

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

UN Biodiversity Lab Sets Out on a Data Mission To Protect People and Planet

Insights from spatial data and analytics can inform evidence-based decisions for people and the planet. As the latest addition to the digital public good registry, UN Biodiversity Lab is demonstrating the value of providing open spatial data as a digital public good that can benefit everyone.

New York, 10 October 2022: The [UN Biodiversity Lab \(UNBL\)](#), an innovative spatial data analytics platform, is now a [digital public good](#), facilitating open access to spatial data that can inform environmental evidence-based decisions.

Designed to aid policymakers in identifying and addressing pressing issues related to conservation and sustainable development, UNBL is a key resource available in the [digital public goods registry](#) – a globally recognized list of digital public goods (DPGs).

DPGs are defined as open-source software, open data, open AI models, open standards, and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable best practices, do no harm by design and are of high relevance for attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. In effect, this designation recognizes UNBL's role in bringing together 400 of the world's best global spatial data layers from more than [40 data providers](#) for use in research, policymaking, and innovative software applications, based on the terms of use from the data providers who generate this wealth of knowledge.

Following its initial development in 2018, an updated UNBL 2.0 was [launched in 2021](#) as a free, open-source platform by the [Secretariat of the UN Biodiversity Convention \(CBD\)](#), [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\)](#), the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#), and the [United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre \(UNEP-WCMC\)](#).

"Data is the lifeblood of the societies of today and the future - that includes revealing new insights that can drive climate action and restore our natural world," says UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner. "By providing open access to spatial data sets and real-time analytics as a digital public good, the UN Biodiversity Lab aims to spur much-needed efforts by countries and communities to protect our planet's irreplaceable biodiversity and spur progress across the Global Goals."

PRESS RELEASE

UNBL is powered by [Impact Observatory](#) and the [Planetary Computer](#), which are leaders in producing technological innovation to support state-of-the-art infrastructure and user-centric design. The platform collates high-quality national and global spatial data on biodiversity to generate insight for action. Its recognition as a digital public good means it adheres to privacy and other applicable laws and best practices, and does no harm by design. These attributes encourage its greater utility as a safe and trusted platform that countries can adapt to build their own digital public infrastructure.

UNBL assists stakeholders in monitoring and understanding the impacts of biodiversity loss, as well as recommending where action should be taken to protect, manage, and restore nature based on evidence-backed, high-quality data.

“The health of our natural and human systems will determine the future of our societies, economies, and planet. UNBL enables us to harness spatial data to increase transparency on the state of our planet and to generate insights about where to prioritize action for nature that delivers powerful dividends for climate action and sustainability,” said Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director.

With the shift towards digitalization across countries, there has been an increased demand as well as uptick in the development of digital data analytics platforms. [UNBL's stewardship by UN-based actors](#), its emphasis on the intersection between nature and nature-dependent development, and its focus on supporting countries in their commitments to the UN Biodiversity Convention distinguishes it as an open-source resource designed for the public good.

“The world is set to come together in December to agree on new global biodiversity targets that will shape action for nature in this critical coming decade. UNBL will be a critical tool to support Parties around the world to use the power of spatial data for planning, implementation, and monitoring of this post-2020 global biodiversity framework based on their unique national needs and context,” stated Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary of the UN Biodiversity Convention.

Past and current UNBL donors include the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark](#), [Government of Flanders](#), [Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#), [Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation](#), [Microsoft](#), [One Earth](#), [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency \(Sida\)](#), and [Swedish Postcode Foundation](#). UNBL would like to thank its [data providers](#) without whom this designation as a DPG would not be possible. UNDP's digital public goods work is supported by the Government of Norway as part of UNDP's leadership role in the Digital Public Goods Alliance.

- ENDS -

PRESS RELEASE

For Media Inquiries:

Victor Garrido Delgado, Media Analyst, UNDP. Email: victor.garrido.delgado@undp.org, tel: +12129065310

Keisha Rukikaire, Head of News and Media, UNEP. Email: rukikaire@un.org, tel: +254 722 677747.

David Ainsworth, Information Officer, CBD Secretariat. Email david.ainsworth@un.org, Tel +1 514 561 2720.