



EU BUSINESS AND BIODIVERSITY (B@B) PLATFORM

Activities Report 2015

The EU Business and Biodiversity (B@B) Platform allows the European Commission to work directly with companies and financial institutions, giving them the opportunity to showcase and develop their work related to biodiversity. The Platform is also a powerful tool for making the business case for investments for biodiversity, which is in line with the Commission's green growth objectives. So far, after one year of activity the Platform has attracted over 250 organisations including +20 multinational companies, +100 SMEs and numerous NGOs from over 10 Member States. Most importantly, many of the multinationals and SMEs are actively working with the Commission on delivering on the Platform's workstreams.

Candidates can apply for different membership status. Businesses/financial institutions are able to participate as general observers, or as full members (full membership is not applicable to NGOs) who actively participate in one or more of the following three workstreams:

- Accounting for Natural Capital
- Innovation for Biodiversity and Business
- Access to Finance and Innovative Finance Mechanisms

The following paragraphs provide a summary of the 2014-2015 results of each Workstream.

Accounting for Natural Capital

The Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) workstream aims to help companies identify best practice guidance and tools available to support informed business decisions related to the environment and the development of natural capital accounting systems.

During the year [2014](#)¹, the Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) workstream's aim was to develop a decision framework and set of principles to help companies determine what form of NCA to adopt, and identify the best practice guidance and tools available to support them. The approach was piloted by volunteer companies.

In [2015](#)², the workstream explored the links between public sector and private sector NCA. The aim was to map business and financial institution NCA applications and approaches compared to how governments and policy makers use NCA (e.g. for taxes, PES, land use planning). The intention was also to address data links i.e. how/what data businesses and financial institutions can provide to the public sector and vice-versa, as well as on the possible data links and exchanges between businesses and financial institutions. A workshop was organised bringing together Member State representatives, financial institutions and businesses to discuss NCA applications and cooperation on data links and data sharing.

Innovation for Biodiversity and Business

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream1-natural-capital-accounting/2014-output_en.htm

² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream1-natural-capital-accounting/2015-output_en.htm

The Innovation for Biodiversity and Business workstream's objective is to promote innovations that contribute to nature protection by sharing best practices of innovative companies – including SMEs – and business models and identifying opportunities for fostering new business models.

In [2014](#)³, the Innovation workstream's objectives focused on three main aspects:

- Showcase innovative business models and companies involved in green infrastructure and ecological restoration (though other relevant business innovations might also be showcased);
- Identify priorities for further research on critical issues relating to these innovations and opportunities for their further development;
- Analyse opportunities at EU level to foster new business models, such as benefit corporations, which might contribute to nature and biodiversity objectives.

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In [2015](#)⁴, the Innovation workstream will collect additional cases of innovations to add to those collected in year 1, with a focus on Public Private Partnerships and other partnership models. A subset of 'most promising' partnership models (in terms of benefit to nature and benefit to business) will be analysed using cost-benefit analysis and involving an assessment of scalability, feasibility and potential benefits to business and to nature.

Access to Finance and Innovative Finance Mechanisms

The Finance workstream seeks to demonstrate the benefits to business of biodiversity-related investment. The workstream provides opportunities for businesses, including SMEs, to showcase financing schemes for biodiversity and champions in the finance sector who are funding biodiversity related projects or who are using nature-related criteria for financing decisions.

In [2014](#)⁵, the Finance workstream's objectives were the following:

- Identify and profile biodiversity investment opportunities (e.g. pro-biodiversity business/certified products; biodiversity offsetting and habitat banking, PES schemes and bio-carbon markets, financial services);
- Identify funds and financial instruments supporting investment in biodiversity in the EU and worldwide; and
- Identify key actors in the financial sector championing integration of biodiversity into investment decisions.

In [2015](#)⁶, the Financing workstream developed a more detailed analysis of financial needs and opportunities in key areas of biodiversity action (certified products, offsets, green infrastructure, Payment for Ecosystem Services, biodiversity friendly businesses). The role of different sources of

³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream2-innovation-for-biodiversity-and-business/2014-output_en.htm

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream2-innovation-for-biodiversity-and-business/2015-output_en.htm

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream3-access-to-finance-and-innovative-finance-mechanisms/2014-output_en.htm

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/workstreams/workstream3-access-to-finance-and-innovative-finance-mechanisms/2015-output_en.htm

private and public sector finance, including EU funds, in addressing these needs and opportunities were also examined.