

Forging of joined-up approach at COP29 and COP16 vital for urgent action for climate and nature, say scientists

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World leaders must take advantage of a pivotal window of opportunity for forging a much-needed joined-up approach to tackle climate change

and biodiversity loss, say scientists from ZSL and York University. Without this, work on tackling either crisis could inadvertently harm progress on the other.

[Published](#) 23 July in the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, a paper from international conservation charity ZSL and researchers at York University, Toronto, titled "The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement need a joint work program for climate, nature, and people" conceptualizes how a joint work program between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) could be established.

Highlighting the issues the joint program must tackle, and recommendations for successful implementation—the paper argues that such a unified political tool is critical to meet international commitments under both the Paris Agreement and the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

Professor Nathalie Pettorelli, who has long been calling for united solutions to tackle climate change and [biodiversity loss](#), is co-author of the paper and researcher at ZSL's Institute of Zoology said, "We urgently need a global approach that addresses the nature and climate crises together—because they are intrinsically connected.

"The UNFCCC and CBD are incredible platforms for providing the evidence to and guiding the way through the changes we need, but higher levels of integration between the biodiversity and climate change agendas are needed to plug implementation gaps.

"The upcoming Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC and CBD present a clear policy window for the two conventions to introduce a formal governance structure that brings together ideas, people,

organizations and processes necessary for joining the dots on how to both stabilize our climate and recover our nature."

World leaders will come together later this year for two global conventions to separately tackle climate change and biodiversity loss. In October, the CBD will meet in Columbia for the 16th United Nations Biodiversity conference (COP16). A week after its close in November, the UNFCCC will meet in Azerbaijan for the 29th United Nations Climate Change conference (COP29).

Nathalie added, "With the closely related policy agendas of the upcoming UNFCCC and CBD's COPs, negotiators have a key opportunity to take coordinated, bold and transformative action to deliver a new, more integrated and coherent approach to addressing the entwined nature and climate crises.

"The urgency is such that both conventions need to work together now, and take advantage of the many potential synergies we highlighted between climate change and biodiversity policies to change humanity's course towards a sustainable future."

Government representatives at COP16 will be tasked with assessing the state of implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which was adopted in 2022, outlining a path for humanity to live in harmony with nature by 2050—with goals including halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.

Discussions during COP29 will be key in progress towards the landmark [international treaty](#) to limit global temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, known as the Paris Agreement.

Climate change and biodiversity loss are [inherently interconnected](#); rapidly changing conditions drive the loss of species and the subsequent

breakdown of ecosystems across the world—however healthy, functioning ecosystems are absolutely key to tackling climate change and mitigating its impacts.

Professor Idil Boran, co-author and researcher at York University's Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Toronto said, "The world is currently at a crossroads. World leaders have signed international treaties that commit them to take action to address these two crises—but there is currently a massive gap in the tools available to ensure this action is unified.

"We need a program that fills these gaps, identifies areas where climate actions may harm to biodiversity, provides clear recommendations and develops methods to monitor progress on shared goals.

"Without this, we risk action to tackle one crisis creating major setbacks for the other. For example, the replacement of natural grasslands with forests may help capture and store planet-warming carbon dioxide, but it does so at a cost of the ecosystems and wildlife that previously used the land."

Properly implemented Nature-based Solutions (NbS)—natural systems that help achieve societal goals—tackle climate change and biodiversity loss simultaneously, while also bringing benefits to people. For example, the restoration of [mangroves](#) not only helps with carbon storage, but also protects the homes of species such as Endangered Bengal tigers and Critically Endangered Philippine cockatoo, and provides food and resources for local communities.

The paper also calls for the vital need for the reallocation of resources to address imbalances in funds and support available for action to address climate change in comparison with biodiversity loss.

Nathalie added, "There is a wider need for world leaders to ensure they're putting nature at the heart of their decision making. Functioning ecosystems aren't just important for addressing rapid climate change—losing them impacts every aspect of our lives, from food security to access to clean water. We need these to be recognized and conservation to receive the resources needed for it to be part of the solution towards tackling [climate change](#) and championing human well-being."

More information: The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement need a joint work programme for climate, nature, and people, *Journal of Applied Ecology* (2024). [besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley ... 1111/1365-2664.14721](https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.14721)

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