

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Biodiversity Conservation Goals

Maura Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca Tepper
Secretary

Thomas O'Shea
Commissioner



Appendix A: Global and National Context

International Context

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity & Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

The United Nations [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#), formed in 1993, convenes 196 nations with three main objectives: conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of biological diversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of genetic resources. The [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(GBF\)](#) was adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2022.

In the face of a precipitous decline in biodiversity and ecosystem health that puts over one million species at risk, the GBF sets four main goals for 2050 and twenty-three action-oriented global targets for 2030 to initiate progress towards the 2050 vision. The historic framework reflects years of negotiation and sets an ambitious pathway to achieve harmony with nature by 2050. The United States of America is the only nation, other than the Vatican, that has not joined the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). While the U.S. hasn't adopted the Global Biodiversity Framework, the country has set targets such as conserving 30% of lands, waters, and seas by 2030 (30x30). Global targets for 2030 include conservation of 30% of the Earth's lands, waters, and seas, restoration of 30% the planet's damaged ecosystems, halting species extinction and protecting genetic diversity, and minimizing climate impacts and while building resilience. Targets include ensuring sustainable wild harvest, agriculture, water use, and management of fisheries; reducing pollution and invasive species; creating urban greenspaces; and restoring nature's contributions to people. Additionally, the GBF calls for integrating biodiversity conservation in decision-making at every level, creating positive incentives for biodiversity conservation, and mobilizing over \$200 billion per year for biodiversity from all available sources, including \$30 billion through international finance. Targets prioritize justice—calling for full, equitable, inclusive representation and participation in decision-making by Indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities.

In adopting the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022, all Parties committed to setting national targets to implement it. In October 2024, the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) took place in Cali, Columbia and Parties and aimed to transform the commitments into actionable plans and track progress toward national targets. The [High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People](#) is a group of 120 countries united by a shared ambition to implement the GBF goal of effectively conserving and restoring at least 30 percent of the world's land and ocean by 2030. At COP15, the dedicated task force was launched, under the leadership of Quebec and California, to support the effective implementation of 30x30 at the subnational level to enhance collaboration, boost capacity, and provide technical assistance. In 2024, Massachusetts joined The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People Subnational Government Task Force, the second state in the country to do so after California.

European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

The [European Union Biodiversity Strategy](#) for 2030, published in May 2020, describes the threats that development, overexploitation, pollution, climate change, and invasive species pose to biodiversity and ecosystem health. The Strategy commits the EU and its member states to over [100 actions](#) by 2030. It sets a target of legally protecting 30% of the EU's lands and 30% of its seas and integrating ecological corridors as part of a [Trans-European Nature Network](#). It also outlines actions to set legally binding nature restoration targets, reverse pollinator declines and chemical pesticide use, remediate contaminated soils, restore freshwater ecosystems, reduce invasive species, support urban greening, activate business and financing in support of biodiversity, and establish a new EU biodiversity governance framework.

National Context

America the Beautiful Initiative

In the 2021 [Executive Order No. 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#), President Joe Biden issued a call to action that we work together to conserve, connect, and restore at least 30% of U.S. lands and waters by 2030, for the sake of our economy, health, and well-being. This directed federal agencies to develop goals and strategies toward this collaborative conservation vision.

In 2022, the Biden-Harris Administration launched the \$1 Billion [America the Beautiful](#) Initiative, a decade-long challenge to pursue a locally led and voluntary nationwide effort to conserve, connect, and restore the 30% lands, waters, and wildlife upon which we all depend by 2030. The America the Beautiful Challenge is anchored by an initial commitment of \$440 million of Federal resources over the next five years to a new streamlined public-private grant program, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), to accelerate progress toward this vision and support locally led ecosystem restoration projects. NFWF will leverage initial Federal commitments, supported by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), from the Department of the Interior (DOI), Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Department of Defense (DOD) to raise additional philanthropic and private support, with the goal of directing at least \$1 billion in grants to communities over the next five years. The initiative prioritizes collaborative, locally led conservation projects, landscape-scale and watershed-scale approaches, climate resilience, wildlife corridors and connectivity, equitable access, workforce development, and honoring Tribal sovereignty and supporting the priorities of Tribal Nations.

In 2023, Massachusetts received over \$8 million through the America the Beautiful Initiative to conserve and restore biodiversity in two globally-significant biodiversity hotspots, the Appalachian Mountain Corridor and the Southeastern Massachusetts Pine Barrens. The first project will restore the site of a former cranberry bog; expand aquatic connectivity; build ecosystem resilience of pine barrens, woodlands, shrublands, and sandplain grasslands; and improve ecological function of coastal plain ponds. This effort will engage landowners and collaborate with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and other partners to complete large-scale restoration and build capacity for future conservation throughout the imperiled southeastern pine barrens of Massachusetts. The second project will restore aquatic connectivity within three river basins in the Appalachian Highlands and reconnect wildlife corridors from the southern Berkshires to the Connecticut River Valley to enhance habitat and critical connections between two key tributaries and provide critical habitat for numerous imperiled species, including the dwarf wedge mussel and shortnose sturgeon.

California 30x30 Initiative

In October 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued the [Nature-Based Solutions Executive Order N-82-20](#), advancing biodiversity conservation as an administration priority and elevating the role of nature in the fight against climate change. As part of this Executive Order, California committed to the goal of conserving 30% of its lands and coastal waters by 2030. In April 2022, the state launched the [California Pathways to 30x30 Initiative](#), to protect and restore biodiversity, expand access to nature, and mitigate and build resilience to climate change. This effort drives and

aligns with broader state commitments to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; strengthen tribal partnerships; and sustain economic prosperity, clean energy resources, and food supply.

California's strategy to conserve an additional six million acres of land and half a million acres of coastal waters to reach 30x30 is organized into ten pathways: 1) accelerate regionally led conservation; 2) execute strategic land acquisitions; 3) increase voluntary conservation easements; 4) enhance conservation of existing public lands and coastal waters; 5) institutionalize advance mitigation; 6) expand and accelerate environmental restoration and stewardship; 7) strengthen coordination among governments; 8) align investments to maximize conservation benefits; 9) advance and promote complementary conservation measures; and 10) evaluate conservation outcomes and adaptively manage. Each of these pathways identifies specific state actions to achieve 30x30, and highlights partnerships beyond state government as essential to success of this initiative.

Vermont Community Resilience and Biodiversity Protection Act

The [Vermont Community Resilience and Biodiversity Protection Act](#) (CRBPA), which went into effect in July 2023, establishes a goal of conserving 30% of Vermont's total land area by 2030 and conserving 50% by 2050. The Act calls for Vermont to maintain an ecologically functional landscape that sustains biodiversity, maintains landscape connectivity, supports watershed health, promotes climate resilience, supports working farms and forests, provides opportunities for recreation and appreciation of the natural world, and supports the historic character of the state. It calls for an inventory of land currently conserved in the state and of the state's existing land conservation policies by July 2024. It also requires a plan with a comprehensive strategy for achieving the vision and goals of the Act by the end of 2025.

Maine Won't Wait

In 2020, Maine Governor Janet Mills released [Maine Won't Wait](#), a four-year plan for climate action. One of the strategies outlined in the plan is to protect natural and working lands and waters by increasing conserved lands in the state to 30% by 2030. This recognizes the threats of climate change and development on Maine's natural and working lands and waters, which are key to achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. It directs the state to prioritize conservation of high biodiversity areas to support ecosystem health and land and water connectivity.