**Report on the Unlocking Global Gateway investments in nature and the green economy**

07 -10 July 2025, Borschette Conference Centre, Brussels

Context and objectives

The Unlocking Global Gateway investments in nature and the green economy brought together colleagues from headquarters, EU Delegations and external speakers to explore the evolving landscape of the environment, green economy and development. The workshop provided the latest updates on EU policies, examined new approaches to financing for nature, and addressed both opportunities and challenges in this field. Through interactive presentations and discussions, participants shared experiences, with a particular focus on the insights and realities facing EU Delegations. The event served as a valuable opportunity to network, exchange knowledge, and strengthen the Green Network of colleagues across institutions, equipping them with practical tools to support implementation.

The agenda included a strategic introduction and framing session, offering updates on the latest policy and programmatic developments from Brussels and fostering exchange with EU Delegations. Technical sessions covered financial instruments for nature and the green and circular economy, including guarantees, blending, Payments for Ecosystem Services, green bonds, nature credits, and natural capital accounting, as well as approaches to engage with the private sector. The workshop also addressed working in fragile contexts and examined how to deliver on the Green & Clean ambition of the Global Gateway through Nature-based Solutions, green infrastructure, Do No Harm, green corridors, and integrated landscape approaches.

We are grateful for the many interesting discussions and insights that took place this week, particularly on how to better involve the private sector and utilise financial tools for nature and the green and circular economy. It is essential that we continue to deepen this dialogue to ensure relevance and impact. In line with this, it remains a central objective that the environment and green transition are embedded within the Global Gateway.

Leveraging both private and public investment will be essential to scale up impact. This must be accompanied by the establishment of favourable policies, institutional capacities, and enabling frameworks, supported through the 360° approach. The Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle must remain a cornerstone of our efforts to achieve the Global Gateway’s Green and Clean ambition. Where possible, we should go further, striving for nature-positive outcomes.

Nature-based Solutions, as infrastructure or in conjunction with grey infrastructure, have been explored during the workshop as sustainable, resilient, and cost-effective approaches to delivering on Global Gateway objectives in a 360° manner. Supporting integrated approaches that combine economic development with nature preservation will be key, particularly by innovative financing mechanisms and the exploration of Payments for Ecosystem Services.

Participants also underlined the importance of highlighting the benefits of environmental action in fragile and conflict-affected settings. These settings present both unique challenges and vital opportunities to promote environmental resilience and stability.

Looking ahead, preparations will begin for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2034). The reflections and exchanges that have taken place throughout the week will help guide this transition and ensure that nature and sustainability remain central to our strategic planning.

Organisation and attendance

The ‘Unlocking Global Gateway investments in nature and the green economy’ workshop 2025 was a 4-day event organised by INTPA F2 for Delegations from INTPA countries. The workshop’s focus was on the latest updates on EU environmental policies, exploring the new approaches to financing for nature and the circular economy through interactive presentations, discussions and shared experience from EUDs and HQ.

The workshop was presented in a hybrid format with interpretation in French, Spanish and English. On average 70 people participated in person to each session. And on average, 30 people were connected online throughout. Colleagues came from forty-one Delegations, with the most coming from Africa, and then Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean (please find the list in Annex 1).

The sessions were made up of speakers from INTPA F2, other Commission services (including RTD, ENV, CLIMA and MOVE) as well as Delegation colleagues complemented the discussions with presentations and insights. The external speakers and experts provided a different perspective, with representation from the European Investment Bank, BIOFIN, Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Asian Development Bank, Arcadis, UDUMA, Water Europe, ENABEL, European Remanufacturing Council, International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT), Safari Bookings and the Virunga Foundation. The technical experts from the Switch 2 Green, Greening, B4Life, NDC, Forests 4 Future, Water and EU Energy facilities were also at the heart of discussions.

Concluding Remarks

We encourage all participants to stay in touch with the colleagues who presented this week, as well as with the different teams and facilities of our Green Deal Knowledge Hub. This network is here to support your work as we collectively advance the Global Gateway and the green transition. Please consider joining the Environment, Climate Change and Green Economy Capacity for Development group to access all the resources from the workshop and stay up to date with any future events and developments.

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# Introduction and Strategic Framing

**Aurelie Godefroy (INTPA F2), Nick Goetschlackx (INTPA F2), Luca Marmo (ENV F2) Kåre Johard (INTPA E2)**

The first session of the workshop presented different policy perspectives on the green transition. The session had two objectives: (a) reassure colleagues on the green course and (b) inform colleagues on recent policy developments.

Indeed, following the heyday of the Green Deal, there is a risk of green fatalism or policy despair among colleagues. However, the 57 colleagues that participated in the introductory Slido quiz remain generally positive:

* 67% remain convinced that multilateralism could be an effective tool, while 33% indicate that top-down multilateralism is working less and less.
* 58% believe the Commission is staying the course on the Green Deal in a pragmatic way, while 42% fear simplification is a euphemism for deregulation.
* 67% support the EU’s sustainability legislations as an integral part of our competitive offer; while 33% fear they are seen as EU protectionism by partners.

The subsequent panel discussions provided an overview of the good, the bad, and the ugly of environmental policy developments. Luca Marmo (ENV F2) presented the progress made in different COPs and the recent UN Ocean Conference. He also referred to difficult forthcoming negotiations on a global plastics treaty and UNEA-7. Nick Goetschalckx (INTPA F2) underlined the continuity from Green Deal to Clean Industrial Deal, also highlighting key developments around the European Water Resilience Strategy; and the forthcoming Updated Bioeconomy Strategy and Circular Economy Act. Kåre Johard (E2) focused on the rollout of sustainability legislations, such as CBAM, EUDR, CS3D, and ESPR. In the Q&A, EUD colleagues

Aurelie Godefroy (INTPA F2) concluded the session indicating that the green transition was never going to be a straight line forward. The scale of social, economic, and environmental changes requires a constant (re)balancing of interests, trade-offs, and politics. That is why this Commission is focused on implementation; on delivering results. For INTPA this means taking Global Gateway from start-up to scale-up, also for nature.

# Green and Clean principle of Global Gateway

**Bernard Crabbé (INTPA F2), Juan Palerm (Greening Facility), Eva Meyerhofer (EIB)**

The session on *Global Gateway’s Green & Clean ambitions* reaffirmed the European Union’s strong commitment to advancing the global transition toward low-carbon, clean, and circular economies. At the same time, it underscored the strategic importance of positioning the EU in priority, high-impact sectors such as mining, critical raw materials (CRMs), transport, and digital infrastructure.

Presenters opened the session by highlighting the triple planetary crisis and its increasingly harmful effects on human well-being, ecosystems, and economies. Citing the World Bank’s  [Global Risk Report](https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2025/) 2024, they noted that extreme weather events, biodiversity collapse, and resource scarcity are among the most significant long-term risks facing businesses globally.

In response to these growing challenges, the European Commission remains resolute in its pursuit of climate neutrality and environmental sustainability by 2050, objectives that are central to EU Founding Treaties and NDICI Regulation. The Global Gateway strategy plays a pivotal role in this vision, fostering low-carbon and circular economies while ensuring that all investments uphold the *Do No Harm* principle. Green and clean principles must be applied across all Global Gateway sectors, regions budget lines, programmes GG flagships and investments, from pipeline and project design to M&E.

The EIB intervention informed the participants on how Environmental and Social Standards (E&S) strategically enable sustainable finance by managing risks early, improving project outcomes, and promoting climate and nature goals. The standards are catalysts for green innovation and social inclusion in partner countries. However, on-the-ground support is essential to address significant ongoing challenges including limited local capacity, technical constraints, administrative burdens, contextual and environmental risks, as well as gaps in monitoring and enforcement.Support from theEU Delegations is especially encouraged in the early pipeline screening phase as their close relations with governments and institutions give them the upper hand compared to financing institutions.

**Take aways for discussion with the EU delegations:**

* High costs, lack of knowledge of available instruments, and competition (e.g., with China) can discourage public and private actors from investing in risky green and clean activities in the Global South.
* Many EUDs lack sufficient knowledge and technical capacity to engage effectively with Financial Institutions (FIs), international companies and business associations, as well as to internally assess pipelines, or promote green investments, highlighting the need for targeted training.
* At country level, fragmented communication between national ministries, local agencies, and implementing bodies can delay or derail green investment projects.
* EU support is not always considered an investment partnership, which hinders deeper engagement and ownership from local stakeholders and the private sector.

The session concluded with a call from the panellists for EU Delegations to actively engage with a range of available tools and resources:

* The [Greening EU Cooperation Toolbox](https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/spaces/ExactExternalWiki/pages/135299291/Greening+EU+Cooperation+Toolbox)
* The Facilities of the European Green Deal Knowledge Hub
* Upcoming Trainings: Laos regional training, 20-24 October; Brussels, Q1 2026; Ecuador regional training Q1 2026.

# National Public Finance

**Nadia Cannata (INTPA F2), Eric Deschoenmaeker and Gabija Zymonaite (INTPA E1), Onno van den Heuvel (BIOFIN), Ludwig Liagre and Anja Gasser (CIFOR- ICRAF), Katja Svensson (EUD Lesotho)**

This session was designed to provide:

* An overview of the role of the public sector in increasing finance to nature
* Concrete examples of different interventions that can boost the positive role the public sector can play in forests, biodiversity and water.

This session explored, through concrete examples in three different sectors, the type of interventions that can boost the positive role that the public sector can play. This session allowed to look at issues related to greening public finance management, working on taxation systems, improving the way public utilities operate and generate revenues and improving governance, legal frameworks, law enforcement as well as connectivity to create conducive business environment that catalyses investment expands financing opportunities.

The session started with a presentation of the European Commission approach and work on greening public finance management. The presentation consisted in sharing the strategies and policies and the type of actions that can be supported; it allowed to look at all levels of the budget cycle: Strategic planning, Budget preparation, Budget execution and accounting, Control and audit. The presentation also showed the type of support that the EU provides to greening PFM: policy dialogue, diagnostic tools, dedicated projects, international partnerships). A training is also designed and available on this matter.

During the discussions, colleagues confirmed the difficulty to work on public procurement and the limitation in the fiscal space to allow green investment. They also raised the issue of the different classifications among countries but also the different government levels of investments (from central to local governments).

This general presentation was followed by sector specific examples as follows:

**The Forest Sector:**

This presentation focused on the “national forests funds” which have the potential to unleash forest finance. The funds present the following features:

* Extra budgetary funds (more than one budget cycle) with objective to supporting conservation and sustainable forest resources
* Instrument is building on number of financing solutions, mobilising different sources (domestic, international, public, finance)
* Conservation trust funds: can be also used for forest restoration, conservation etc.
* Two underling principles: Polluter pays principle (fines, penalties, etc.) /Beneficiary pays principle (ecotourism revenues etc)
* Taxes can be used to bring funding (timber import, fuel tax, etc.)
* Several examples are working: FONAFIFO in Costa Rica; Moroccan Nat Forest Fund
* Use these funds to develop bankable projects with private sector. Partnerships to derisk investments and allow guarantees.

During the discussions, questions were raised about why fossil fuel revenues, especially in oil producing countries, are not used more to support this type of funds. Among the many reasons there is also a disconnect between Ministries of Finance and Ministries of environment in our partner countries. In several countries there is an interest in this type of funds, but they are still at theoretical stage. In order cases, colleagues shared that these types of funds were not successful as they did not target MSME but only big companies. In other countries there is a discouragement to use dedicated funds.

This presentation gave the opportunity to present the ongoing Mapping of Forest Finance with the EU has commissioned in 15 countries and that will generate a global report. This mapping is a preparatory work to a dedicated Financing for Forest Programme which will start in 2025.

**The Biodiversity Sector:**

The presentation focused on the BIOFIN programme, which receives EU funding. The presentation focused on: the BIOFIN methodology, the type of existing Alliances, the type of solutions identified. Examples were provided on how to work to increase revenues for national parks, how to engage with the private sector, on nature and infrastructure, innovative finance, repurposing subsidies. As this programme is expanding to more countries in this new phase, Delegation colleagues will be involved in country led activities.

**The Water Sector:**

For this sector, a colleague from Delegation Lesotho presented the approach they are supporting to water catchment management. Through the engagement with Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) this programme is implemented by the national ICM unit within the Ministry of Water with the intention to transform the ICM unit into an autonomous entity to more effectively engage all relevant line ministries – including forestry, energy and agriculture. The overall aim is to combat land degradation and to improve management of land and water resources in Lesotho. The coordination is ongoing, but the creation of the legal autonomous entity will take place once the water bill that is currently with Parliament has been enacted. The programme further foresees the creation of a fund for ICM activities, which includes private sector funds. Through the Commission engagement with ICM we are supporting a national movement – ReNOKA (we are a river) – with national ownership at local level as a crucial part. Additionally, a public-private partnership has been launched with Aranda – a leading manufacturer of traditional Basotho blankets. Two ReNOKA designs have been launched and 10% of all proceeds will go to ICM activities at community level.

# Nature-based Solutions and Nature Positive Investments

**Franz Huebner (INTPA F2), Susanna Goinfra (RTD B3), Yoko Watanbe, Alvin Lopez, Jennifer Romero-Torres, Klaus Prochaska (Asian Development Bank), Walid Fayad (B4life facility), Murray Bielder (Water Facility), Adriana Vega Sanchez, Geraldo Carriero (B4Life facility), Nijaz Dizdarevic (GTAF)**

The session on "**Nature-Positive Investments and Nature-based Solution (NbS) Infrastructure**" built on the earlier session “Global Gateway: Green and Clean Principle” and illustrated concrete pathways for going beyond the "Do No Significant Harm" (DNSH) principle toward actively delivering nature-positiveness as part of the EU’s Global Gateway offer and the 360-degree approach. It focused on three interlinked themes: Nature-Positive Investments, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), and Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

The session explored the concept of nature-positiveness and how a planned INTPA F2 action will enhance the "Investments in Regional Infrastructure" action in Sub-Saharan Africa. By providing additional resources, the action aims to strengthen the integration of biodiversity and environmental sustainability throughout the project cycle—through upstream pipeline engagement (e.g. enabling environments, strategic planning, early screening), improved design and assessment, sustainable procurement, and implementation approaches that benefit nature, economies, and communities (e.g. green corridors, landscape approaches, nature-positive sectors).

The session further framed ecosystem services and illustrated the potential of PES as a market-based mechanism that rewards service providers—such as farmers and communities—for conservation efforts. Case studies across agriculture, forestry, tourism, and urban planning demonstrated PES in practice, highlighting principles like conditionality, additionality, and the "beneficiary pays" model. A range of financing mechanisms were presented, from public and user-based funding to innovative instruments like outcome bonds and revolving funds.

A strong focus was placed on NbS-infrastructure as a sustainable, resilient, and cost-effective alternative—or complement—to grey infrastructure, enhancing the Global Gateway offer. DG RTD underlined the EU’s commitment to scaling up NbS through coherent policy integration, research support, and capacity-building initiatives. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) showcased NbS-based infrastructure projects across Asia that deliver climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and socio-economic co-benefits across various sectors. Drawing from experiences of ADB’s Nature Solutions Finance Hub (NSFH), ADB presented blended finance approaches—such as outcome bonds, PPPs, and revolving funds with a mix of public and private capital—that mobilise private capital while de-risking investment in nature-based projects like watershed and river basin management.

Breakout sessions deepened the discussion with case studies from Mauritius (water), Colombia (urban resilience), Indonesia (coastal protection), and Zambia (hydropower), complemented by a presentation from EUD Rwanda on the Volcanoes Community Resilience Project. The session concluded with a forward-looking announcement of the planned “Global Gateway NbS-Infrastructure Incubator” (2026), which will provide targeted support at country and project levels to operationalise nature-positive Global Gateway infrastructure investments globally.

# Sustainable Finance

**Pablo Villanueva Hullebroeck (INTPA F2), Alison O’Riordan (INTPA E4), Helene Beaghe (INTPA E3), Johann Lammerant (Arcadis)**

The session was the opportunity to update colleagues on 1/ main INTPA development regarding sustainable finance, notably the Global Green Bond initiative, 2/ policy developments under the due diligence directive and Corporate Social Responsibility directive, 3/ present the importance of natural capital accounting and valuation.

The **Sustainable finance Advisory Hub** included 3 pillars: sustainable finance frameworks, green bonds and other instruments. INTPA is supporting a large number of countries in developing taxonomies.

Designed to direct capital into sustainable projects in Low-and Middle-income countries, the **Global Green Bond initiative** includes the GGBI fund, technical assistance and the Green coupon subsidy facility.

The **Corporate Due Diligence Directive** will require companies to identify and assess adverse impact, cease, prevent or mitigate, monitor and report on impacts.

A Global Team Europe Initiative on sustainability in Global value chains is under preparation and will include a due diligence navigator and a platform for exchanges.

Companies are increasingly being called upon to not only make commitments but also take tangible actions to preserve nature. Another important approach is **natural capital accounting**. The presentation focussed on biodiversity measurement approaches and metrics for businesses and financial institutions.

# Carbon Markets

**Nadia Cannata (INTPA F2), Diana Guzman Barraza (NDC Facility), Gilles Dufrasne and Jop Weterings (CLIMA-Task Force International carbon pricing and markets diplomacy)**

This session aimed at sharing with colleagues:

* Knowledge about how carbon market work; and
* The current position of the Commission

In the presentation, participants were informed that carbon projects must follow three main principles: quantification, additionality and permanence.

* Additionality principle
  + 1. project must demonstrate that it needs monetary return to maintain project running.
  + 2. It must be additional so it cannot be a country issuing the carbon reduction as part of its law
* Issue of non-permanence: projects must be real, verifiable, and permanent
* Ownership: land and facility owner own the property of the carbon project. In case of NDC country can be buyers, but at times the offsetting happens in third countries. Contractual specifications define the beneficiaries (who receive the payments) e.g. communities, project developers, investors, etc.
* Corresponding adjustment is a mechanism under the Paris Agreement ensuring that when a host country sells carbon credits internationally, it must adjust its own emissions inventory to avoid double counting, meaning it cannot use those sold reductions toward its own NDC (risk of overselling).

The type of support that can be provided:

* Strategic analysis of the strengths and benefits
* carbon markets development and implementation ​
* NDC implementation plan​
* Marginal abatement cost curves: analysing the
* alternatives with costs/benefits

Regarding the priorities for the EU:

* Integrity over scale: high quality based on robust strategic approaches at the national level (Article 6 is new quality benchmark
* EU is not currently a credit buyer-> the EU might start buying carbon credits starting from 2036 useful to maintain expectation management as it has not been confirmed.
* Increasing interest from partner countries (caution is recommended)
* EU currently developing recommendations to support EUDS for the development of robust strategic approaches at national level and refraining from providing concessional support directly to activities that aim to generate carbon credits.​

EU approach:

* Priorities on EU support should be on building a robust strategic approach rather than providing financial support on specific projects requiring carbon credit financing. Support to help countries preventing overselling by keeping quick wins for NDC reporting and opening more challenging projects for international markets (robust strategic approach)
* Approach Article 6 strategically and holistically: getting it right takes significant effort to ensure integrity and readiness (e.g., NDC, LTS, modelling, MRV, registry, regulations, stakeholder engagement, capacity building).​
* Ensure Article 6 implementation is fair to host countries and communities > social safeguards (incl. FPIC), benefit sharing, sustainable development.

-> EUDs are invited to rely on the Task force international carbon pricing and markets diplomacy as well as the EU support Facility for NDCs

Discussion and Q&As with the EUDs:

Several questions were raised and examples from specific countries shared:

What risks arise if we're unaware of who the buyers are? A key risk is that competing economies may also be selling carbon credits. This could lead to unintended consequences, such as using public funds to lower carbon credit prices, benefiting large companies in meeting their sustainability targets without meaningful emissions reductions.

How can EUDs engage in dialogue with country and can they help assessing viable projects. Clear message from HQ for how to engage with local partners (in relation to carbon pricing). Support can be provided by helping to establish domestic carbon pricing (example from Brazil). Where not yet feasible, focus on stimulating demand and building market readiness. NB: Current internal mechanism: the EUDs can report their requests to INTPA, which then evaluates in collaboration to DGCLIMA. Following approval, the NDC facility can then provide technical assistance to strategically analyse different viable options. Challenge in ensuring the quality of carbon credit projects, EU standpoint is rather to strengthen strategic approach than engaging/financing projects.

If a EUD is engaging project including pilot initiatives in carbon sequestration. If EUD is involved in project that lists carbon credits as part of its revenue strategy, it becomes necessary to closely monitor and engage with task force to assess. Better coordination is necessary but for now assessment is done on a case-to-case basis.

Experience in a Redd+ project focused on forestry (deforestation reduction): large target in carbon credit market due to non-permanence issue thus recommendation to focus on less risky sectors. EU is mostly interested in high value credit rather than volume. Recommendation to focusing on strengthening frameworks and improving the strategic approach rather than direct investment.

China’s carbon credit market has not yet signalled intentions to buy or sell credits internationally and has not authorized the transition of past CDM credits into its current system. Instead, China is focused on developing an internal carbon pricing mechanism and prioritizing its domestic market over international trade. The application of CDM credits to large-scale Chinese energy plants raises questions about additionality, whether these projects truly require carbon credit financing or would generate revenues regardless of credit sales.

Member states are purchasing carbon credits according to their own voluntary frameworks rather than a unified EU framework, though there is interest in greater coordination. There is also a request to involve EU delegations in the development of the EU carbon credit strategy, but formal negotiations are not expected to begin in the near future.

# Nature Credits and Natural Capital Accounting

**Pablo Villanueva Hullebroeck (INTPA F2), Florian Claeys (ENV, D2), Walid Fayad (B4life facility)**

The European Commission has launched a Roadmap towards Nature Credits to mobilise private investment in biodiversity and ecosystem restoration. Nature credits are proposed as reward-based instruments to complement public funds, incentivising companies, institutions, and citizens to support measurable nature-positive actions as well as engagement with various stakeholders. The roadmap seeks to anchor pilot initiatives and connect them with policy development in Europe and outside, such as the pilot project in Peru, underscoring the importance to continue developing the international dimension. The B4life expert Walid Fayad presented a review of biodiversity credits highlighting that mobilising finance is key for closing the biodiversity funding gap. There are 50 different methodologies and standards, but biodiversity credits are not yet governed by a single, internationally recognised framework, therefore certain precautions must be considered.

Discussions underlined both opportunities and challenges. Nature credits can incentivise action in support of ecosystem services, resilience, and rural livelihoods, and offer options for countries with intact ecosystems that cannot benefit from carbon markets. However, as the market remains voluntary and unregulated, there are risks to consider including greenwashing and inconsistent standards. Strong EU involvement is required to establish robust certification, transparent methodologies, fair benefit sharing and safeguards to uphold integrity and EU values.

Delegation colleagues emphasised that biodiversity must be closely linked with food security, and that land tenure and agricultural livelihoods should be central to any nature credit framework. Ensuring that farmers and local communities benefit directly, through income diversification, improved soil health, and enhanced resilience, was highlighted as essential for long-term credibility. At the same time, Delegations reported ongoing engagement with stakeholders and early discussions on piloting nature credits schemes, signalling strong partner interest and concrete opportunities for EU collaboration.

Take-Home Messages:

* Treat current methodologies as work-in-progress.
* Ensure any support includes benefit-sharing, sound treatment of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), and social safeguards including strong fair prior and informed consent (FPIC) processes.
* Rely on guidance from both internal and external expertise for methodologies, metrics, permanence claims, additionality, safeguards, and high integrity.

Nature credits remain at an early stage but hold significant potential. Delegations can play a catalytic role by supporting credible pilots, ensuring safeguards, and contributing to the development of globally recognised standards in biodiversity finance. INTPA F2 are preparing with ENV lines to take for Delegations on biodiversity credits.

# Engaging with the private Sector: Water

**Arnaud de Vanssay (INTPA F2), Zoe Van den Bossche (INTPA F2), Marie-Charlotte Buisson (IWMI-GCEW), Bryan Fornari (EU Delegation Cambodia), Mikael Dupuis (UDUMA & Vergney Hydro), Durk Krol (Water Europe), Nicolas Chomel (EFCA)**

The session “Engaging with the Private Sector in Water” addressed the pressing need to close the substantial financing gap for achieving SDG 6, by mobilising private sector participation alongside public investments. Drawing on the work of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, it emphasised the importance of reframing water as a global common good and shifting towards more integrated, just, and sustainable water governance and financing models. It highlights the importance of water as an economic factor of development that needs to be properly valued. Case studies from India (subsidy reform for groundwater sustainability) and Ethiopia (privately led catchment rehabilitation for hydropower resilience) illustrated how financial and regulatory incentives can realign behaviours and deliver environmental and economic benefits.

A core focus of the session was placed on private sector entry points (and models) in the water sector value chain (source, storage & transfer, treatment, distribution, tap, sewerage, wastewater treatment, and reuse) and on diversifying sources of finance (moving beyond traditional sources), notably through sub-sovereign lending, direct lending, and credit enhancement models. The F2 Water - Water value chain Genially presentation was shared, highlighting several successful case studies with innovative and impactful models for private sector engagement across the entire water value chain. Interventions from the private sector (UDUMA & VERGNET HYDRO, EFCA, Water Europe) stressed that successful private sector engagement hinges on de-risking investments and making projects bankable. Result-based funding, policy reforms, management contracts or financial guarantees were identified as promising de-risking mechanisms.

All interventions agreed that while funding is essential, it is not sufficient on its own. Strengthening the governance of the water sector—through clear policies, effective regulatory implementation, performance standards, and benchmarking—is crucial to ensure transparency, accountability, and a stable environment that fosters investor confidence and long-term sustainability. The Cambodian Bakheng Water Supply Project, supported by the EU, EIB, and ADF exemplified this, demonstrating how policy reforms, transparent procurement, environmental safeguards, and capacity-building created the conditions needed to attract and sustain meaningful private sector engagement. Long term commitment and trust building were underlined as a critical part of the success.

Ultimately, the session underscored that private sector engagement in water must be rooted in long-term thinking, equity, and shared value creation—making water investments not only financially viable but also socially and environmentally sustainable.

# Engaging with the Private Sector: Circular Economy

**Bernard Crabbé (INTPA F2), Alexander Charalambous (Switch2Green Facility), David FITZSIMONS, (Director at the European Remanufacturing Council), EUD Zambia, Ernest Muwamba (TL GREENTech4CE), Rose Aurore LUNA LEAL (INTPA Unit B2 Mexico, Central America, Caribbean & Regional Operations), Lucia LACALLE (EUD Guatemala), Jane Feehan (Senior Investment Officer, Circular Economy EIB)**

The session on Circular Economy reaffirmed the central position of circularity in supporting the EU to reach both its competitiveness and environmental / decarbonisation ambition — making the link with the EU private sector. It provided EU Delegation and HQ colleagues with operational insights into how to engage with the private sector in promoting circular economy investments contributing to the Global Gateway and Clean Industrial Deal objectives.

David Fitzsimons (European Remanufacturing Council) made a strong case for private sector engagement, highlighting the EU’s frontrunner position in remanufacturing and material recovery. He outlined where EU firms can invest in partner countries, the sectors with high potential (e.g. electronics, machinery, secondary raw materials), and the support required — particularly around de-risking, clearer policy signals, and market support (notably through public procurement).

Speakers underscored the need to tailor EU support tools to local contexts and illustrated how this can be effectively achieved using value chain analysis, stakeholder mapping, and B2B engagement. Highlights included examples from Zambia, Guatemala, and Latin America & the Caribbean, ranging from mining equipment reuse and copper recycling, to addressing plastic waste at municipal level. Emphasis was placed on the importance of technical assistance, blended finance, and matchmaking platforms to enable EU business engagement (e.g. Business Fora). The European Investment Bank (EIB) on the other hand highlighted its [ongoing support for the circular economy](https://www.eib.org/en/projects/topics/energy-natural-resources/circular-economy/index) through direct financial support, technical assistance, partnerships building and [knowledge sharing](https://www.eib.org/en/publications/20240173-the-circular-economy-in-motion-2024).

Key lessons underscored the need for strategic engagement with both local and international financing mechanisms to strengthen business cases and attract investment. Circularity holds significant potential to reduce material costs, lower import dependency, foster innovation, build investor confidence, and lessen environmental impacts, particularly in high-risk sectors like mining.

Key takeaways for Delegations:

1. Strategy matters: The EU is a global pioneer in CE and must maintain its momentum. Delegations are encouraged to identify priority CE sectors where the EU offer is competitive and aligned with partners needs. Policy clarity is essential to incentivise private investment.
2. Tools are available: Instruments like the Circular Economy Resource Centre, the Clean Ocean Facility, and the SWITCH to Green Facility can support Delegations in advancing Circular Economy partnerships.
3. Operational partnerships: Operational partnerships (e.g. through business forums, municipal alliances) and on-the-ground innovation can elevate CE from the concept/start-up to scale-up/impact level. Existing pilot initiatives, regional experience, and Team Europe approaches need to be leveraged to scale impact.

The session concluded with a positive message on the importance of the work of EU Delegations, which can have a transformational impact on the economy by embedding circularity in public procurement, supporting secondary material markets, and catalysing strong political commitment and governance structures.

# Engaging with the private sector: Forest

**Patrice Moussy (INTPA F2), Caroline Duhesme (ATIBT), Peter Rowan (Forests 4 Future Facility), Bastian Koop (INTPA E5), Fadila Hamdane (EDFI)**

The session on Investing in Forests reaffirmed the role of private finance in delivering Global Gateway objectives for forests, and set out what the European Union brings to partner countries: (i) policy and regulatory support to create an enabling environment, and (ii) de-risking finance through EFSD+

INTPA set the scene by highlighting the gap in forest investment: Across the 7 Forest Partnership countries, the predicted need for financing in forests by 2030 is approximately €10 billion whilst current private sector committed investment amounts just €1.1 billion. He noted that capital accelerates where policy risk is reduced and bankable pipelines exist, and that the EU should enable long-term investment conditions by supporting fiscal reform to incentivise processing, industrial wood zones with services, energy and infrastructure, and vocational training and technology transfer.

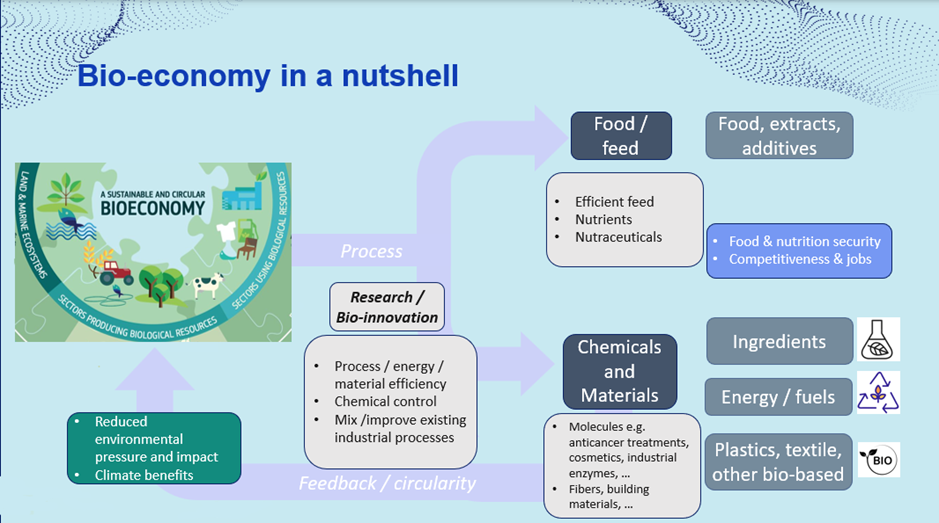
ATIBT illustrated market reality and private-sector needs with examples from Central Africa combining significant forest assets with a meaningful certified base and substantial employment, conveying a clear message that certified operators and SMEs will invest where infrastructure and enabling policy frameworks are in place, predictable taxation applies, and prior public investment, helps crowd-in private capital, alongside improved access to finance, tenure/benefit-sharing clarity, industrial partnerships and Technical Assistance for skills development (TA).

On instruments, the Commission and partners presented EFSD+ guarantees now available for nature and land-use: EDFI Carbon Sinks (€366 million) for long-tenor equity/quasi-equity into forest and regenerative-agribusiness platforms (with TA); DFCD Aya – Land-Use Facility (€105 million) for adaptation/mitigation via debt and equity.

Key takeaways for Delegations

1. **Use the tools with intent**: by matching pipelines to the right guarantee, Carbon Sinks for equity/quasi-equity platforms and out-grower models; DFCD Aya for mid-ticket adaptation/mitigation debt or equity; CFM when conservation-livelihood blends are central.
2. **Shape bankability early**: focus on predictable taxation and fiscal reform to incentivise processing, plan and service industrial wood zones, and address energy and infrastructure bottlenecks so proposals reach investment committees ready.
3. **Engage at the right moment**: build the EUD consultation step into each pipeline; convene B2B dialogues with likely off-takers; coordinate with INTPA F2 for potential market, governance and MRV inputs related to the Forest Partnership developments.
4. **Treat domestic markets** as a strategic growth area for tropical wood while maintaining export channels; reflect this in dialogue and programme design.
5. **Put SMEs at the centre**. Pair access to finance and guarantees with aggregation platforms and Technical Assistance for skills development (vocational training, apprenticeships, certification and technology transfer).

# Engaging with the private sector: Bioeconomy

**Aymeric Roussel (INTPA F2), Nick Goetschalckx (INTPA F2), Heloise Dubois (INTPA F2), Julien Chupin (Consultancy Julien Chupin), Geraldo Carriero (B4Life Facility)**

Policy Developments: 2025 Updated EU Bioeconomy Strategy to scale up investment in technologies, production systems, and bio-based materials. EU Bioeconomy Monitoring System to track high-value biomass solutions using sustainability indicators to guide investments and avoid negative impacts. Global policy developments (G20…). Growing number of national policies.

Economic potential: EU bioeconomy employs 17M people (17% of jobs). 70% of Africa’s economy depends on agriculture and forests.

Challenges: For European companies: Lack of visibility on available knowledge. Difficulty identifying competent authorities. Limited understanding of local governance. For actors in the Global South: Limited understanding of companies R&D goals. Lack of exposure to industrial R&D practices and IP frameworks. Weak access to finance & innovation platforms

Solutions for Partnerships:

* Facilitate matchmaking platforms, hubs, and incubators.
* Mobilize appropriate funding (EFSD+, biodiversity funds).
* Share best practices and success stories to build investor confidence.
* Train actors with practical tools (guides, contracts, checklists).
* Promote hybrid benefit-sharing models (co-ownership, open licensing).
* Strengthen understanding of ABS frameworks.
* Prepare SME investment pipelines and strategic plans for value chains.

Case Study – Gabon: Opportunities on forest ingredients for health products. Okoumé essential oils, Moabi oil, Iboga powder.

Discussion with EUDs: Strict EU rules on genetic material research limit collaboration. Need to build capacity in the South, strengthen ABS mechanisms, and expand fair partnerships to unlock potential.

# Navigating fragility and building resilience- the role of environmental action

**Niclas Gottmann (INTPA F2), Apostolos Nikolaidis (INTPA G5), Chantal Marijnissen (INTPA F2), Romain Calaque (B4Life Crisis Facility), Sabine Zwaenepoel (INTPA G5)**

CONTEXT

The world is grappling with an important increase in fragility. According to the OECD’s ‘States of Fragility 2025’ [report](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2025_81982370-en.html), 61 contexts around the globe are experiencing extreme or high levels of fragility. This encompasses 2.1 billion people and 72% of those experiencing extreme poverty. Until 2040, we could see this share rise to 92%.

MAIN MESSAGES

* Fragility: environmental and climatic factors are an important threat multiplier.
* Peace dividends: If employed purposefully, environmental initiatives can enable their emergence and support environmental peacebuilding efforts.
* Conflict-sensitivity: crucial in environmental- and climate action to avoid doing (further) harm in fragile settings.
* Long-term engagement: key to address root causes of fragility and build resilience – requires bespoke natural resource governance mechanisms supporting it.
* Flexibility: in design and budget of programmes/projects – important to respond and adapt to multi-dimensional fragility and sudden climatic or weather shocks (e.g. droughts, floods, storms) – context specificity must also be central to programme design.
* Data: improved and more concise data on environmental factors and conflict are needed to better identify potential hotspots and act proactively.
* Integration: participatory and inclusive approaches – e.g. to natural resource management – are paramount for operating at the climate-environment-peace-security nexus.
* Focus: on potentially impactful opportunities to maximise benefits of operationalisation of the climate-environment-peace-security nexus.

EUD CONTRIBUTIONS

Case examples from Nigeria, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, and Barbados.

NEXT STEPS

Setting up of informal INTPA (HQ & DEL) ‘Community of Practice’ on the Climate-Environment-Peace-Security Nexus. G5 and F2 central role in coordinating it.

# Nature Based Tourism

**Nadia Cannata (INTPA F2), Alexander Charalambous (Switch2Green), Anna Spenceley (Expert), Andrea Bacher (Expert), Matthijs Verberkmoes (Safari Office), Marlene Bartes (DG MOVE), Ana Pinto Fernandez (DG ENV)**

The Nature-Based Tourism (NBT) session provided a comprehensive overview of the newly launched EU NBT Value Chain Study, aimed at supporting EU Delegations in identifying, designing, and scaling nature-based tourism projects. The session emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism as a driver of green growth, biodiversity protection, and local development. The Garamba in the Democratic Republic of Congo served as a key example of how nature-based tourism can create a viable business case for conservation-linked investment.

The session featured a presentation from [www.safarioffice.com](http://www.safarioffice.com) , a digital platform linking European travellers with African tour operators. Initially launched as a free service to raise awareness among local providers, the platform successfully empowered small businesses to shift from B2B to B2C models, boosting revenues and transparency.

DG MOVE and DG ENV reiterated the EU’s commitment to promoting greener, more digital, and resilient tourism and invited delegations to participate in the upcoming consultations for the EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism on 15 August 2025.

DG MOVE and DG ENV jointly showcased a range of tools available to EU Delegations and partners, including the [EU Tourism Platform](https://transition-pathways.europa.eu/tourism) and the [EU Ecolabel](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel_en) certification. The EU Ecolabel, a third-party verified mark of environmental excellence, can be awarded to products, services and accommodations outside the EU if marketed to European tourists. Trusted by a growing number of consumers, it serves as a credible and effective standard for promoting environmentally responsible tourism services.

The panel discussion also addressed ongoing challenges for EU Delegations working in NBT, including limited digital capacity, infrastructure gaps in remote destinations, and the uneven distribution of tourism revenue, much of which is often retained by international intermediaries. Strengthening local regulatory frameworks, building digital skills, and fostering public-private partnerships are essential to expand market access and ensure more equitable benefits sharing.

Key takeaways for Delegations:

* Conducting a value chain analysis helps identify demand-supply gaps and opportunities and help inform investment decisions.
* There is no one-size-fits-all solution. The EU NBT VC Study offers a flexible framework to help EU Delegations design strategies aligned with local ecosystems, cultures, infrastructure, and market potential.
* Digital platforms support marketing, visitor management, data collection, and access to resources—especially in data-scarce environments. Close collaboration with the private sector actors, including tour operators and booking platforms, can unlock valuable data and steer tourism flows toward emerging destinations while relieving pressure on over-visited ones.

EU Delegations interested in engaging with SafariOffice are invited to contact Mr. Matthijs Verberkmoes at [matthijs@safarioffice.com](mailto:matthijs@safarioffice.com) .

# Green Corridor

**Chantal Marijnissen (INTPA F2), Gaia de Battista (Virunga Foundation), Jerome Gabriel (Virunga Foundation)**

The Green Corridor session highlighted that with the EU’s support over the last 30 years, has led to the Democratic Republic of Congo’s ambitious initiative to align large-scale nature conservation with economic development and social stability. Announced in 2025 by President Félix Tshisekedi, the Corridor spans over 540,000 km² and is home to 31.5 million people (an area the size of France) linking eastern DRC to Kinshasa. With more than 285,000 km² of intact forests and 60,000 km² of peatlands at stake, the project seeks to safeguard globally critical carbon stocks while addressing poverty, conflict, and underdevelopment.

Building on the Virunga Alliance model, which has demonstrated how conservation and inclusive economic growth can reinforce each other, the Green Corridor sets out a transformative agenda across four pillars, i) renewable electricity, ii) agro-industrial transformation, iii) sustainable transport, and iv) carbon financing. Case studies from North Kivu illustrate the potential with Virunga Energies having already installed 40MW of hydropower serving 140,000 people, while Virunga Development has established systems to process local cocoa, palm oil, and wheat, creating jobs, raising farmer incomes, as well as reducing deforestation pressures. Microfinance partnerships, such as Grameen Virunga, further empower households and small enterprises through innovative repayment schemes linked to energy access.

The financing strategy emphasises blended approaches with grants, concessional capital, equity, and project finance being complemented by guarantees and offtake agreements to de-risk investments in a fragile context. Carbon and biodiversity markets, for example, could be positioned as pivotal mechanisms to generate sustained revenues from deforestation that has been avoided.

It was underlined that while billions in capital are needed, long-term sustainability will be equally dependent on governance, transparency, as well as stakeholder collaboration. By combining conservation, industrial transformation, and inclusive finance, the Congo River Green Corridor hopes to become a model for green economic growth in fragile states.

# List of Delegations represented at the workshop

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Delegations** | | |
| **Africa** | **Asia and the Pacific** | **Latin America and the Caribbean** |
| INTPA.A.5.DEL.Angola  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Botswana  INTPA.A.DEL.Burkina Faso  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Burundi  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Cameroon  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Central African Republic  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Chad  INTPA.A.4.DEL.CONGO DEMOCRATIC REP  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Djibouti  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Gambia  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Ivory Coast  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Lesotho  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Liberia  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Malawi  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Mauritius  INTPA.A.DEL.Mozambique  INTPA.A.DEL.Niger  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Nigeria  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Rwanda  INTPA.A.3.DEL.Senegal  INTPA.A.4.DEL.Uganda  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Zambia  INTPA.A.5.DEL.Zimbabwe | INTPA.C.2.DEL.Cambodia  INTPA.C.3.DEL.China  INTPA.C.1.DEL.Kyrgyzstan  INTPA.C.2.DEL.Laos  INTPA.C.2.DEL.Nepal  INTPA.C.2.DEL.Pakistan  INTPA.C.3.DEL.Papua New Guinea  INTPA.C.1.DEL.Tajikistan  INTPA.C.2.DEL.Sri Lanka | INTPA.B.2.DEL.Barbados  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Colombia  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Costa Rica  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Guatemala  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Guyana  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Haiti  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Honduras  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Jamaica  INTPA.B.2.DEL.Mexico |