential contributions based on the BioTrade Principles and Criteria
Economic Empowerment and Social Inclusion	1.1, 1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 4.7, 5.5, 5.A	5, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement policies that promote sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products and services, particularly for small-scale producers, Indigenous communities, and women, thereby enhancing their market access and incomes Dedicated policies to support micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs) and small-scale producers in overcoming trade barriers, securing access to finance, and ensuring sustainable sourcing practices Dedicated policy to advance gender equality and leadership roles for women in decision-making and ensure their access to land, resources, markets and information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable use of biodiversity to generate livelihoods in rural, biodiversity-rich areas Support gender equality, empowering women and Indigenous and local communities Enhance food security and market access for small producers, and foster their local economic development Raise awareness about biodiversity's importance for sustainable development and strengthen decision-making inclusivity
Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation	6.3, 12.6, 12.8, 12.A, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.B, 14.2, 14.5, 15.1, 15.9	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide incentives for/mandate companies to adopt sustainable practices through certifications, reporting, traceability and transparency of impacts on biodiversity Design and implement policies to enhance capacity-building and knowledge-sharing in sustainable practices and monitoring and reporting for biodiversity-based products and services through trade facilitation Promote policy coherence by integrating biodiversity conservation into national and sectoral policies, poverty eradication strategies, and development processes to align trade and biodiversity goals Promote policies to implement voluntary sustainability standards (VSS), eco-labelling schemes, payment for ecosystem services (PES) through a pro-development angle Conduct environmental impact assessment related to biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage ecosystem-based agriculture and minimize environmental pollution Promote sustainable consumption and production, and corporate reporting. Support climate resilience and ecosystem restoration efforts, integrating climate action in biodiversity management Reduce pollution to protect biodiversity, enhance water quality, and promote biodiversity-friendly practices



**Trade and BioTrade's contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
and synergies with the other Sustainable Development Goals**

Area	SDG targets	KMGBF targets	Examples of relevant trade policy instruments	Examples of potential contributions based on the BioTrade Principles and Criteria
Sustainable Trade and Economic Growth	8.3, 8.4, 9.2, 9.3, 10.1, 10.2, 12.6, 17.3, 17.7	14, 15, 16, 18, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote policies to implement VSS, eco-labelling schemes and PES through a pro-development angle Promote policies dedicated to supporting MSMEs to reduce their cost of joining certification schemes and support them in building sustainable supply chains Develop dedicated policies to support producers to comply with sustainability requirements, regulations and standards Promote trade facilitation measures for biodiversity-based products and services through capacity-building and knowledge-sharing Develop and scale positive incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and access and benefit-sharing (ABS), while phasing out harmful subsidies Develop policies to promote and support public-private partnerships for investment in sustainable biodiversity-based products and services, as well as scale up financing for BioTrade value chains Develop incentives to encourage companies to include Corporate Social Responsibility and biodiversity conservation into their business models to promote sustainability in global value chains Develop incentives to encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices through certifications, reporting, traceability and transparency of impacts on biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation of market incentives for biodiversity-friendly products and promote sustainable business models that benefit both biodiversity and the communities that depend on it Encourage the private sector to invest in biodiversity conservation and ABS schemes Support the creation of sustainable businesses and biodiversity and socially friendly markets Promote sustainable agriculture practices that reduce environmental degradation and enhance biodiversity Support the creation of eco-certified products from protected areas, such as sustainably sourced fish and forest products, nature-based tourism and birdwatching, ensuring economic benefits from conservation Help overcome trade barriers for MSMEs sustainably sourcing and producing biodiversity-based products and services, including those working in biodiversity-rich areas Promote ABS in the trade of biodiversity-based products, contributing to income growth, particularly in populations dependent on those resources Strengthen the financial sustainability of biodiversity-based businesses
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	5.5, 5.A	22, 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support policies that promote sustainable trade in biodiversity products, particularly for small-scale producers, Indigenous communities and women, thereby enhancing their market access and incomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster gender equality through leadership opportunities and equal access to resources Encourage the involvement of women and marginalized groups in decision-making related to biodiversity management
Climate Change and Ecosystem Resilience	13.1, 13.2, 13.3	8, 9, 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote trade facilitation for biodiversity-based products and services through capacity-building and knowledge-sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches to climate resilience Enhance adaptation to climate-related hazards while supporting biodiversity conservation
Supporting Sustainable Resource Use	12.6, 12.8, 15.1, 15.3, 15.5, 15.9	1, 4, 5, 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote policy coherence by integrating biodiversity conservation into national and sectoral policies, poverty eradication strategies, and development processes to align trade and biodiversity goals Implement VSS and eco-labelling schemes and PES Consider certification schemes (e.g. Forest Stewardship Council for forestry, Marine Stewardship Council for fisheries) to support building sustainable supply chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage sustainable management of natural resources, especially forests and marine ecosystems Provide technical support for sustainable practices of wild-collected terrestrial and marine species as well as in agriculture, forestry and other biodiversity-based sectors

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Moreover, trade and biodiversity-related information is needed to support the KMGBF monitoring frameworks at global and national levels. Existing global datasets with trade-related information could contribute further to the definition and monitoring of indicators for the KMGBF monitoring framework. The datasets could also inform better policymaking to support modelling and ex ante assessment of the impact of policies and trade agreements.

UNCTAD's TraBio statistical tool is one example where information can be found on such topics as trends in trade flows of over 1,800 biodiversity-based products (box 3). Figure 6 illustrates TraBio's information on the trends in the trade of medicinal plants (KMGBF Goal B's complementary indicator).



Box 3. UNCTAD's Trade and Biodiversity (TraBio) statistical tool

UNCTAD has developed tools to better monitor and understand the trade flows of biodiversity-based products. The TraBio statistical tool is comprised of:

- Product classification of biodiversity-based products covering over 1,800 biodiversity-based products
- An online database on trade flows in these products and related indicators updated annually from 2010 onward and covering over 190 economies
- A visualization tool with interactive maps and charts.

This statistical tool provides comprehensive data on trade flows of biodiversity-based products, helping to identify trends, growth rates, and the economic impact of this trade on a global scale.

Source: UNCTADstat (n.d.-a; n.d.-b).

**TraBio
statistical tool
offers data on
trade flows of
biodiversity-
based products,**
revealing trends,
growth rates
and global
economic impact

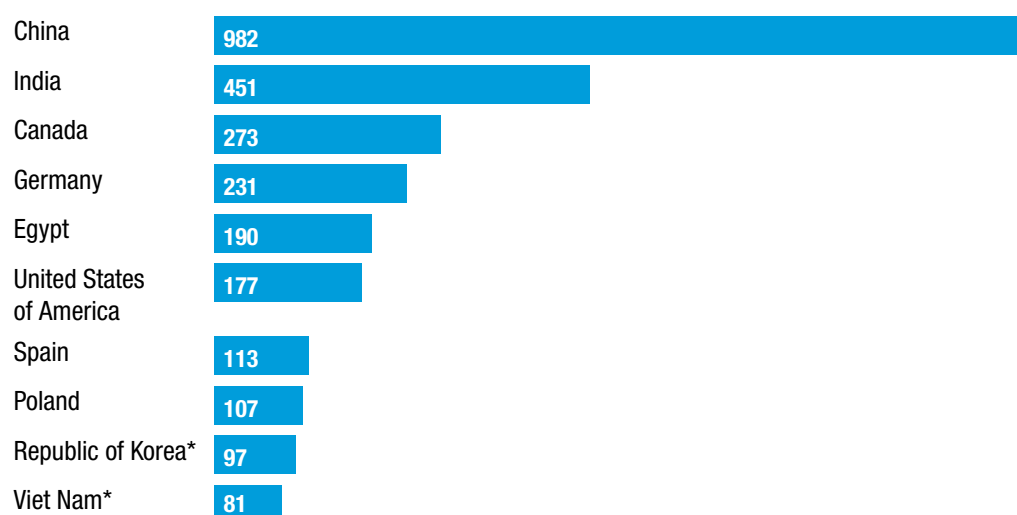




Figure 6.

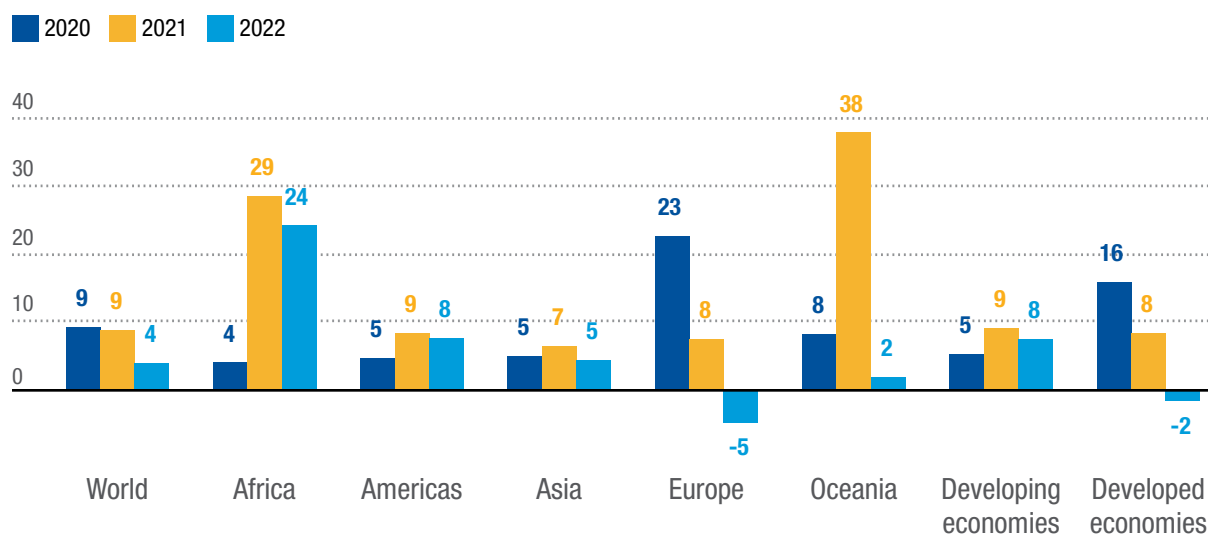
**TraBio's trade-related information on the trade of medicinal plants
contributing for selected countries**

**Top 10 exporters of medicinal plants in 2023
(Millions of United States dollars)**



Note: *2022 data

**Growth rate of exports of medicinal plants
(Per cent)**



Source: UNCTADstat (n.d-a).





Chapter 5

Conclusions and key findings



Conclusions and key findings

This paper has reviewed the role of trade and trade-related policies and measures, especially BioTrade and the BioTrade Initiative, in supporting the CBD and its newly adopted KMGBF. It also highlights how the BioTrade initiative can help implement and monitor progress of the KMGBF, based on decades of experience, accumulated knowledge, guidelines, tools, capacity-building and technical assistance programmes, as well as UNCTAD's strong network and partnerships. This paper has also aimed to raise awareness about the mutually supportive linkages between trade and biodiversity, supported by the right tools, as well as about the BioTrade P&C and the TraBio statistical tool at the disposal of CBD parties as they develop their post-COP15 NBSAPs to implement their commitments.

Some key findings include:

1. The role of trade in biodiversity conservation and the KMGBF:

Trade, especially when guided by social, environmental and economic sustainability principles such as the BioTrade P&C, can contribute to achieving the KMGBF goals and targets, with strong co-benefits for the SDGs. Sustainable trade can support the conservation of ecosystems and species, and address drivers of biodiversity loss. Comprehensive and sustainable use of a biodiversity approach complemented by sustainable trade is especially important for biodiversity-rich countries (as opposed to direct conservation) to generate jobs and livelihoods, often for the most marginalized (women's associations, Indigenous Peoples), and rural development.

2. The contribution of trade to the achievement of the SDGs:

The paper highlights that sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products, based on BioTrade P&C, can have strong synergies with almost all SDGs. This is in part due to dedicated goals to biodiversity in the SDGs, and the fact that 55 per cent of the world's GDP depends on nature (Evison et al., 2023) and 80 per cent of the world's poor and vulnerable living in rural areas depend directly on biodiversity (United Nations, 2023c). Sustainable trade can turn a negative impact on biodiversity loss into an incentive for sustainable use by providing economic development through alternative business and trade models.

3. Biodiversity-trade links to key sectors:

Economic sectors of importance to developing countries such as agriculture, fisheries, and forestry rely heavily on biodiversity. With a significant portion of global trade being biodiversity-based, trade in these sectors can either drive biodiversity loss or support conservation through sustainable use and practices. UNCTAD's BioTrade P&C can help to ensure that trade provides sustainable economic, environmental and social outcomes.

4. BioTrade as a positive example:

The BioTrade Initiative promotes sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products and services, creating incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (as recognized by the CBD). The work of the BioTrade Initiative spans around 80 countries, contributing significantly to both socioeconomic development and biodiversity conservation and generating increased revenue and market share for its beneficiaries, whether they are small and medium-sized enterprises (women and Indigenous Peoples) associations, cooperatives, or projects.

Trade guided by sustainability principles, like BioTrade P&C, supports achieving the KMGBF goals and targets and the SDGs



5. Role of trade agreements: Trade in biodiversity-based products has contributed to biodiversity loss. However, through appropriate policies as well as the inclusion of biodiversity provisions in RTAs, sustainable trade can incentivize sustainable practices that promote biodiversity conservation, economic diversification, rural development and social inclusion.

6. The importance of BioTrade in contributing to the achievement of the KMGBF targets: Although this paper demonstrated how BioTrade contributes to achievement of the KMGBF targets, UNCTAD's analysis of the national targets of 119 countries submitted as of 1 November 2024 revealed that only seven countries reported the complementary indicator featuring BioTrade P&C under KMGBF Target 5. This provides a clear opportunity for UNCTAD and its partners to raise awareness and understanding about the tools, technical assistance and capacity-building programmes available to member States as they prepare and/or report on their post-COP15 NBSAPs and their national targets, to include BioTrade, as well as trade and trade-related policies. Raising awareness and enhancing understanding of how TraBio can provide information for the KMGBF monitoring framework is also essential (see point 7 below).

7. Inclusion of BioTrade in the KMGBF and its monitoring framework:

The contribution of BioTrade to the achievement of the KMGBF and its monitoring framework could be enhanced by better using BioTrade insights. This includes data generated from the TraBio statistics tool, the work of the iWG on trade and biodiversity statistics, and information from BioTrade partners implementing the BioTrade P&C and related schemes. These data can help develop and report on indicators relevant for the KMGBF, as only three countries (Dominican Republic, Sierra Leone, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) could use TraBio data as part of their national targets under KMGBF Goal B as of 1 November 2024. It can also help design better and more coherent policies.

UNCTAD's continued work on trade and biodiversity, including through its BioTrade Initiative, is enhancing understanding about the importance of – and contributing to create a synergistic relationship between – biodiversity and trade and economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental health. UNCTAD will continue coalescing partners and providing support and capacity-building to member States, particularly developing countries, to undertake a comprehensive and coherent approach that aligns trade and trade-related measures to foster the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while simultaneously enhancing sustainable and social inclusion through its three pillars: consensus-building, research and technical assistance.



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