

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Call for Ideas: Strengthening Research Capacity in Biodiversity

#### What Capacities and Capacity-Strengthening Initiatives Are Needed to Implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)?

Biodiversity loss is one of the most pressing global challenges of our time, threatening ecosystems, economies, and livelihoods worldwide. In response, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) sets forth ambitious goals to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Achieving these goals requires strong institutions, effective policies, and sustainable financing mechanisms—yet to translate global commitments into actionable, country-level initiatives, a significant investment in domestic capacities is needed.

National *research capacity*—particularly at the intersection of biodiversity with various development domains such as trade, urban development, agricultural policies, human-wildlife conflict management, broader economic policy, and more—are among the critical areas requiring substantial investment and innovative approaches to achieve rapid progress.

The [Global Development Network](#), through the pilot edition of the [AFD-GDN Biodiversity and Development Awards](#) (2020–2025), analysed the challenges researchers face in mainstreaming biodiversity across the social and natural sciences. Research projects in Ghana, Madagascar, Vietnam, Fiji, and Ethiopia highlighted that:

- A **systems approach** to research capacity strengthening is essential. Challenges within broader research systems directly impact researchers' ability to focus on the biodiversity-development nexus. These include limited training, mentoring, publication platforms, and institutional support for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. Addressing these gaps requires strengthening the monitoring and analysis of research system trends and driving systemic change to advance national research capacity in biodiversity research.

- **Transdisciplinary research**—defined as the continuous effort to co-develop research questions, processes, and interpretations with the communities affected by the issues studied—is key to ensuring impactful and relevant biodiversity research. However, it remains underfunded and lacks adequate institutional incentives and frameworks. In this context, the growing movement for **open science** presents a valuable opportunity to also strengthen biodiversity research by promoting accessibility, collaboration, and knowledge sharing across society.
- Individual researchers and their projects, regardless of their quality and achievements, serve as building blocks within a broader infrastructure essential for advancing the implementation of the global biodiversity framework. To maximise their impact, they need strong institutional support—**organisations capable of hosting and funding** diverse and long-term **research agendas**, not just projects, and systematically **linking them to policy** discussions.

The Global Development Network (GDN) is actively collaborating with partners to build a movement aimed at tackling these challenges. As part of this effort, GDN seeks to gather insights, ideas, and analyses from stakeholders worldwide to identify practical pathways for better understanding and strengthening national research capacity in biodiversity. We call **biodiversity scholars, practitioners and policymakers**, irrespective of their affiliation, to participate in a global consultation and address the following questions :

- What capacity-building mechanisms are needed to strengthen government agencies, research institutions, and local organisations in biodiversity governance? What practical steps can kick-start them in your context?
- What successful partnerships (NGOs, universities, development agencies, private sector) have integrated biodiversity research into policy?
- What funding and sustainability strategies ensure long-term investment in biodiversity research? What successful national-international collaborations should be replicated?

The consultation results will be analysed and shared with all respondents and the general public. Participating institutions will have the first opportunity to review the findings and join the coalition to implement actions aimed at securing financial support through GDN and its partners.

Send your ideas and contributions to [biodiversity@gdn.int](mailto:biodiversity@gdn.int) by **May 16, 2025**.