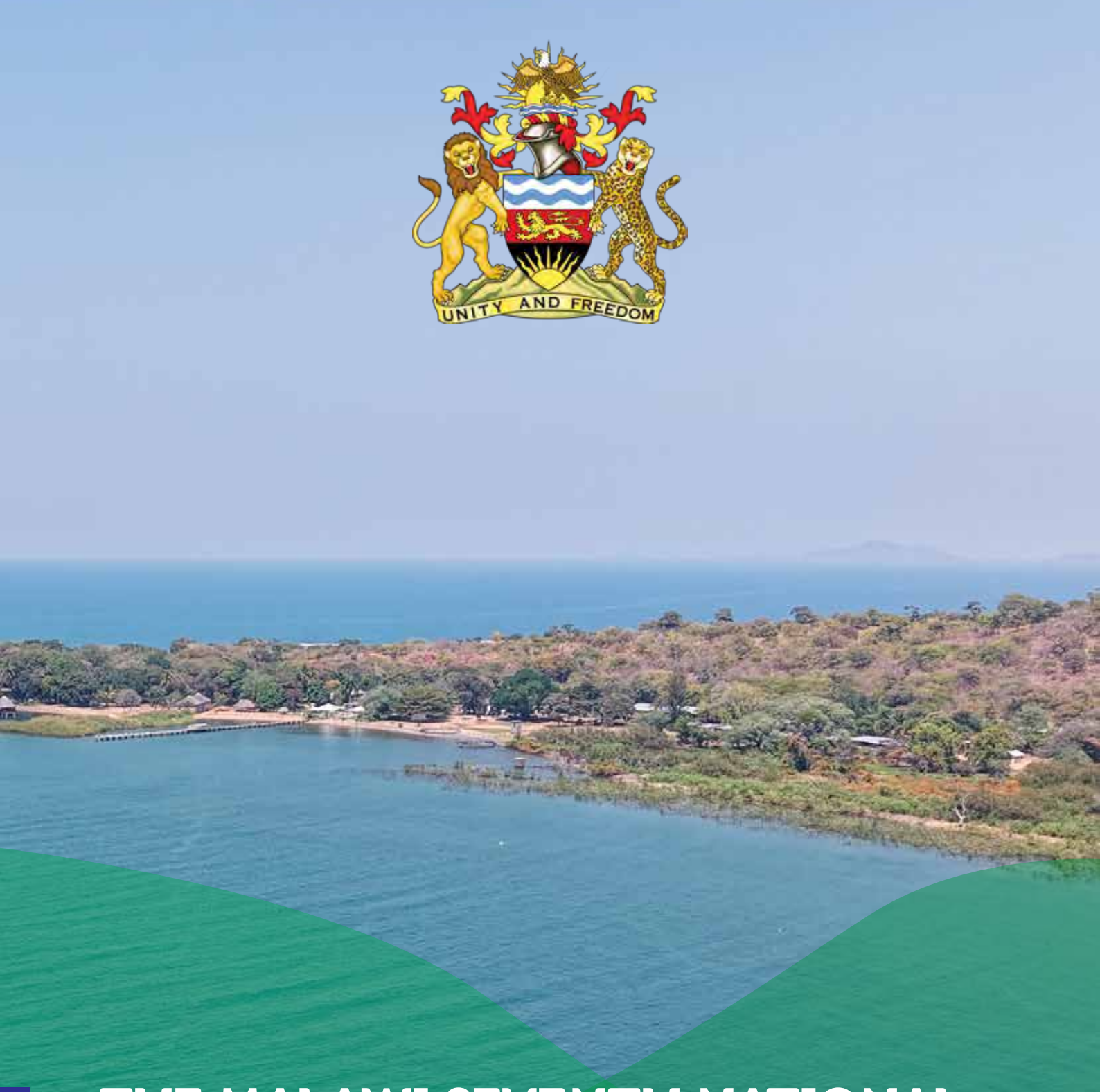


THE MALAWI SEVENTH NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

FEBRUARY **2026**

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Foreword

The Government of the Republic of Malawi presented its Seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in fulfilment of its obligations under Article 26 of the Convention. This report provides a comprehensive assessment of Malawi's progress in implementing the Convention and advancing the goals and targets of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and the Third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPIII).

Malawi's biodiversity remains a vital national asset underpinning sustainable development, economic growth, and the well-being of its people. Our ecosystems provide essential services, including food production, water and climate regulation and cultural values. Recognizing this, the Government continues to prioritize biodiversity conservation as a cornerstone of national development planning.

This report demonstrates that Malawi is making notable progress towards its national biodiversity targets. Key achievements include the advancement of ecosystem restoration initiatives, increased application of participatory and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning, expansion and improved management of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and strengthened efforts to reduce human–wildlife conflict. These efforts are complemented by ongoing reforms in policy, legal, and institutional frameworks aimed at enhancing sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity.

Importantly, the report reflects Malawi's commitment to inclusive and participatory approaches, with meaningful engagement of local communities, women, youth, civil society, academia, and the private sector. Such collaboration is essential to ensuring that biodiversity conservation delivers equitable and lasting benefits.

Notwithstanding the progress made, Malawi continues to face significant challenges, including inadequate financial and technical resources, data and knowledge gaps, climate change impacts, and increasing pressure on natural resources driven by population growth and competing land uses. Addressing these challenges will require strengthened partnerships, innovative financing mechanisms, enhanced capacity-building, and sustained integration of biodiversity considerations across all sectors of the economy.

The Government of Malawi reaffirms its strong commitment to the full implementation of NBSAP III as a key instrument for advancing the KMGBF and contributing meaningfully to global biodiversity goals. It remains resolute in its efforts to conserve, restore, and sustainably use biodiversity for the benefit of present and future generations.

Lastly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all stakeholders who contributed to the preparation of this report and to the ongoing stewardship of Malawi's natural heritage. I also extend special recognition to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for its financial support, which has been instrumental in facilitating the preparation of this report.

Hon. Patricia Wiskes, MP.
MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES





Preface

The Seventh National Report of the Republic of Malawi to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has been prepared in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention, which requires Parties to report on measures taken for the implementation of the Convention and their effectiveness in achieving its objectives. This report provides a comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of Malawi's progress in implementing the Convention and advancing the goals and targets of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

The report draws on the most recent data, national indicators, and relevant assessments to evaluate progress toward national biodiversity targets as outlined in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPIII), as aligned with the Global Biodiversity Framework. It also integrates information from related national processes, including sustainable development goals reporting and other environmental agreements to provide a holistic view of implementation efforts and outcomes.

The preparation of this report has been guided by internationally agreed reporting frameworks and has involved extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including government institutions, academia, civil society, and development partners. This inclusive and participatory approach has ensured that the report reflects diverse perspectives, strengthens national ownership, and enhances the credibility and relevance of the findings.

While the report highlights notable progress in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, it also identifies key challenges, gaps, and priority areas that require further attention. These insights are intended to inform policy development, strengthen implementation mechanisms, and support the continuous improvement of national biodiversity strategies and actions.

Further to fulfilling a reporting obligation, this document serves as an important tool for learning, reflection, and strategic planning. It is expected to guide future interventions, enhance coordination across sectors, and support Malawi's efforts to meet its national and global biodiversity commitments. Ultimately, the successful implementation of the priorities identified in this report will depend on sustained commitment, strengthened partnerships, and adequate financial and technical support. The Government of Malawi remains committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to conserve, restore, and sustainably use biodiversity for the benefit of present and future generations.

Misheck Y. Munthali, PhD
SECRETARY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES



Acknowledgment

The preparation of Malawi's Seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was made possible through the collective efforts and commitment of a wide range of stakeholders. The Government of Malawi, through the Environmental Affairs Department, extends its deepest appreciation to all institutions, organizations, and individuals who contributed their expertise, and time to this process.

We acknowledge the valuable inputs from government ministries and agencies, academia, civil society organizations, local communities, women, youth, and the private sector, whose participation ensured that the report reflects diverse perspectives and national priorities. Special recognition is given to the technical experts and task teams who coordinated data collection, analysis, and validation, thereby strengthening the credibility and relevance of the findings.

We are grateful to our development partners, particularly the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for their financial support, and the Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity whose technical assistance and guidance were instrumental in the successful completion of this report.

Tawonga Mbale-Luka
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

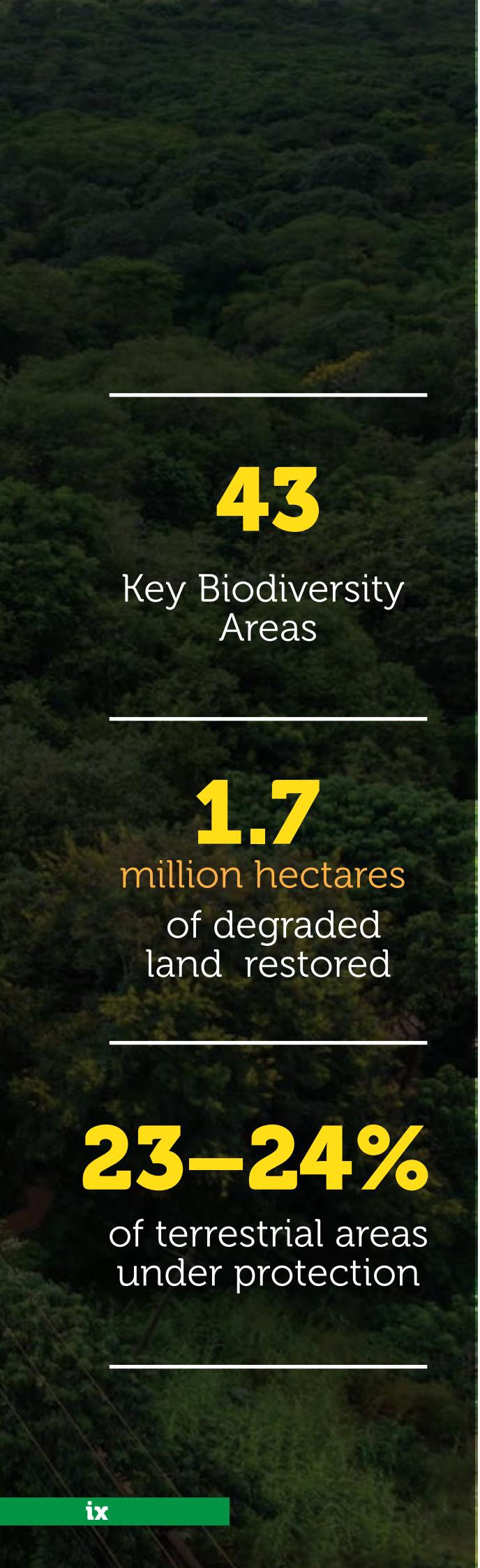
Executive Summary



The Malawi's Seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) presents a comprehensive assessment of the country's progress in implementing the Convention and advancing the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). It evaluates progress towards national biodiversity targets, highlights key achievements, identifies persistent challenges, and outlines priority actions required to accelerate implementation.

The report was developed through a participatory and inclusive process coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department, involving government institutions, academia, civil society, the private sector, and development partners. A multi-sectoral task team was established to compile and validate data across thematic areas, ensuring a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. A national validation workshop further strengthened the accuracy, relevance, and ownership of the report.

Overall, implementation of national biodiversity targets shows encouraging progress. Several targets, particularly those related to spatial planning, ecosystem restoration, and human-wildlife conflict mitigation are on track, while others require accelerated efforts.



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Key Biodiversity Areas

1.7

million hectares

of degraded land restored

23–24%

of terrestrial areas under protection

Key Achievements

Key achievements include:

- Improved biodiversity planning and knowledge systems:
- Malawi has identified 42 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), conducted ecosystem mapping aligned with global standards, and advanced Red List assessments for ecosystems and species, strengthening the scientific basis for conservation planning.
- Ecosystem restoration at scale:
- Approximately 1.7 million hectares of degraded land have been restored through initiatives such as AFR100, community-based restoration, and landscape-level programmes, contributing to climate resilience and ecosystem recovery.
- Expansion and diversification of conservation approaches:
- About 23–24% of terrestrial areas are under protection, complemented by growing recognition of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), including community conservation areas and village forest reserves.
- Reduction of human-wildlife conflict:
- Innovative measures such as electric fencing, early warning systems, and community engagement have reduced wildlife incursions and improved coexistence in hotspot areas.
- Strengthened species and genetic resource conservation:
- Wildlife translocations, fish sanctuaries, and ex-situ conservation efforts have enhanced species recovery and genetic diversity.
- Enhanced legal and institutional frameworks:
- Stronger laws and enforcement mechanisms have contributed to reduced illegal wildlife trade and improved regulation of natural resource use.



Despite these achievements, progress remains uneven and several systemic challenges persist. These include:

- Limited financial resources and investment gaps, constraining field operations, monitoring, and enforcement.
- Data deficiencies and weak information-sharing systems, particularly for under-studied taxa and ecosystem conditions.
- Human capacity constraints within institutions responsible for biodiversity assessment and management.
- Ongoing habitat loss and degradation, driven by agricultural expansion, deforestation, and population pressure.
- Climate change impacts, exacerbating ecosystem vulnerability and complicating conservation efforts.
- Policy and institutional fragmentation, leading to conflicts between conservation objectives and development priorities.
- Emerging threats from invasive alien species and unsustainable resource use.

The report highlights the importance of community-based natural resource management, indigenous and local knowledge systems, and public private partnerships as critical enablers of successful biodiversity conservation. It also underscores strong linkages between biodiversity action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to climate action, food security, water security, and poverty alleviation.

Key Recommendations

To accelerate progress and achieve national and global biodiversity targets, the following strategic actions are recommended:

- Increase and diversify financing for biodiversity
- Strengthen domestic budget allocations, mobilize international climate and biodiversity finance, and promote innovative financing mechanisms such as biodiversity offsets, carbon markets, and public-private partnerships.
- Strengthen data systems and knowledge management
- Invest in national biodiversity monitoring systems, improve data-sharing mechanisms among institutions, and expand research on underrepresented species and ecosystems to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Enhance institutional and human capacity
- Build technical expertise across sectors through targeted training, recruitment, and partnerships with academic and research institutions.
- Accelerate adoption and implementation of the revised NBSAP
- Finalize and formally adopt the updated NBSAP, ensuring its integration into national development plans, sectoral policies, and budgeting processes.
- Promote integrated land-use planning and policy coherence
- Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination to balance conservation and development priorities, particularly in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and urban development.
- Scale up ecosystem restoration efforts
- Expand restoration initiatives to underrepresented ecosystems such as wetlands and aquatic systems, while strengthening monitoring frameworks to track outcomes and impacts.
- Strengthen community-based conservation and benefit-sharing
- Enhance support for local communities through secure tenure rights, equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, and livelihood diversification to sustain conservation gains.
- Address key drivers of biodiversity loss
- Implement targeted interventions to reduce deforestation, unsustainable harvesting, and land degradation, including promotion of sustainable agriculture and alternative energy sources.
- Enhance climate–biodiversity integration
- Align biodiversity actions with climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, promoting nature-based solutions to build ecosystem and community resilience.
- Improve enforcement and governance frameworks
- Strengthen compliance, enforcement, and coordination among institutions to combat illegal wildlife trade and manage invasive species effectively.

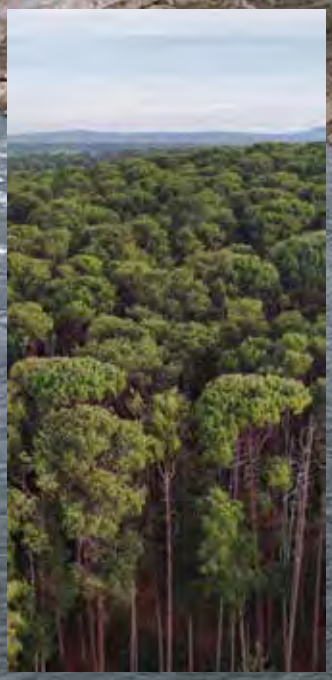
Conclusion

- Malawi has demonstrated strong commitment and notable progress in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. However, achieving the 2030 and 2035 targets under the KMGBF will require accelerated action, increased investment, and stronger institutional coordination. By addressing existing challenges and implementing the recommended actions, Malawi can enhance biodiversity outcomes while supporting sustainable development and resilience for present and future generations.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION









1.0 Introduction

Biodiversity constitutes a fundamental pillar of Malawi's ecological integrity, social well-being, and economic development. The country's diverse ecosystems including terrestrial, wetland, and aquatic habitats harbor a wide array of species, many of which are endemic and of global conservation significance. Malawi acceded to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1994, and in accordance with Article 26, the country has been submitting periodic national reports on measures taken for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the its objectives.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) which are aligned to the Global Biodiversity frameworks (GBFs), remain the key instrument through which parties contribute to implementation of the Convention. Since the submission of its first national report in 1998, Malawi has consistently met this obligation, underscoring its enduring commitment to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Malawi has finalised revising its NBSAP which is aligned to the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) adopted in 2022 during the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15). The Seventh National Report provides a comprehensive evaluation of Malawi's achievements and challenges in implementing its NBSAPIII and its contribution to the global goals set in the KMGBF and sustainable development goals. This report synthesizes up-to-date data from national assessments, indicator frameworks, and stakeholder contributions, highlighting key interventions, outcomes, and lessons learned. Through participatory approaches, including engagement with government institutions, local communities, civil society, academia, and the private sector, reflecting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort to advance biodiversity conservation in Malawi.

1.1 Methodology

The methodology for preparing Malawi's Seventh National Biodiversity Report involved a multi-sectoral approach coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department, with a dedicated desk officer overseeing data collection, reporting, and consolidation. Each sector was tasked with providing data aligned with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) using standardized templates that captured headline, binary, complementary, and national indicators. A national stakeholder validation workshop, engaging government, local authorities, indigenous peoples, women, youth, civil society, and the private sector, reviewed and validated all inputs to ensure inclusivity, accuracy, and alignment with national priorities. Following validation, inputs were consolidated into a unified report, ensuring consistency, comparability, and comprehensive coverage of targets and indicators, while key challenges and data gaps were documented. Progress was assessed using national and KMGBF-aligned indicators, integrated into national monitoring frameworks, and contextualized against relevant Sustainable Development Goals and international environmental agreements, highlighting Malawi's contributions to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.



1.2 Objectives of National Reports



Demonstrate implementation and progress:

Show how the country is implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), its protocols, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including progress toward national and global biodiversity targets using agreed indicators.



Integrate biosafety under the Cartagena Protocol:

Describe how the country is meeting its obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, including rules and procedures for handling, transport, and use of living modified organisms (LMOs), risk assessments, decision-making processes, and public awareness and participation.



Document conservation, use, and benefit-sharing:

Report on concrete measures for conserving ecosystems and sustainably using biodiversity across sectors, as well as on policies and practices for access to genetic resources and fair and equitable benefit-sharing (ABS).



Identify gaps and strengthen accountability:

Assess national capacity, knowledge, and financing gaps for biodiversity action, and ensure the report is prepared through broad stakeholder engagement to support transparency, policy updates, and global CBD review processes.

1.3 Users of the Report

The 7th National Report on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity is intended for a wide range of users, including government policymakers, environmental agencies, researchers, conservation practitioners, NGOs, and the general public. Policymakers and agencies can use the report to inform and guide national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Researchers and practitioners can draw on its data and analyses to support studies, monitoring, and project design. Civil society and the public can gain insights into national biodiversity trends, conservation efforts, and the benefits of sustainable resource management, fostering awareness and participation in biodiversity protection.

CHAPTER TWO: ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS TOWARDS NATIONAL TARGETS

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents progress made in the implementation of the third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP III) for the period 2019–2025. It outlines key measures undertaken to achieve the national targets set under NBSAP III, which are aligned with the KMGBF, and provides data on both global and national indicators, illustrative case studies that demonstrates effectiveness of actions taken. The chapter also highlights challenges encountered during implementation of actions under each target and explains how the national targets contribute to the achievement of specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). NBSAP III comprises 23 national targets that directly correspond to 22 of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets.



2.1 Progress Towards National Targets

2.1.1 National Target 1

By 2035, ensure 45% of terrestrial, 20% of wetland and 50% of aquatic key biodiversity areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning while respecting the rights of local communities.

Main Actions Undertaken

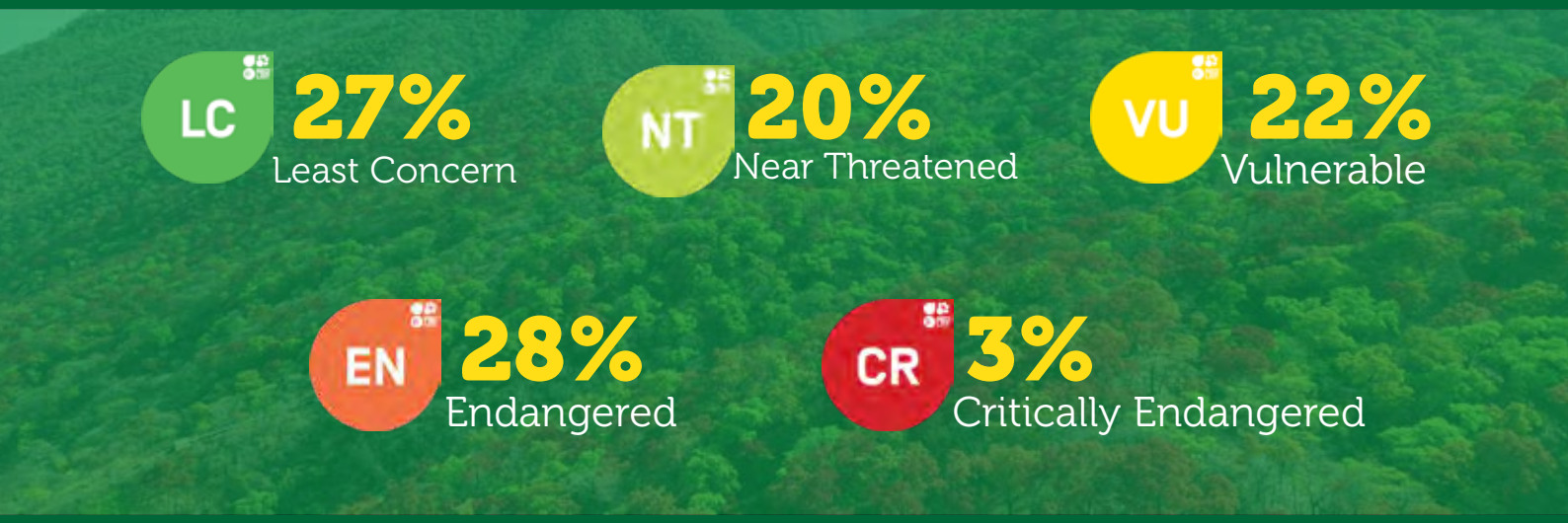
Forty-two sites in Malawi have been designated as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs). Of these sites, 30 were assessed under the Spatial Biodiversity Assessments, Prioritization, and Planning (SBAPP) project in 2024 and 2025. Out of the 30 are new assessments, 4 confirmed and 2 proposed, whilst 24 were re assessments of legacy sites, of which 14 are confirmed. The remaining sites were assessed between 2011 and 2018 and will be reassessed in due course. Malawi has also mapped its ecosystems and aligned to the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology (GET). The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems and Red List of Species assessments have been conducted to identify critical sites for conservation, ensuring that biodiversity efforts are spatially mapped, scientifically targeted and locally inclusive. These actions collectively support the country's goal of safeguarding biodiversity across key ecosystems through spatial planning and ensuring that local communities play a central role in conservation.

Currently Malawi has 4 KBAs that are wetlands, of these 3 (75%) are under forms of community participatory management through Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) with Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMC's) and Community Conservation Ares (CCA's). There are 12 globally recognised aquatic KBAs within Lake Malawi, of these 10 (83%) are managed by communities through BVCs under fisheries department while one is a gazette protected area.

Summary on Progress and Main Outcomes

Red List of Ecosystems (RLE):

A total of 69 ecosystem types have been mapped and aligned with the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology. The Red List of Ecosystem Assessment has identified ecosystems under different threat statuses and levels of protection, providing a structured basis for conservation planning.



Red List of Species (RLS):

Eighteen endemic plant species and seven animal species have been assessed and published on the IUCN platform through the SBAPP regional project. These assessments contribute to a clearer understanding of species vulnerability and conservation priorities.

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA):

The KBA assessment reconfirmed 14 existing sites. Four new sites were confirmed, and two additional KBAs have been proposed, expanding the network of recognized biodiversity hotspots.



Key Indicators for Target 1.

A total of 69 ecosystem types has been mapped and aligned with the IUCN Global ecosystem Typology (figure 1).

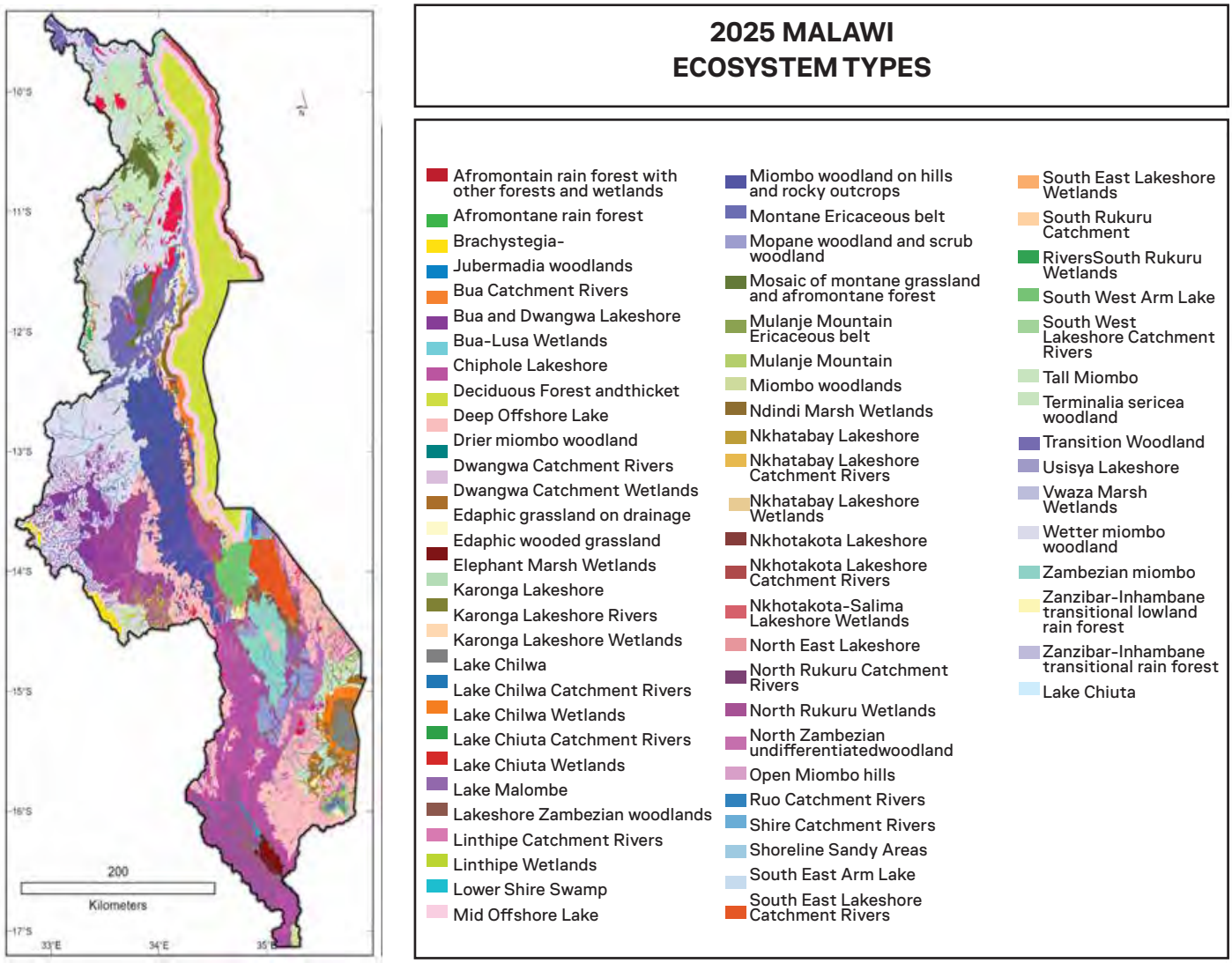
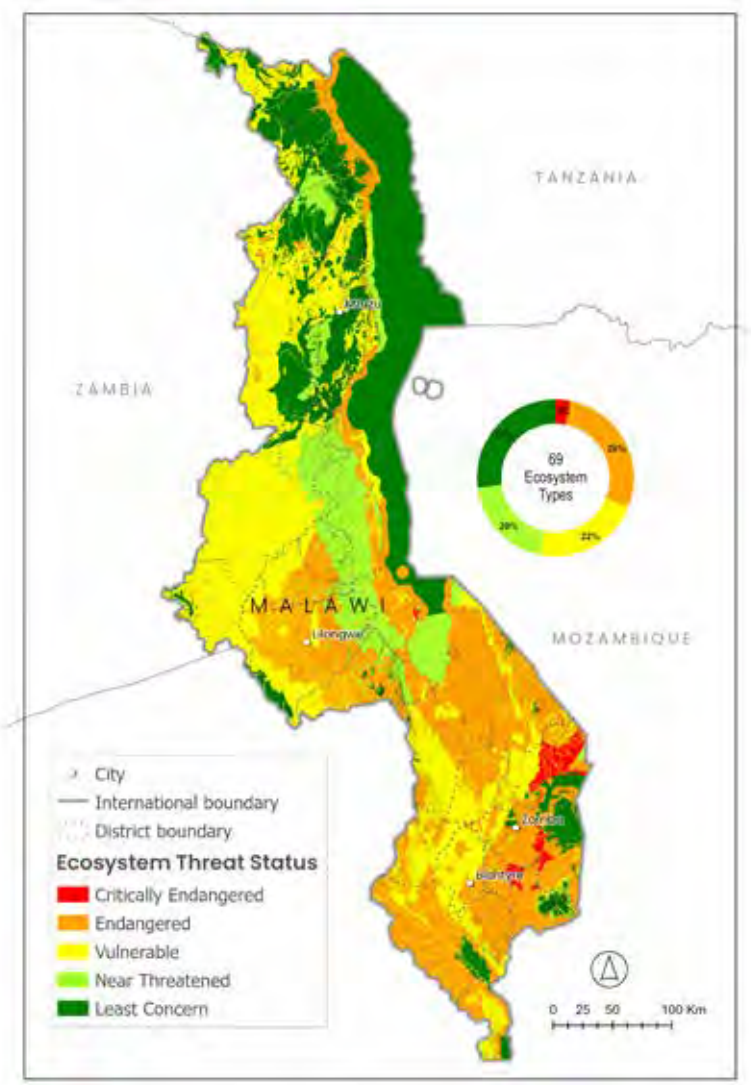


Figure 1:Ecosystem types of Malawi



a. Red List of Ecosystems (RLE):

The Red List of Ecosystem Assessment has identified ecosystems under different threat statuses and levels of protection, providing a structured basis for conservation planning.



LC **27%** Least Concern

NT **20%** Near Threatened

VU **22%** Vulnerable

EN **28%** Endangered

CR **3%** Critically Endangered

Figure 2: Map of Red List of Ecosystem



a. Red List of Species (RLS):

- Eighteen endemic plant species and seven animal species have been assessed and published on the IUCN platform through the SBAPP regional project.
- These assessments contribute to a clearer understanding of species vulnerability and conservation priorities.

a. Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)

Forty- four Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) have been mapped during this reporting period (see figure 3 below).

The KBA assessment reconfirmed 14 existing sites.

Four new sites were confirmed, and

two additional KBAs have been proposed, expanding the network of recognized biodiversity hotspots.

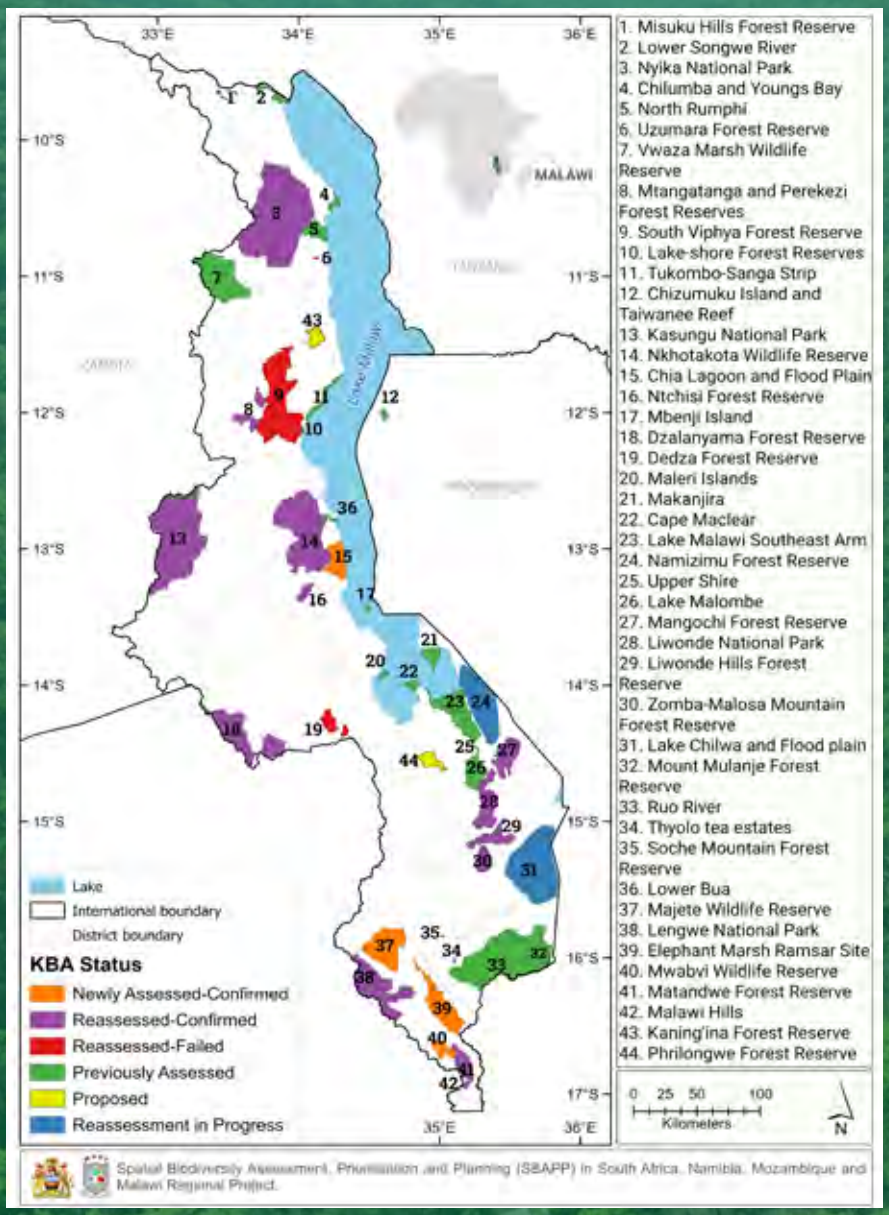


Figure 3: Key biodiversity areas of Malawi assessed in 2025



Indicator A2: Extent of natural ecosystems

2025 Ecological condition Map of Malawi shows the following categories

47%
Lost/Not natural

12%
Degraded

41%
Natural

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

https://www.sanbi.org/biodiversity/building-knowledge/biodiversity-monitoring-assessment/the-sbapp-regional-project/

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a111cfa02ed94a0d9fd752329ef1fdea/page/Key-Biodiversity-Areas

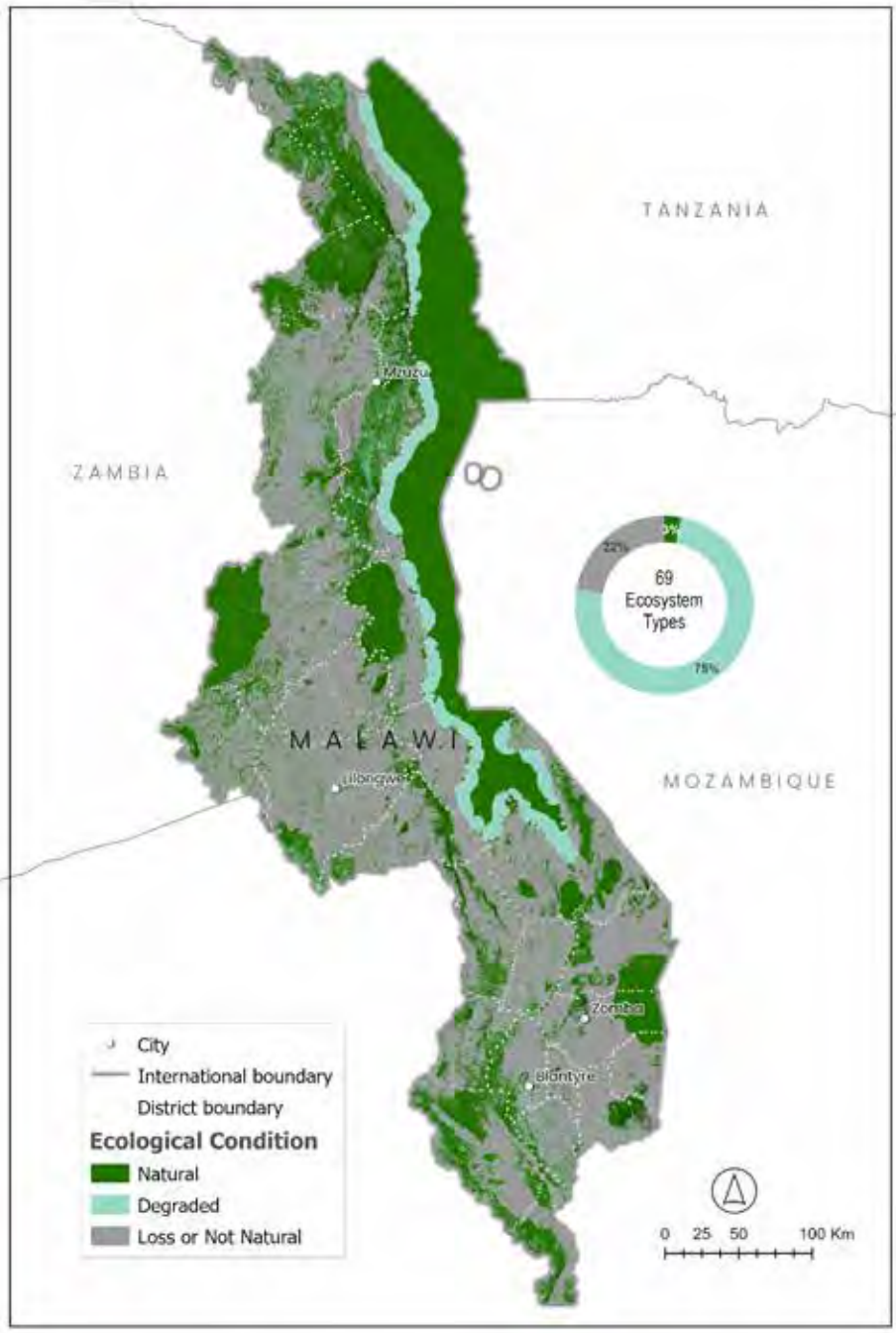


Figure 4: Ecosystem Condition



Table 1: Challenges and Approaches to Further Implementation for Target 1.

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Inadequate data stemming from institutions resisting to provide and share information for assessments.	strengthen collaboration and coordination among institutional through establishment of data-sharing frameworks and protocols to improve accessibility of biodiversity information.
Existing data is incomplete and insufficient to adequately inform biodiversity assessments.	Increase investment in biodiversity surveys, research, and regular data collection to improve the completeness and reliability of datasets.
Biodiversity data is biased towards certain taxa, with limited information on groups such as herpetofauna.	Promote targeted research and assessments on underrepresented taxa to ensure balanced and comprehensive biodiversity information.
Limited financial resources with constrains in fieldwork, scientific assessments, and data management activities.	Mobilize additional financial resources from government and development partners to support field operations, monitoring, and data management infrastructure.
Weak data management infrastructure limits effective storage, updating, and sharing of scientific information.	Improve biodiversity data management systems, including digital databases, monitoring platforms, and information-sharing mechanisms.
Human capacity constraints persist due to limited numbers of skilled personnel involved in biodiversity assessments.	Strengthen capacity-building initiatives through specialized training, technical support, and partnerships with academic and research institutions.

Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals.



SDG 14 – Life Below Water: By integrating ILK into the management of aquatic ecosystems, including lakes, rivers, and wetlands, communities help promote the sustainable use and conservation of freshwater resources. Customary fishing practices, water quality monitoring, and participatory mapping support ecosystem resilience and prevent overexploitation. SDG 15 – Life on Land: ILK-based management practices enhance sustainable terrestrial ecosystem use, including forests, grasslands, and protected areas. Community-led conservation initiatives, restoration of degraded landscapes, and participatory land-use planning contribute to biodiversity protection, habitat conservation, and sustainable land management. SDG Target 15.9, which aims to "integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, and poverty reduction strategies," is most directly related to the outcomes of local community programs focused on biodiversity conservation. This target explicitly calls for incorporating biodiversity considerations into local planning, recognizing the crucial role of community involvement in achieving conservation goals.

2.1.2 National Target 2

By 2035, at least 30% percent of degraded terrestrial, wetland and aquatic ecosystems are restored to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Main Actions Undertaken

Restoration is an important element for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems in Malawi. This is to respond to various challenges including soil erosion, deforestation and land degradation. Each year, Malawi loses an estimated 29 metric tons of soil per hectare, which has a high impact on the productivity of croplands. Between 2001 and 2009, land degradation cost Malawi 6.8 percent of GDP, which is (an estimated $244 million) [2].

The Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunity Assessment for Malawi report also mentions that poor farming practices that caused cropland degradation resulted in a loss of $5.7 million per year. Deforestation drivers such as charcoal production and fuel-wood reliance remain significant, eroding gains at a rate of ~15,000ha per year. Monitoring systems are still developing while frameworks exist, some districts remain pilots and national rollout is ongoing In Malawi Restoration efforts extend across multiple ecosystems; terrestrial, wetland, and aquatic but much of the documented effort focuses on terrestrial and agroforestry landscapes. Wetland and aquatic restoration (e.g., lagoons, riparian zones) are underway but less quantified. As of 2023 1.7 million hectares of land and forest have been placed under restoration, representing nearly 40% of Malawi's AFR100 target of 4.5millionha (equivalent to ~30% of its degraded ecosystems goal). This includes agroforestry, natural regeneration, community forestry, and watershed rehabilitation.

The Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment report indicates that nearly 7.7 million hectares, nearly 80 percent of the total land area of Malawi, have an opportunity for restoration. The assessment makes a recommendation on restoration interventions, their specific objectives and targeted contributions to national sustainable development goals, and estimated opportunity area [6]. The Government of Malawi (GoM) expects large-scale forest landscape restoration to create significant social, economic, and environmental benefits. FLR in Malawi is viewed as a mechanism for promoting sustainable livelihoods, conserving protecting and enhancing ecosystem services.



Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

1.7 million hectares of land and forest have been placed under restoration, representing nearly 40% of Malawi's AFR100 target of 4.5millionha (equivalent to ~30% of its degraded ecosystems goal). This includes agroforestry, natural regeneration, community forestry, and watershed rehabilitation. The AFR100 portal reports area targeted: 4.5 million ha committed, with 2.3 million ha already forested (as of May, 2023), across six active restoration projects Government data (as of early 2022) indicates approximately 1.2 million ha already under some form of restoration from its pledged commitment. Malawi launched its National Restoration Monitoring Framework, piloted in Rumphi District, using tools such as WRI's Restoration Mapper and FAO's Collect Earth, to establish restoration baselines and track vegetation changes over time A National Restoration Platform established in 2021 brings together ministries, civil society, private sector, and communities to coordinate implementation and track progress. However, challenges remain around resources and policy coherence.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

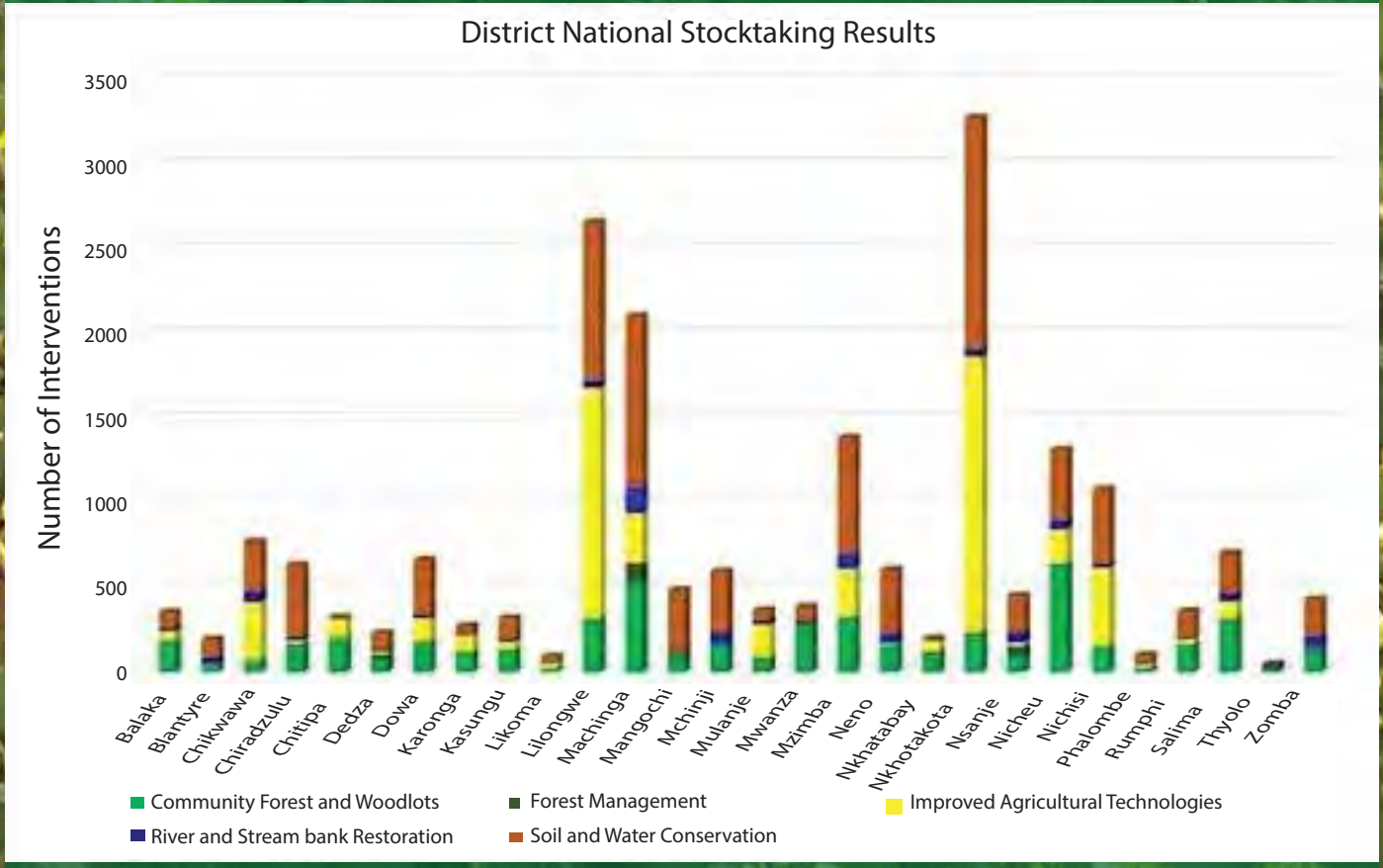


Figure 5: Restoration activities in Malawi

The figure indicates that most of the restoration activities taking place in Malawi are on soil and water conservation followed by implementation of improved agriculture technologies, more efforts are needed to enhance river and stream bank restoration. With regards to costing, Farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) was considered as the most cost-effective option with broad adoption potential (USD 4.65/ha cost). Intensive agroforestry offers high returns and climate resilience but requires greater upfront investment (USD 145.77 per hectare). Natural forest management provides critical ecosystem services though low direct financial returns. It exhibits negative private returns under current opportunity costs. This structured mapping helps policymakers target investments for both public and private benefits. Below is a table with varying major restoration activities and their proposed costs.

Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunity Assessment in Malawi (2017) | Policy Commons AREECA | Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism FLRM | FAO Accelerating forest landscape restoration through farmer field schools in Malawi

Table 2: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 2.

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Restoration efforts are concentrated mainly on terrestrial and agroforestry landscapes, while wetland and aquatic ecosystem restoration remains less quantified and underdeveloped.	Scale up restoration interventions in wetlands and aquatic ecosystems through targeted programmes, improved ecological assessments, and strengthened monitoring systems for these ecosystems.
Deforestation drivers such as charcoal production and heavy reliance on fuelwood continue to undermine restoration gains, with approximately 15,000 ha lost annually.	Promote alternative energy sources, strengthen sustainable forest management, enforce regulations against unsustainable charcoal production, and expand community-based forest restoration initiatives.
Monitoring systems are still developing while frameworks exist, some districts remain pilots and national rollout is ongoing.	Accelerate nationwide implementation of the National Restoration Monitoring Framework and strengthen institutional capacity, data systems, and technical support for restoration tracking and reporting.
Limited financial resources and policy coherence constrain effective implementation and scaling up of restoration activities.	Mobilize increased financing through government budgets, development partners, and innovative financing mechanisms while strengthening policy coordination across sectors involved in restoration.



Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals



Malawi's implementation of this target contributes directly to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by linking biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, EN water security, and livelihoods. It advances SDG 15 (Life on Land, Target 15.1, 15.3) through restoration of degraded forests, wetlands, and catchments that support habitat recovery and land degradation neutrality; SDG 13 (Climate Action, Target 13.1) by strengthening community resilience to floods, droughts, and erosion while enhancing carbon sequestration; SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) through restoration of water-related ecosystems such as the Shire River Basin and Lake Chilwa, improving water regulation and quality; SDG 2 (Zero Hunger, Target 2.4) by promoting sustainable agriculture practices like agroforestry and land restoration that improve soil fertility and productivity; and SDG 1 (No Poverty, Target 1.5) by supporting livelihood diversification, green jobs, and nature-based enterprises in restoration landscapes.

These restoration efforts also align with major international environmental frameworks, including the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification by contributing to land degradation neutrality monitoring; and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through Malawi's Nationally Determined Contributions on ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation. Wetland restoration further supports commitments under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, including conservation of sites such as Elephant Marsh, while national restoration pledges contribute to global initiatives like the Bonn Challenge and the AFR100 aimed at large-scale forest landscape restoration



2.1.3 National Target 3

By 2035, ensure that at least 30% of terrestrial, aquatic, and wetland ecosystems of high biodiversity importance are effectively conserved through protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) while recognizing the rights of local communities

Main Actions Undertaken

Malawi has about 24% of its land set aside for biodiversity conservation. This includes national parks, wildlife and forest reserves, nature sanctuaries (about 11%), and wetlands. Apart from government-managed protected areas, the government is encouraging OECMs. Community conservation Areas (CCAs) ad Village Forest areas have been established

Progress toward conserving 30% of terrestrial, aquatic, and wetland ecosystems of high biodiversity importance by 2030 for Malawi shows an encouraging picture;

Protected Areas management:

Malawi has about 23% of its terrestrial area as a protected area. These include national parks, wildlife reserve, nature sanctuaries as well as forest reserves. The establishment of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) aim to promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, regional cooperation, and ecotourism. Malawi and Zambia have protected areas that are part of this network. Connected corridors reduce fragmentation, allowing species to shift ranges in response to warming, which helps preserve critical species like elephants, lions and even wild dogs. This is evident with the Nyika TFCA where elephants' movement have been observed between Vwaza Wildlife Reserve in Malawi and Musalangu in Zambia.

The Public Private Partnership in biodiversity conservation has been one of the success stories in the country. Areas on the brink of degradation have been restored to glory. The PPP between government and African Parks for Mangochi forest and Majete Wildlife Reserve as well as the Wildlife Action Groups takeover of Thuma Forest reserve are some of the shining examples.

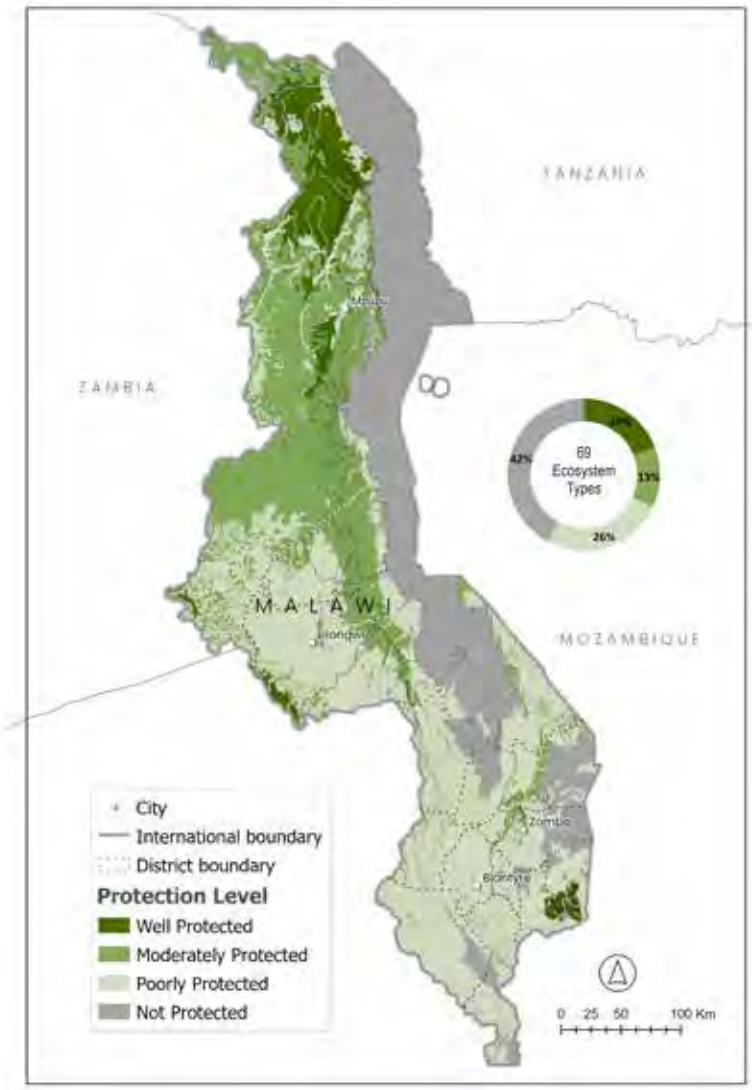


Figure 6: Protection levels of ecosystems

Conservation of OECMs: Initiatives to conserve areas outside protected area have proven to be a game changer as far biodiversity conservation is concerned. Areas like wetlands, contain rich biodiversity that supports adjoining communities and even larger populations. One such example is the conservation of Elephant marsh in the lower Shire. Communities have formed community conservation Areas with guidance from the government aimed at conserving and managing the wetland.

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

The establishment of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs). TFCAs are cross-border networks of protected areas and adjacent landscapes that span national boundaries. They aim to promote biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, regional cooperation, and ecotourism. Malawi and Zambia have protected areas that are part of this network. Connected corridors reduce fragmentation, allowing species to shift ranges in response to warming, which helps preserve critical species like elephants, lions and even wild dogs. This is evident with the Nyika TFCA where elephants movement have been observed between Vwaza Wildlife Reserve in Malawi and Musalangu in Zambia.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

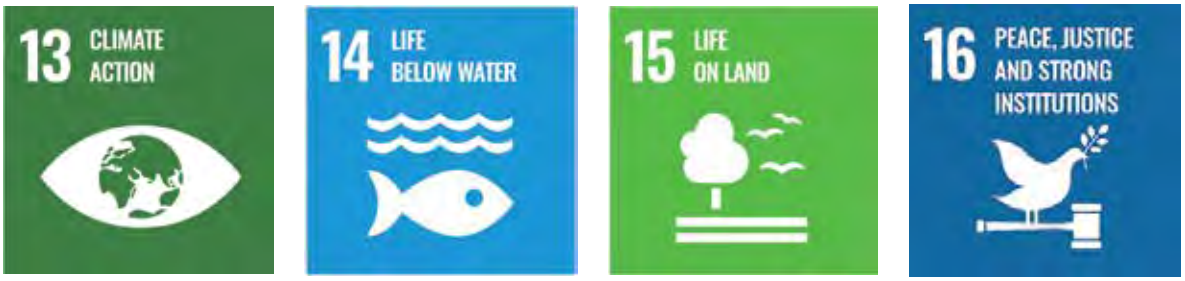
https://svtp.gov.mw/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Baseline-Biodiversity-Report-for-Lengwe-and-Elephant-Elephant-Marsh.pdf

https://www.peaceparks.org/tfcas/malawi-zambia/

Table 3: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 3

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
In countries like Malawi, biodiversity conservation funding is usually not a priority for the central government, hence it is chronically underfunded to the sector.	Increase national budget allocation towards biodiversity conservation and strengthen resource mobilization through partnerships with development partners, private sector investment, and innovative financing mechanisms such as conservation trust funds and payment for ecosystem services.
Climate change is increasingly impacting biodiversity conservation, making conservation efforts more challenging.	Promote climate-resilient conservation strategies through ecosystem restoration, climate adaptation programmes, strengthening of monitoring systems, and integration of climate change considerations into biodiversity policies and management plans.
Effective implementation of conservation strategies and policies remains a key challenge, with often conflicting policies (e.g. Agriculture expansion and urbanization against biodiversity conservation).	Strengthen policy harmonization and integrated land-use planning to ensure that development activities are balanced with biodiversity conservation objectives. In addition, enhance enforcement of environmental regulations and improve inter-sectoral coordination among relevant institutions.
Opening of biodiversity and even wetlands for agriculture and settlement is another big challenge faced by the country with its ever-growing population.	Enhance protection and sustainable management of wetlands and areas rich in biodiversity through strengthened law enforcement, community awareness programmes, promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, and development of alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on natural ecosystems.

Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals



Implementation of Target 3 contributes to multiple SDG targets. It advances SDG 15 target 15.1 and 15.5 by strengthening ecosystem conservation and halting biodiversity loss, SDG 14, target 14.2 and 6.6 through protection and sustainable management of aquatic and water-related ecosystems, and SDG 13 target 13.1 by enhancing ecosystem-based climate resilience. The target also supports SDG 1 target 1.4 and SDG 16.7 by promoting equitable access to natural resources and inclusive, participatory governance that recognizes the rights, knowledge, and roles of local communities in conservation efforts. Together, these contributions link biodiversity protection with sustainable livelihoods, climate adaptation, and effective natural resource governance.



2.1.4 National Target 4

By 2035 reduce human wildlife conflict by 50%

Main Actions Undertaken

Several measures are being implemented to reduce human–wildlife conflict through strengthened prevention, monitoring, habitat management, and community engagement approaches. Physical mitigation interventions include the installation of solar-powered electric fencing in major conflict hotspots, which has significantly reduced wildlife incursions, with areas such as Majete Wildlife Reserve recording periods with no elephant breakouts. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife has also introduced an early warning system in Kasungu National Park that alerts officers when elephants cross a virtual boundary within the park, enabling rapid response. Habitat management efforts, including the establishment of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) such as Community Conservation Areas (CCAs), are helping reduce conflict by conserving critical wildlife habitats and minimizing animal movement into settlements. These actions are complemented by intensified community awareness campaigns promoting understanding of wildlife behavior and coexistence practices, as well as deployment of wildlife officers in conflict hotspots to provide timely response and support to affected communities. Malawi has achieved notable success in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, particularly around national parks, through collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and development partners.

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

Malawi has achieved notable success in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, particularly around national parks, through collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and development partners. Key accomplishments include.

Fence Construction: A 135-kilometer wire fence has been built in Kasungu National Park to create a physical barrier between humans and wildlife, reducing conflicts (figure7).

Economic Empowerment: Local communities benefit from job creation and daily payments, enhancing their well-being and reducing reliance on activities harming wildlife. Currently communities in Nyika, Vwaza and Nkhotakota are implementing a multi-million dollar 30-year project on carbon trade. Community Engagement: Awareness programs educate locals on wildlife conservation's importance and penalties for wildlife crime, promoting behavioral change and community intelligence to prevent poaching.

Conservation Efforts: Earth Ranger technology monitors wildlife movements, preventing conflicts. In Liwonde National Park, this technology reduced crop raids and improved crop yields.

Strengthened Legal Framework: Malawi's legal framework for tackling wildlife crime has been recognized as one of the strongest globally, with significant prison sentences of up to 22 years for wildlife-related crimes.

These initiatives demonstrate Malawi's commitment to reducing human-wildlife conflicts and promoting wildlife conservation. By leveraging technology, community engagement, and economic empowerment, Malawi aims to foster coexistence between humans and wildlife.



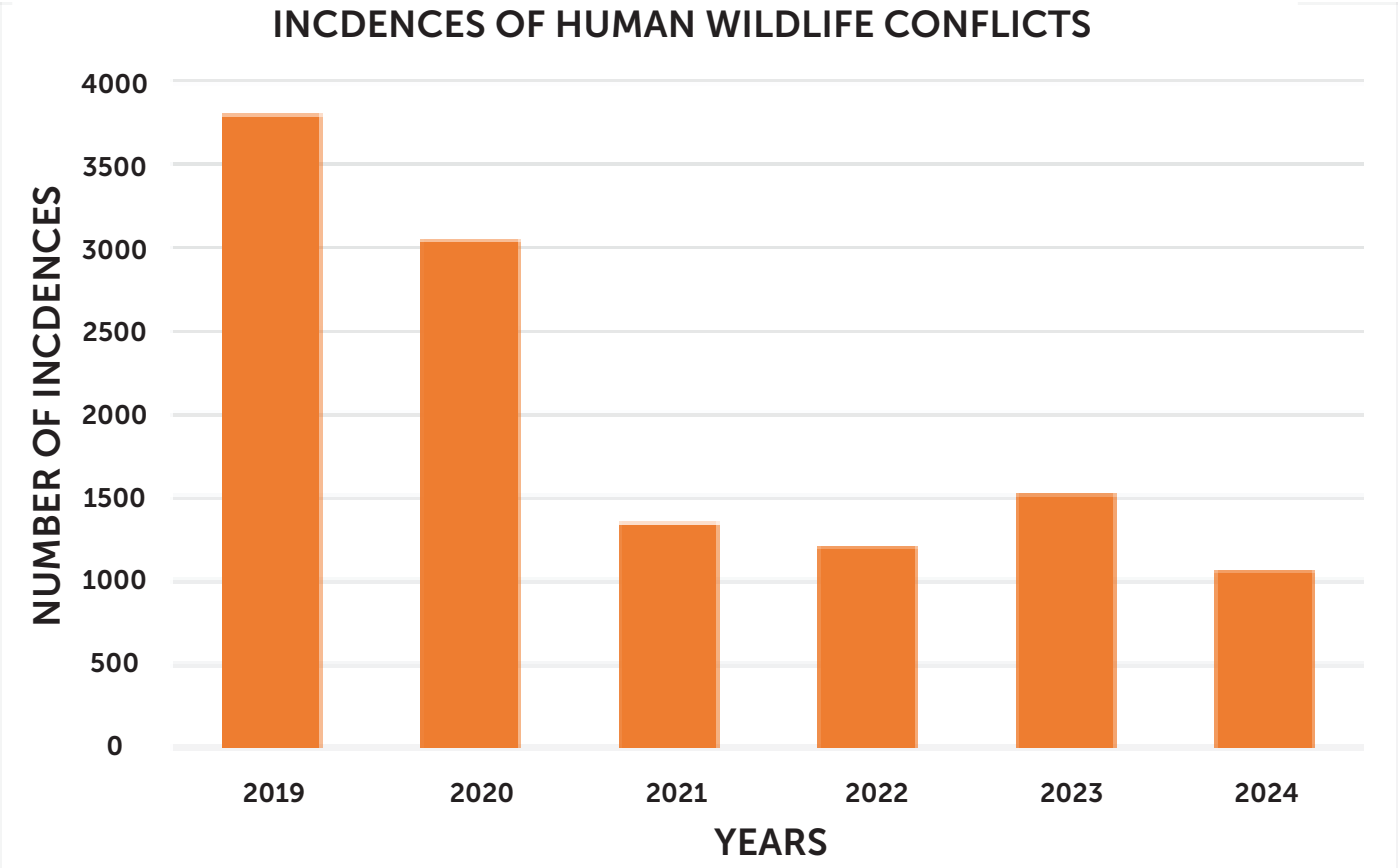


Figure 7: Incidences of human wildlife conflict of the years

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

Fence Construction: A 135-kilometer wire fence has been built in Kasungu National Park to create a physical barrier between humans and wildlife, reducing conflicts. The 144km perimeter solar fence in Majete and which is being patrolled daily has resulted in zero elephants break outs since 2015.

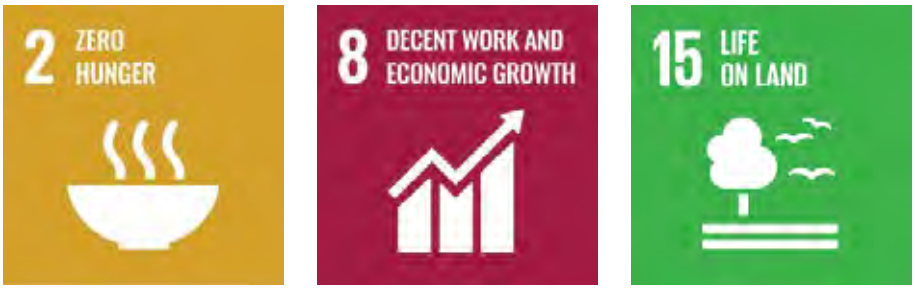
To improve spatial monitoring, elephants in all protected areas are fitted with GPS collars which is connected to earth ranger, which also enhances rapid response for potential outbreaks.



Table 4: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 4

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Habitat Loss and Fragmentation: The expansion of human settlements and agriculture into wildlife habitats is leading to more conflicts between humans and animals competing for space and resources. Malawi being one of the densely populated countries, makes this issue very emotive.	Strengthen land-use planning and enforcement of protected area boundaries to reduce encroachment into wildlife habitats. Promote habitat restoration, establishment of wildlife corridors, and community-based natural resource management approaches to support coexistence between people and wildlife.
Retaliatory Attacks: When wildlife damages crops or livestock, humans often retaliate with violence, harming wildlife populations and escalating conflicts, this has been experienced in most protected areas where human-elephant conflicts are common.	Promote human-wildlife conflict mitigation measures such as construction of barriers and fencing, use of early warning systems, compensation and insurance schemes, and community awareness programmes on wildlife conservation. In addition, strengthen rapid response mechanisms to address conflict incidents in affected communities.
Policy and Governance: Effective policy frameworks and governance structures are necessary to support human-wildlife conflict mitigation efforts, but currently the country is lacking policies that comprehensively support human-wildlife mitigation	Develop and strengthen comprehensive policies, strategies, and legal frameworks on human-wildlife conflict management. Enhance institutional coordination, stakeholder participation, and capacity-building for local authorities and communities involved in conflict mitigation and wildlife management.

Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals.



The implementation of Malawi's target on reducing human–wildlife conflict and promoting the sustainable use of wild species contributes significantly to multiple Sustainable Development Goals. It supports SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) by protecting crops through measures such as solar-powered electric fences around protected areas, thereby enhancing food security for local communities. It advances SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by creating livelihood opportunities and inclusive economic growth through community-based conservation initiatives. At the same time, it directly underpins SDG 15 (Life on Land) by reducing conflicts, improving habitat management, and promoting the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, forests, and wildlife.

2.1.5 National target 5

By 2035, human induced extinction risk is reduced by 50% and genetic diversity is maintained through in-situ and ex-situ conservation

Main Actions Undertaken

Malawi is implementing a comprehensive suite of measures to safeguard species, habitats, and genetic diversity. These include expanding and strengthening protected areas, currently covering over 20% of the country and enhancing in-situ conservation through anti-poaching patrols, habitat protection for endangered wildlife, establishment of fish sanctuaries, community conservation areas, and flood-protection infrastructure. Species recovery and reintroduction programmes, led largely through partnerships with African Parks, have successfully restored populations of elephants, cheetahs, black rhinos, giraffes, and wild dogs. Ex-situ conservation is supported by the Malawi Plant Genetic Resources Centre, national gene banks, botanical gardens, aquaculture research centres, and fish museums that preserve indigenous crops, wild species, and aquatic genetic diversity. Traditional knowledge systems complement scientific approaches through community seed systems, sacred natural sites, and customary resource management practices, particularly in fisheries and forest conservation. These efforts are anchored by a strong legal and policy framework including the Wildlife Act, Forestry Act, Environment Management Act, and Fisheries Conservation Act. Ongoing monitoring and research by government institutions, universities, and international partners track species trends and inform conservation priorities. Finally, community-based conservation initiatives, including Village Forest Areas, Fish Conservation Areas, and community seed banks, empower local custodians to sustainably manage biodiversity and protect ecologically and culturally important species



Underwater world of Lake Malawi. Shutterstock/Radek Borovka

Summary of Progress and Main Outcome

Malawi has designated over 20% of its land as protected areas, including national parks, wildlife reserves, and forest reserves. Many of these areas overlap with Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) that host endemic and threatened species (e.g., Nyika National Park, Lengwe National Park, Lake Malawi National Park). Below are some of the key outcomes achieved;

- The fisheries sector has introduced 42 fish sanctuaries in some key fishery biodiversity hotspots in Lake Malawi.
- Establishment of 3 Community Conservation Area (CCA) around the Elephant Marsh.
- Construction of 3 dykes in Chikwawa, Nsanje and Karonga to protect species from flooding.
- The translocation of 265 elephants from Liwonde National Park to Kasungu National Park was undertaken to address habitat degradation resulting from a population density that had exceeded the area's carrying capacity.
- Two hundred rhinos were translocated from Liwonde National Park to Majete Game Reserve to support the establishment of a viable population and prevent inbreeding.
- Some legal frameworks have been revised to strengthen protection of species and genetic diversity Wildlife Act (2017) and Forestry Act (2020) provide for the protection of endangered species and their habitats, Environmental Management Act (2017) requires EIAs to assess potential impacts on biodiversity
- Ecosystem maps have been developed that shows the conservation status of all ecosystems in Malawi and are been used to inform Environmental and Social Impact assessments.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

Case Study 1: 'Species Recovery in National Parks': Translocations and reintroductions of wildlife have resulted in the improvement of animal population and genetic diversity in protected areas in the country. Species like Cheetah, wild dogs, giraffe and rhinos have been reintroduced in Liwonde National Park, Majete and Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserves. In 2022 Malawi undertook a significant animal translocation project, moving 263 elephants, 120 Impala, 100 Water buck, 80 Buffalos, 80 Warthog and 25Sable Antelopes from Liwonde National Park to Kasungu National Park. This initiative aims to manage elephant populations, enhance biodiversity. This initiative has been effective in species recovery and restoring Kasungu National Park and reducing pressure on other ecosystems and enhancing biodiversity

Underwater world of Lake Malawi. Shutterstock/Radek Borovka





Case Study 2 Fisheries Assessments in Elephant Marsh:

Findings of the 2024 fish biomass, diversity and ecological assessment in Elephant Marsh has provided baseline information critical for monitoring effectiveness of the measures being undertaken to achieve Target 5. It identified a remarkable fish diversity, with 17 distinct fish species from 9 families, showcasing the ecological richness of this relatively small water body compared to larger systems like Lake Chiuta. The assessment revealed that while some commonly captured species, such as C. gariepinus and Synodontis spp, were harvested immaturely, others like O. mossambicus were mature at the time of harvest. This illustrates the necessity for age-specific management strategies. Furthermore, the study employed the IUCN Red List Assessment to evaluate the conservation status of these species, identifying Oreochromis mossambicus as vulnerable and Labeo mesops as critically threatened, while the majority fell under the least concern category. Collectively, these insights underscore the importance of sustainable practices to safeguard the ecological integrity and long-term viability of fish populations in the Elephant Marsh.

Case Study 3 Conservation of Agrobiodiversity and ILK:

Community Seed Banks (CSBs) in Northern Malawi (Rumphi District) has effectively contributed to prevention of human-induced extinction of agrobiodiversity by conserving and multiplying diverse, locally adapted crop varieties that are increasingly threatened by the spread of commercial hybrids, weakening seed-sharing traditions, and market pressures. By serving as repositories for traditional germplasm and providing farmers with access to a wide range of seeds through non-monetary exchanges, CSBs keep endangered local varieties in active use. Their activities such as seed fairs, field demonstrations, and exchange visits promote experimentation and knowledge-sharing, encouraging farmers to continue cultivating diverse varieties rather than relying on a narrow set of commercial seeds. In doing so, CSBs strengthen farmers' seed systems, enhance climate resilience, and directly reduce the human-driven loss of genetic diversity essential for future food security.

WWW

https://www.africanparks.org/significant-wildlife-translocation-completed-malawi-support-biodiversity-efforts

https://www.africanparks.org/wild-dogs-malawi-historic-reintroduction

https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2022.2122254

A study conducted in 2021 showed that 9% of the 458 fish species in Lake Malawi are on the verge of extinction. Among these, three out of four Chambo species (Oreochromis, Oreochromis karongae, Oreochromis squamipinis and O. lidole) are critically endangered.

Table 5: : Summary of Fish Stock Biomass

Fish species	Fish	Potential	Total Biomass	Source of Information
Pelagic Species	90kg/ha	45kg/ha	140,000 tons	FAO database
Oreochromis spp in southeast arm of Lake Malwi	9713 tons	3,379 tons	<500 tons	FAO database
Oreochromis spp in Lake Malombe	<500 tons			FAO database

Key challenges include;

The proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels in Malawi is not explicitly stated. However, the FAO report indicates that globally an average of 61.6% of stocks were estimated to be within biologically sustainable levels in 2022.

Table 6: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 5

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Negative impacts of climate change	Develop and implement climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, climate-resilient species and ecosystem.
Continued illegal fishing practices	Strengthen enforcement of fisheries regulations while promoting community engagement, awareness campaigns, and alternative livelihood programmes to reduce dependence on unsustainable fishing practices
Most taxa are under-assessed; plants and freshwater species are poorly covered which has created a gap in species data	Prioritize research and surveys in collaboration with academic institutions and citizen scientists, making use of e remote sensing and eDNA. Establish sustainable funding models.
Limited facilities, species coverage, and documentation systems have led to weak ex-situ	Build and upgrade ex-situ facilities. Develop standardized documentation systems.
Weak integration of indigenous and local knowledge into natural resources conservation	Respect indigenous rights ensuring that indigenous knowledge is included in planning. Create participatory knowledge exchange platforms.
Weak harmonization of legislation, policies and strategies related to biodiversity conservation	Strengthen intersectoral coordination and harmonize legal, policy, and strategic frameworks across sectors to ensure coherent and effective implementation of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management initiatives.
Inadequate and unsustainable funding for biodiversity conservation activities.	Establish sustainable funding mechanisms through increased government support, partnerships with development partners, conservation trust funds, and private sector participation to ensure long-term financing of conservation programmes.

Malawi has a high proportion of endemic fish species. In addition, the country has a growing aquaculture sub sector.

Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals



National Target 5 contributes primarily to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 15 (Life on Land) by supporting the conservation of species, protection of habitats, and halting biodiversity loss. It also advances SDG 14 (Life Below Water) through the conservation of aquatic biodiversity, SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) by safeguarding genetic resources essential for food security and climate-resilient agriculture, and SDG 13 (Climate Action) by strengthening ecosystem resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change. Additionally, the target supports SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by promoting sustainable use of natural resources and indirectly contributes to SDG 1 (No Poverty) by protecting ecosystem services that sustain livelihoods. Overall, conserving species and genetic diversity under this target reinforces ecological stability while supporting sustainable development outcomes across multiple sectors.

2.1.6 National Target 6

Ensure that the Use, harvesting and trade of wild species are sustainable, safe, and legal, preventing overexploitation and minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems by 2035.

Main Actions Undertaken

Malawi is undertaking a range of complementary measures, including inclusive community engagement in conservation and education on sustainable resource use, supported by a benefit-sharing mechanism that allocates 25% of revenues from protected areas to surrounding communities and promotes non-consumptive livelihood options such as community carbon trading initiatives in Nyika, Vwaza and Nkhotakota. The Government is strengthening regulatory frameworks through the licensing of practitioners in wildlife sectors and the application of existing wildlife regulations, alongside active species management interventions such as animal translocations to maintain viable populations and prevent extinction. Trade in wildlife is being tightly regulated through one of the strongest wildlife legal frameworks in the region, with the new Wildlife Act imposing stiff penalties that have significantly reduced illegal wildlife trade, reinforced by the work of the Inter-Agency Committee on Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, which enhances coordination and awareness. These national efforts are further supported by international cooperation through cross-border collaboration to share knowledge, resources and best practices for conservation and sustainable use.

Progress toward ensuring sustainable use of wild species shows promising results, with several key outcomes achieved.

Sustainable Use Initiatives:

Community-managed sustainable harvest of non-timber forest products in protected areas has resulted in significant income for local communities and thereby helping in community buy-in in conservation issues.

Strengthened Legal Framework:

The Malawi's revised legal framework for combating wildlife crime is recognized as among the strongest globally, providing for custodial sentences of up to 22 years for wildlife-related offences, which has contributed significantly to the reduction of wildlife crime in the country.

Cooperation and Collaboration:

International agreements like the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES

Malawi has provisions in the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (FCMA) for regulating trade in wild fish species. For instance, nobody is permitted to extract fish from an area where standing fish biomass is unknown or where the conservation status of such species is not known. Similarly, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife has laws that regulates trade in wildlife species and has a list of endangered species where trade is prohibited.



Summary of Progress and Main Outcome

Progress toward ensuring sustainable use of wild species shows promising results, with several key outcomes achieved. Sustainable Use Initiatives: Community-managed sustainable harvest of non-timber forest products in protected areas has resulted in significant income for local communities and thereby helping in community buy-in in conservation issues. Strengthened Legal Framework: The Malawi's revised legal framework for combating wildlife crime is recognized as among the strongest globally, providing for custodial sentences of up to 22 years for wildlife-related offences, which has contributed significantly to the reduction of wildlife crime in the country. Cooperation and Collaboration: International agreements like the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) are helping in to ensure that international trade in wild animal and plant specimens does not threaten their survival.

A study conducted in 2021 showed that 9% of the 458 fish species in Lake Malawi are on the verge of extinction. Among these, three out of four Chambo species (Oreochromis, Oreochromis karongae, Oreochromis squamipinis and O. lidole) are critically endangered. These directly measure key aspects of extinction risk and genetic diversity conservation.



Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

https://eia-international.org/press-releases/notorious-kingpin-of-wildlife-crime-syndicate-jailed-for-14-years-in-malawi/

https://www.facebook.com/nyasatimesNewspaper/posts/4-chinese-arrested-for-illegal-fishing-in-lake-malawi-national-parkthe-departmen/10157071918598520/

Table 7: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 6

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Spread of invasive alien species (IAS), which EN have invaded large areas, including protected areas, negatively affecting biodiversity, habitats and reducing pasture availability for wildlife	Malawi is conducting awareness campaigns on the negative impacts of invasive alien species and mainstreaming IAS management into protected area management plans.
Illegal harvesting of wildlife species also continues to threaten conservation efforts, while inadequate funding limits effective biodiversity management and enforcement actions.	Efforts to curb illegal wildlife harvesting include intensifying patrols and promoting public–private partnership (PPP) approaches to wildlife management.

Target Contribution to SDG



This target contributes directly supports SDG 15 (Life on Land), particularly Targets 15.1 and 15.5, by preventing overexploitation of terrestrial species and reducing biodiversity loss, and Target 15.7 by combating illegal wildlife harvesting and trade. The target also advances SDG 14 (Life Below Water), especially Targets 14.4 and 14.2, through sustainable harvesting of aquatic species and protection of marine and freshwater ecosystems. In addition, it contributes to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), Target 12.2, by encouraging sustainable use of natural resources, and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), Target 8.4, by promoting legal and sustainable wildlife-based value chains that support livelihoods while minimizing environmental degradation. Overall, the target strengthens biodiversity conservation, supports sustainable livelihoods, and ensures ecosystem integrity by aligning wildlife use and EN trade with sustainability and legal frameworks.

The target contributes to the implementation of several key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). It directly supports the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity and reducing pressures that lead to species decline and ecosystem degradation. The target also advances the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) through strengthening regulation and monitoring of wildlife trade to prevent overexploitation and illegal trafficking. In addition, it contributes to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands by supporting the wise use of wetland species and maintaining ecological integrity, and to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) by reducing unsustainable harvesting pressures on migratory species and minimizing impacts on non-target species. For aquatic resources, the target aligns with obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) by promoting sustainable management of living marine resources. Overall, the target strengthens compliance with international biodiversity and wildlife governance frameworks by ensuring that species use and trade are ecologically sustainable and legally regulated.



2.1.7 National Target 7

Prevent new invasions, establishment of priority Invasive Alien Species and reduce the current impacts of Invasive Alien Species in protected areas and priority sites by 2035

Main Actions Undertaken

Under National Target7, Malawi has made substantial strides to prevent new invasive alien species (IAS) introductions and curb their impact in protected areas and other priority sites. The country has developed a National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP), alongside a detailed field guide to support rapid identification of harmful species. These publications were formally launched in 2024 and include a companion Invasive Species Pathway Analysis Study Report, emphasizing the critical pathways through which IAS enter and spread.

To strengthen public awareness and stakeholder engagement, these materials are complemented by a communication strategy that is being implemented through civic education, radio, television, and community outreach, particularly in agricultural and rural landscapes. In protected areas such as Nyika National Park, IAS control has been mainstreamed in the parks management plan. The management of IAS like Pinus patula and black wattle is integrated into planning, and extensive clearing of over 100 hectares has been done to restore native habitats. Risk analyses have been conducted for key pathways. For example, an in-depth study in Malawi's Lower Shire region focused on Prosopis juliflora, while a national-level IAS risk assessment document provides a guiding framework on the status, potential spread, and priority species. The Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) system, established under the GEF-6 IAS project, equips national and local actors with procedures, training, and surveillance to quickly identify and counter emerging invasions.

Through this project, community-level action has been intensive on Mulanje Mountain and in buffer zones around protected areas, large-scale clearing has been achieved, communities have been sensitized in partnership with Wildlife and Environment Society of Malawi (WESM) and other NGOs. District councils have also begun mainstreaming IAS management into their development plans. Key knowledge products, such as the Guide to the Naturalized and Invasive Plants of Malawi, co-published by CABI and the Environmental Affairs Department, catalog over 115 species, map their distribution, explain their impacts, and recommend control methods. These resources support both prevention and active management across protected and non-protected lands. Additionally, the implementation of National Target 7 integrated Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) to prevent and manage IAS in protected and priority areas. This included documenting Traditional Ecological Knowledge through participatory mapping, interviews, and focus groups, which informed formal monitoring systems, while community-led early detection and surveillance by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) enabled rapid response and adaptive management. ILK was incorporated into management plans using traditional methods such as controlled grazing, manual removal, and natural deterrents, and co-management arrangements allowed IPLCs to participate in decision-making. Complementary awareness-raising and capacity-building activities strengthened community understanding of IAS impacts, promoted knowledge sharing, and reinforced collective stewardship, while policy and institutional frameworks increasingly recognized ILK as valuable evidence for IAS monitoring and management

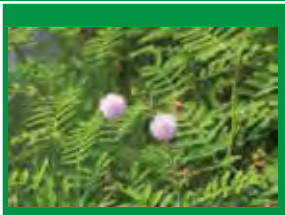
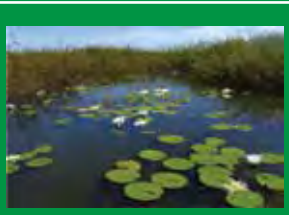


Progress and Main Outcomes

Overall, progress towards National Target7 shows that Malawi is strengthening prevention, early detection, and management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS), particularly in protected areas and priority sites. Efforts combine scientific approaches, policy measures, and community engagement. Key outcomes and achievements:

1. Community-led early detection and monitoring mechanisms
    - Observation networks in communities near protected areas support timely reporting of new IAS incursions.
    - Community surveillance has enabled rapid response and adaptive management, reducing the risk of IAS spread.
2. Integration of control measures in management plans
    - Traditional IAS control methods such as manual removal, controlled grazing, and natural deterrents are applied alongside formal management strategies.
    - Co-management arrangements allow communities to participate in decision making on priority species, control methods, and monitoring.
3. Awareness-raising and capacity building
    - Communities have been trained on the ecological and socio-economic impacts of IAS, including effects on biodiversity, agriculture, and livelihoods.
    - Knowledge-sharing platforms strengthen collaboration between communities, authorities, and neighboring areas, supporting collective stewardship.
4. Policy recognition and strategic planning
    - National environmental policies recognize local knowledge as a complementary source of information for IAS monitoring.
    - The National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) and Invasive Species Pathway Analysis Study Report guide prevention, early detection, and response.
    - Measures are in place to manage key pathways of IAS introduction such as trade, transport, and cross-border movement.
5. Prevention and biosecurity measures at ports of entry
    - Inspections, enforcement checks, and confiscation of prohibited species prevent new IAS introductions.
    - Communities engage in surveillance systems to detect new invasions early, enabling rapid response and potential eradication.
    - Priority IAS have been targeted in sensitive ecosystems, guided by national strategies and pathway management measures.
    - Control programs reduce ecosystem disruption, protect native species and habitats, and limit economic losses in agriculture and natural resource-based livelihoods

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken


Mimisa Pigra semi-aquatic





Xanthium strumarium

Managing Invasive Alien Species in Nyika National Park

Nyika National Park in Malawi is experiencing significant ecological pressure from invasive alien plant species such as Pinus patula and black wattle, which have spread from historical plantations into grasslands and river systems. These species are reducing water availability, altering soil conditions, increasing fire risk and replacing native plants including orchids and crop wild relatives. In response, Malawi is taking actions that support Target 7 by removing invasive pine stands, applying combined physical and chemical control to manage black wattle and strengthening monitoring and research through the Environmental Affairs Department, CABI and local universities. These measures have begun to restore native grasslands and improve water flow, although challenges such as large seed banks, difficult terrain and the scale of infestation remain. The Nyika example shows that coordinated control efforts and ecological monitoring can reduce the impacts of invasive species and protect biodiversity.

Link: https://mwnation.com/invasive-species-turn-thorny-to-biodiversity/

Case Study 2: Using the CABI–Malawi Guide to Strengthen IAS Knowledge

CABI, in partnership with the Malawi Government and the Malawi Herbarium and Botanic Garden, has produced the Guide to the Naturalized and Invasive Plants of Malawi, a comprehensive resource that profiles about 115 alien plant species that are already naturalized or invasive or have the potential to become invasive in Malawi and Zambia. The guide includes detailed descriptions, images and distribution maps for a wide range of taxa including invasive grasses, ferns, aquatic weeds, shrubs, succulents and trees, with high-risk species such as Lantana camara, Hyptis suaveolens, Opuntia stricta and Tithonia diversifolia highlighted. By filling a major information gap related to species identification, distribution and impacts, the guide directly supports the implementation of GBF Target 6 by improving early detection, raising awareness, and strengthening national capacity for prevention and control. It also promotes cross-border cooperation between Malawi, Zambia and other SADC countries, which is essential for managing shared invasive species. Developed under a UNEP–GEF project, the guide enhances policy development, supports Malawi's commitments under the CBD and IPPC, and contributes to sustainable development by ensuring that decision-makers, researchers and communities have the knowledge needed to address IAS threats effectively.

Link: https://blog.invasive-species.org/2024/05/13/cabi-publishes-guide-to-the-naturalized-and-invasive-plants-of-malawi/



Despite the progress made, several challenges continue to limit the full achievement of National Target 8. The table below outlines the main challenges and possible approaches to strengthen future;

Table 8: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 7

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Limited integration of community and scientific data on IAS.	Develop GIS-compatible databases combining community observations and scientific monitoring for national and sub-national IAS management.
Insufficient enforcement of IAS regulations, particularly at local and district levels.	Build capacity of local authorities, involve communities in monitoring compliance, and establish clear protocols and penalties.
Resource and funding constraints limiting long-term monitoring and control efforts.	Mobilize sustainable financing (government budgets, environmental funds, partner support) to support community-led monitoring, control operations, and awareness campaigns.
Knowledge gaps due to incomplete documentation of IAS occurrences and impacts.	Strengthen systematic data collection and continuous training for communities and authorities on IAS identification and reporting.
Climate change increasing IAS risks by altering ecosystem conditions.	Integrate climate considerations into IAS management by prioritizing resilient native species and adjusting management plans.
Loss of native habitats and species, causing ecosystem disruption.	Implement ecosystem-based management and restoration measures, including IAS removal and native vegetation restoration.
Crop destruction and impacts on food security from IAS.	Promote integrated pest and IAS management, combining scientific methods and community practices, supported with training and extension services.
High economic costs of IAS control and damage repair.	Focus on preventive biosecurity, early detection, rapid response, and cost-benefit analyses of prevention versus long-term control.
Limited cross-border coordination in transboundary landscapes.	Establish joint monitoring with neighbouring countries, harmonize protocols, and integrate IAS into regional conservation policies.

Target Contribution to SDGs



This target contributes primarily to SDG 15 (Life on Land) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water) by reducing the impacts of invasive alien species (IAS) on terrestrial, freshwater, and aquatic ecosystems, thereby protecting biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. It also supports SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 1 (No Poverty) by minimizing IAS-related damage to agriculture, fisheries, grazing lands, and natural resources that sustain livelihoods and food security. Additionally, it advances SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) through the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in decision-making, SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by strengthening environmental governance and regulatory enforcement, and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through cross-border collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Furthermore, the target aligns with global and regional biodiversity and climate commitments by enhancing ecosystem resilience and supporting effective biodiversity conservation.



2.1.8 National target 8

Reduce pollution risks and its negative impacts by at least 10% from all sources by 2035, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystems functions and services.

Main Action Undertaken

Malawi through the Pesticides Control Board has developed legislative frameworks (Act, Policy and Regulations that regulate importation, trading and utilization of agrochemicals) ensuring that the right agrochemicals are imported in Malawi and are utilized within their shelve lives and in the safest way to protect humans and other forms of biodiversity.

For the reporting period, Malawi through the Pests Control Board, managed to

1. Updated the pesticides regulations of 2023 that allowed inclusion of stock piling and environmental pollutions and safety issues
2. Gazetted the updated regulations.
3. Conducted compliance checks on the regulations

Through the Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi developed other institutional frame works to support biodiversity and ecosystems functioning.

In the reporting period, Malawi managed to draft and validate the Malawi Fertilizer and Soil health Action Plan ensuring that terrestrial biodiversity is sustainably conserved.

1. This strategy recognises that Malawi's soils are not acidic and aim to maintain the status quoi through implementing measures that improve the soil health with pillars 1, 2, and 3 focusing on Soil Health and Fertilizer Reforms, Sustainable Land Use, Soil and Water Conservation and Soil Health Research and Fertilizer Development;
2. The actions under these pillars aim to maintain or improve soil health and prevent environmental pollution while encouraging soil productivity.

Through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, Malawi has established several key laws and regulations to control pollution and ensure environmental protection:

1. Environment Management Act (EMA): Governs waste and pollution control, covering hazardous waste, and enforcing the polluter pays principle. It also mandates Environmental Impact Assessments for development projects and authorizes licensing for pollutant discharges.
2. Waste Management Regulations (2000, 2008): Address classification, treatment, recycling, and disposal of solid, liquid, and hazardous waste.
3. Water Pollution Regulations (2018): Regulate effluent discharges to meet water quality standards.
4. Plastics Regulations (2015): Control the production, trade, and use of thin plastics to curb plastic pollution.
5. Chemical Substances Act (2003): Regulates the safe import, use, and disposal of chemicals to prevent environmental contamination.
6. Revised the Environment Management (Chemicals and Toxic Substances) Regulations of 2008 in 2020
7. Developed the Environment Management (Plastic Regulations) 2015

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

Progress made includes the submission of draft revised regulations on chemicals and toxic substances to the Ministry of Justice for legal vetting, enhanced compliance monitoring and enforcement activities, increased public awareness campaigns on pollution risks, approximately 70% implementation of the enacted Pesticides Act, and awareness creation on pesticide safety and safeguards. In addition, following validation of the soil health strategy, several initiatives have been introduced across relevant ministries to promote conservation of terrestrial biodiversity.

Table 9: : Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 8.

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Delays in vetting the draft regulations by the Ministry of Justice since their submission in 2020.	Proposed approaches include sustained engagement with the Ministry of Justice to expedite the vetting process.
Continued concerns over single-use plastics despite the court lifting the plastics ban.	Strengthening border patrols to curb the smuggling of plastics, intensifying compliance monitoring and enforcement. Scaling up awareness and advocacy on pollution reduction measures and associated environmental and health risks.

Target's Contribution to the SDGs



This target contributes to SDG 6.3 (Clean Water and Sanitation) by improving water quality through reducing pollution, minimizing untreated wastewater, and promoting safe wastewater reuse, with progress measured through indicators 6.3.1 (proportion of wastewater safely treated) and 6.3.2 (ambient water quality), which demonstrate reductions in nutrient loading and related interventions. It also supports SDG 14.1 (Life Below Water) by reducing marine and aquatic pollution, particularly nutrient pollution and eutrophication, tracked through indicator 14.1.1(a) (coastal eutrophication index). In relation to pesticides and hazardous chemicals, the target advances SDG 12.4 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by promoting environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes throughout their life cycle, with indicators 12.4.2(a/b) measuring hazardous waste generation and treatment capacity, while also contributing to SDG 3.9 (Good Health and Well-being) by reducing deaths and illnesses caused by hazardous chemicals and pollution, monitored through indicators 3.9.1–3.9.3. Furthermore, the target supports efforts to address plastics and waste pollution under SDG 14.1 and SDG 12.5, with indicators 14.1.1(b) (floating plastic debris density) and 12.5.1 (national recycling rate) providing evidence of progress in preventing plastic pollution, improving waste management, and promoting circular economy approaches



2.1.9 National target 9

Minimize the impact of climate change on biodiversity and increase its adaptive capacity to build resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk management actions, including through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches by 2035.

Main Actins Undertaken

Malawi is implementing Target 9 through a coherent set of policy, programmatic and on the ground measures that integrate climate change adaptation with biodiversity conservation. Key actions include the revision of the National Agricultural Policy (2024), which strengthens the resilience of crop production systems through crop diversification and climate-smart agriculture, and the development of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Plant Genetic Resources Conservation, promoting regenerative and agroecological practices, on-farm conservation of genetic resources, access and benefit sharing, disaster risk management, and crop restoration in disaster-affected areas.

Climate-smart agricultural technologies such as drought-tolerant and water-efficient crops, agroforestry, soil and water conservation measures, and renewable-energy-based irrigation systems is being scaled up while reducing emissions from deforestation and land-use change under the Forestry and Other Land Use (FOLU) approach. Ecosystem-based adaptation and restoration are being advanced through large-scale initiatives, including the FAO–GCF EbAM programme restoring degraded landscapes and strengthening community resilience, community-led forest regeneration, nature-based solutions, bamboo and reforestation programmes, and sustainable land management projects. These efforts are complemented by improved early warning systems for climate and health risks, strengthened policy and governance frameworks, promotion of alternative energy to reduce forest pressure, and targeted biodiversity conservation actions under the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, collectively enhancing ecosystem resilience, safeguarding genetic diversity, and strengthening adaptive capacity to climate shocks.

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

Malawi is advancing this national target by promoting the sustainable use and management of wild species to deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits, especially for vulnerable communities. Actions include strengthened partnerships in protected area management, species conservation, genetic resource preservation, and invasive species control, led by agencies and trusts such as African Parks, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre, and Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust. Community-based initiatives provide sustainable livelihoods through activities like beekeeping, mushroom farming, and climate-resilient alternatives to wood fuel, while environmental education and ecosystem-based adaptation projects enhance resilience of ecosystems and communities.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of Measures/Actions Undertaken

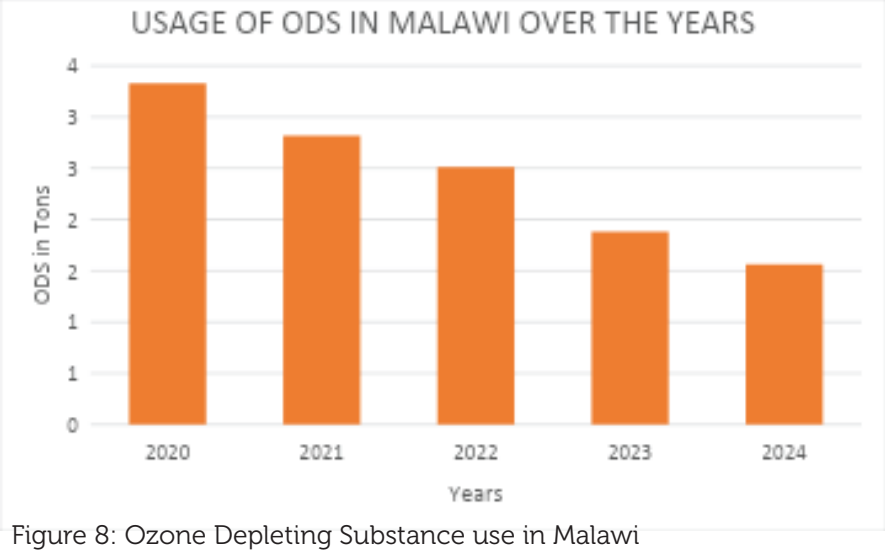


Figure 8: Ozone Depleting Substance use in Malawi

Interventions conducted to promote use of cleaner gases has proven effective in reducing the amount of ozone depleting substances usage in the country (figure 8).

A good example is the revision of the NAP 2018-2023 to include policy outcome 3.2.2. Emphasizing on strengthening resilience of crop production systems to climate and other shocks that was absent in the previous Policy.

Another example is the deliberate inclusion of measures for disaster risk management that include genetic resources restoration and conducting rescue missions.

Climate-smart agriculture and solar irrigation (e.g., UNDP's Greening Malawi initiative) improve food security and soil productivity, while also enhancing resilience against climate shocks



Table 10: : Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 9

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Limited and inconsistent financing.	Scale up and diversify biodiversity and climate finance through BIOFIN solutions, including environmental levies, green bonds, payments for ecosystem services and blended finance models, while reducing long-term donor dependency
Low institutional and technical capacity	Strengthen the capacity of local governments, community institutions and technical staff through targeted training in ecosystem-based adaptation, climate-smart planning, monitoring and reporting.
Deforestation and land degradation	Implement nature-based solutions such as agroforestry, watershed protection, landscape restoration and wetland rehabilitation, alongside strengthened enforcement of forestry and environmental regulations.
Climate-related disasters (floods, droughts and cyclones)	Expand early warning systems and climate services to vulnerable and remote areas and integrate climate information into agriculture extension services, disaster preparedness and local development planning.
Community livelihood pressures and weak incentives.	Promote community-based adaptation and alternative livelihoods, including climate-smart agriculture, sustainable energy options and restoration-linked income opportunities, while improving land tenure security.
Fragmented data and weak monitoring systems.	Establish a centralized climate–biodiversity monitoring and data platform and strengthen partnerships with research institutions to support evidence-based decision-making and progress tracking.
Weak institutional governance and policy coherence.	Harmonize and align national development, climate and biodiversity policies and strategies (e.g. NAP, NBSAP, NDCs and DRM frameworks) to support integrated implementation.
Inadequate technical backstopping for ecosystem and nature-based approaches.	Strengthen national technical support mechanisms and partnerships to guide the design, implementation and scaling up of ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solutions.
Lack of standardized resilience and impact metrics.	Develop nationally agreed standards and indicators for measuring ecosystem resilience and quantifying climate change and biodiversity intervention impacts.
Underutilization of technologies for genetic resources conservation	Promote adoption of climate-smart, digital and biotechnological tools that support sustainable conservation, use and documentation of plant genetic resources and agro-biodiversity.
Constraints in renewable energy adoption.	Address intermittency and high upfront costs of renewable energy through incentives, subsidies, hybrid systems and decentralized energy solutions to reduce pressure on forest resources.
Limited public awareness and skills development.	Enhance education, awareness and human and institutional capacity in climate change mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction and early warning systems.
Weak multi-sectoral coordination.	Strengthen coordination mechanisms across agriculture, water, energy, forestry and environment sectors to enable integrated planning and implementation

Target's Contribution to SDGs



Target 9 effective implementation contributes significantly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by linking biodiversity conservation with climate resilience and sustainable development. The target directly advances SDG 13 (Climate Action), particularly Targets 13.1 and 13.2, by strengthening resilience and integrating climate change measures into national planning through ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation approaches. It also contributes to SDG 15 (Life on Land), Targets 15.1, 15.2 and 15.5, by protecting and restoring terrestrial ecosystems to enhance biodiversity resilience to climate change. Through ecosystem-based management of aquatic systems, the target supports SDG 14 (Life Below Water), Target 14.2, by safeguarding marine and freshwater ecosystems from climate-related degradation. Additionally, it advances SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), Target 11.5, and SDG 1 (No Poverty), Target 1.5, by reducing disaster risks and protecting vulnerable communities from climate-related shocks through nature-based solutions. By promoting sustainable ecosystem management that supports food systems and livelihoods, it also contributes to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), Target 2.4. Overall, the target strengthens climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and disaster risk reduction while promoting integrated ecosystem-based approaches that deliver multiple sustainable development benefits.

2.1.10 National target 10

By 2035, wild species are sustainably utilized and managed providing social, economic, and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations whose livelihoods are mostly dependent on biodiversity

Main Actions Undertaken

Key measures undertaken under this target include strengthening partnerships in biodiversity management and species conservation, with organizations like African Parks managing major protected areas, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre leading rescue, translocation, and education programs, and the National Plant Genetic Resource Centre conserving genetic resources. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife addresses invasive species, while trusts such as Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust and WESM implement species and ecosystem-focused interventions. Community engagement and sustainable livelihoods are promoted through conservation-linked economic incentives such as beekeeping, energy efficient stoves, mushroom farming, and climate-resilient alternatives to wood fuel and environmental education programs led by the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust. Additionally, ecosystem-based adaptation initiatives, including the Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change Adaptation Programme and the EbAM project, enhance resilience of watersheds and communities.

Summary of progress and main Outcomes

Malawi is advancing this national target by promoting the sustainable use and management of wild species to deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits, especially for vulnerable communities. Actions include strengthened partnerships in protected area management, species conservation, genetic resource preservation, and invasive species control, led by agencies and trusts such as African Parks, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre, and Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust. Community-based initiatives provide sustainable livelihoods through activities like beekeeping, mushroom farming, and climate-resilient alternatives to wood fuel, while environmental education and ecosystem-based adaptation projects enhance resilience of ecosystems and communities.

Case Study: Enhanced Wildlife Restoration & Tourism in Majete Wildlife Reserve, Liwonde and Kasungu National Parks. • Improved wildlife stocking from near-extinction to "Big Five" status. • A sharp rise in tourism: from 315 visitors in 2006 to approximately 7,000 by 2016, producing around US$400,000 in revenue.

Case Study 2: Elephant Relocations for Balanced Ecosystems • Over 520 elephants and thousands of other animals successfully relocated from Liwonde and Majete to Nkhotakota between 2016–2017. • Translocated 263 elephants (plus 431 other animals) from Liwonde to Kasungu National Park in July 2022. A year later, Kasungu's elephant population had increased significantly, boosting tourism thereby providing social, economic, and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations

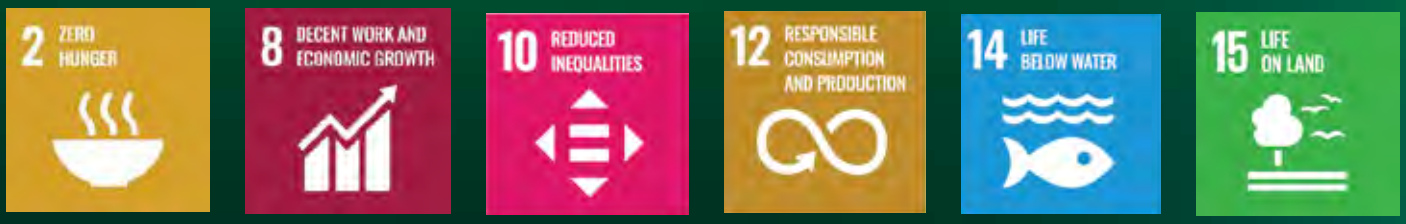
Enhanced stakeholder engagement and partnerships

- Improved Access and Benefits Sharing of resources between communities and park authorities around Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve
- Community participation in reforestation and soil conservation around Michiru and Dedza Mountains has improved through programs funded by Malawi Environmental Education Trust.

Table 11: Table 11: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 10

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Human–Wildlife Conflict (HWC) during elephant translocations leading to fatalities, crop destruction, and local protests.	Strengthen Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
Inadequate Conflict Compensation and Access & Benefits Sharing.	Enhance Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) approaches and strengthen governance systems to ensure equitable benefit-sharing, improved community participation, and transparent compensation mechanisms for affected communities.
Habitat Degradation & Fragmentation	Scale up landscape restoration initiatives through afforestation, habitat rehabilitation, establishment of wildlife corridors, and promotion of sustainable land-use practices to restore ecosystem connectivity and resilience.
Weak Enforcement of legislation leading to wildlife poaching, illegal logging, and wildlife trafficking in protected areas due to limited resources	Strengthen national capacity for law enforcement and monitoring through increased funding, training of enforcement personnel, improved surveillance technologies, inter-agency coordination, and stronger community participation in conservation efforts.
Climate change impacts such as Droughts, floods, and unpredictable rainfall patterns threaten both species and the livelihoods of biodiversity-dependent communities	Strengthen climate resilience of biodiversity projects through ecosystem-based adaptation measures, climate-smart conservation strategies, restoration of degraded ecosystems, and integration of climate change considerations into biodiversity planning and management.
Shrinking Donor Support	Institutionalize biodiversity finance mechanisms and undertake natural capital accounting to demonstrate the economic value of biodiversity and support sustainable financing through public investment, private sector engagement, and innovative financing mechanisms.
Biodiversity data gaps due to weak monitoring systems hindering evidence-based decision-making	Improve biodiversity data management systems, monitoring frameworks, and research programmes through investment in digital technologies, regular field assessments, and collaboration with academic and research institutions. Strengthen climate resilience of biodiversity projects.
Lack of guidelines on compensation and consolation	Develop and operationalize clear guidelines and frameworks for compensation, consolation, and benefit-sharing to improve community trust, participation, and support for conservation initiatives.
Limited integration between ILK and scientific datasets.	Promote documentation, preservation, and integration of Indigenous and Local Knowledge through participatory research, knowledge-sharing platforms, and inclusion of local communities in biodiversity planning and decision-making processes.

Targets Contribution to SDGs



The target contributes primarily to SDG 15: Life on Land (Targets 15.1, 15.5, 15.9) through the conservation and sustainable use of wild species and ecosystems; SDG 14: Life Below Water (Targets 14.2, 14.4) through sustainable management of aquatic species; SDG 1: No Poverty (Targets 1.4, 1.5) by sustaining biodiversity-based livelihoods and building resilience of vulnerable communities; SDG 2: Zero Hunger (Targets 2.3, 2.4) by supporting food security through sustainable use of wild biological resources; SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (Targets 8.3, 8.4) by promoting sustainable biodiversity-based enterprises and green livelihoods; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities (Target 10.2) through inclusive and equitable benefit-sharing; and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production (Target 12.2) by ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources.



2.1.11 National target 11

By 2035 areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are sustainably managed contributing to the resilience, long-term efficiency and ecosystem productivity, and maintaining nature's contributions to people

Main Actions Undertaken

On the agriculture sector, through the Department of Land Resources Conservation, Malawi has embraced a range of policy reforms such as Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy (ALRMP) and National Agriculture Policy (NAP) and multi-stakeholder projects aimed at reversing land degradation and embedding sustainable land management in agriculture. Actions span from the following: Soil and water conservation for soil erosion control and boosting soil organic carbon on croplands. Forest restoration that brings multiple benefits including soil health and fertility improvement, drought and flood mitigation, Watershed/catchment rehabilitation to improve water availability, reduced nutrient runoff, and support biodiversity in the agricultural landscapes. Institutional strengthening that aims at capacity building, enforcements, sustainability, resources mobilization and increasing access to climate financing among others. Private Sector Engagement that will broaden investment capital, market access, technology and innovations in sustainable agriculture land management. Community driven approaches to promote stronger adoption, cost effectiveness, social cohesion, resilience and knowledge sharing of sustainable agriculture interventions and fisheries management.



Restoration Achievements

- Under AFR100, Malawi has restored approximately 40% of degraded land.
- A number donor funded projects such as Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project (MWASIP), Climate Smart Public Works Programme (CS-PWP), Sustainable Management of Landscapes (SAMALA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), SLM stands for Sustainable Land Management, Adaptation Fund has made significant restoration efforts in catchment rehabilitation, Agroforestry adoption, and other restoration interventions

Summary of Progress and Main Outcome

1. **Ecosystems restoration:** Malawi has made significant gains in tree planting, Agroforestry and watershed and catchment rehabilitations that has led to improvement in soil stability and local biodiversity.
2. **Climate Resilience:** Where forests and catchment areas including agriculture landscapes have been restored, there some indicators of reduced soil erosion, improved water retention and some farms buffered against drought and floods.
3. **Livelihood improvements:** Farmers adopting sustainable land management intervention report higher yields and income levels especially for maize production than those farmers still practicing conventional farming.
4. **Capacity Building:** With various projects and programs adopting integrated catchment management approach in SLM, there has been enhanced community skills and knowledge in land rehabilitation and sustainable agriculture techniques in Malawi.

Case Studies and Effectiveness of the Measures

Case Study 1: Community-Led Landscape Restoration

Under MWASIP, communities in degraded watershed areas adopted restoration practices such as tree planting, natural regeneration, contour bunding, and riverbank protection. Local farmer groups were trained in sustainable land management and agroforestry, enabling them to restore previously eroded farmland and protect water sources.

As a result, thousands of hectares of degraded land were rehabilitated, soil erosion was significantly reduced, and vegetation cover increased. Communities reported improved soil fertility, better crop yields, and more reliable water availability during dry periods. The project also created short-term employment through restoration activities while strengthening community stewardship of natural resources. This success demonstrates how community participation, ecosystem restoration, and livelihood support can simultaneously enhance biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and rural incomes

Table 12: Table 12: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation Target 11

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Large area under degradation: In 2020, 75% of Malawi's land was classified as degraded and to restore such a big land require massive resources and sustained coordination.	There is need to prioritize high impact catchments and adopt low-cost restoration interventions such as in-situ water harvesting, natural regeneration, use of organic soil amendments.
Population pressure and land fragmentation: This has resulted into over-cultivation of available land parcels with little or no room for fallow and natural regeneration. Expansion into marginal areas has increased land degradation risks.	Promote intensive, sustainable agriculture to increase yields on small plots. Develop several off-farm livelihoods to reduce pressure on land.
Climate Change impacts: Restoration efforts by various projects and programs are damaged by more frequent droughts, floods and cyclones in Malawi. Extreme events have washed away crops, tree seedlings and top soils.	Promote and scale up integration of climate smart agriculture, flood control measures and drought tolerant crop varieties in all restoration programs.
Weak monitoring and data systems: There are glaring gaps in nation-wide land health monitoring soil organic carbon tracking and land degradation mapping. Inconsistencies in reporting make it even difficult to assess real progress towards achieving target 11	Integrate national land health monitoring indicators in existing monitoring systems or establish a standalone land health monitoring centre. Utilise satellite-based degradation tracking and Link restoration data to relevant policy decisions useful in developing land restoration policy briefs.
Limited financing and investment: Malawi rely heavily on donor funding to implement land restoration projects.	Create blended financing mechanisms (Donor, Private sectors and Government). Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy has singled out establishment of SLM Trust Fund at Council level as one such blended financing mechanism. Create and intensify carbon credit programs Mainstream payment for eco-system services models in all restoration and catchment rehabilitation programs and projects. Increase in pollution and improper waste management

Targets Contribution to SDGs



The target, contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their specific targets. It primarily supports SDG 15: Life on Land, particularly Target 15.1 (conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems), Target 15.2 (sustainable management of forests and halting deforestation), Target 15.3 (combating desertification and restoring degraded land), and Target 15.5 (reducing degradation of natural habitats and halting biodiversity loss) through sustainable land and forest management practices. It directly contributes to SDG 2: Zero Hunger, especially Target 2.3 (doubling agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers) and Target 2.4 (ensuring sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices) by promoting sustainable agriculture and improved ecosystem productivity. The target also supports SDG 14: Life Below Water, particularly Target 14.2 (sustainably manage and protect marine and aquatic ecosystems) and Target 14.4 (effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing) through sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management. It contributes to SDG 13: Climate Action, especially Target 13.1 (strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards) and Target 13.2 (integrate climate change measures into policies and planning) by enhancing ecosystem resilience and supporting ecosystem-based climate adaptation. Additionally, it supports SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, particularly Target 12.2 (achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources) through resource-efficient production systems; SDG 1: No Poverty, especially Target 1.5 (build resilience of vulnerable populations to environmental and economic shocks) by sustaining ecosystem-based livelihoods; and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, particularly Target 8.4 (improve resource efficiency in consumption and production and decouple economic growth from environmental degradation) by promoting sustainable, productive, and environmentally responsible natural resource-based economic activities.

2.1.12 National Target 12

Enhance nature's contributions to people by 2035.

Main Action Undertaken to Implement the Target

Malawi has undertaking policy, regulatory, and ecosystem management actions to enhance nature's contributions to people, in urban, peri-urban and rural areas. The Departments of Forestry in collaboration with district and City councils, have developed and enforced environmental bylaws to curb illegal activities such as sand mining, brick moulding, illegal tree felling, and unauthorized quarry mining, supported by routine compliance patrols to protect ecosystems and ecosystem services. Urban ecosystem restoration and greening have been strengthened through annual afforestation initiatives. The Nation has designated yearly National Forestry Season from 15 December to 15 April to take advantage of the rainy season for tree planting activities. For instance, approximately 30,000 tree seedlings are planted each year in Lilongwe City. The establishment and management of public nurseries in the city and district councils provide tree and ornamental seedlings to residents. Sustainable freshwater management has been enhanced through regulation of water abstraction from urban rivers via permitting and licensing systems, ensuring sustainable use and protection of aquatic ecosystems. Cultural and recreational ecosystem services have been improved through the development and management of urban parks, green spaces, dams, and landscaped road reserves, increasing public access to nature and contributing to human well-being. Collectively, these measures demonstrate progress in safeguarding ecosystem services and enhancing nature's contributions to people.

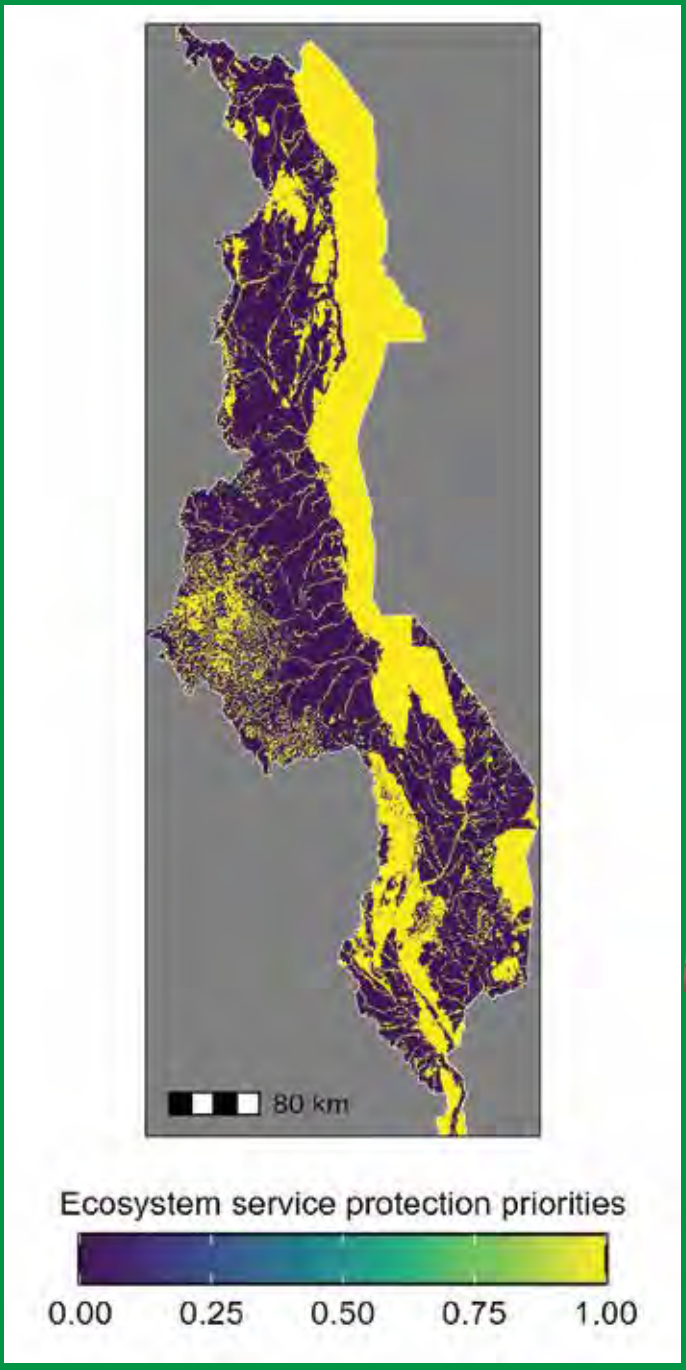
Summary Progress and Main Outcomes

Through various initiatives, Malawi targeted to create and maintain 100 hectares of new parks and recreational areas, fully protect 200 hectares of rivers and wetlands, and reestablish 500 hectares of forestry and agroforestry cover. These are areas in urban and peri-urban location in the country. Key achievements include the following: 1. 30 hectares of new parks have been created (area 10 Dam Park, extension of Eden Park, Public space near area 10 Sana) 2. 135, 000 trees planted along riverbanks of LL, Lingadzi, Mchesi, Nankhaka and Chankhandwe (equivalent to 122 hectares) 289, 500 trees have been planted and distributed to surrounding communities as part of afforestation efforts (equivalent to 263 hectares of forestry cover).

Case Studies and Effectiveness of the Measures

The following are examples from Lilongwe City council in their initiative of urban greening. • The establishment of Area 49 Park (Over 1Ha) • The establishment of area 10 Dam Park (over 2 Ha) • The expansion of Eden Park (over 3 Ha) • Afforestation of over 135,000 trees along the banks of the Lilongwe and Lingadzi rivers. Collaborations with local communities and NGOs have resulted in the distribution and planting of over 289,500 seedlings.





Ecosystem Services provided

Malawi's rich biodiversity provides several ecosystem services that underpins human wellbeing and economic development. The figure below showcases some of the benefits Malawians are enjoying from biodiversity and its diverse ecosystems which include clean water, fish, wild fruits, wildlife that promotes ecotourism among others.



Figure 9: Some ecosystem services and protection levels

Table 13: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 12

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
encroachment of protected riverbanks through farming activities, illegal tree cutting, brick moulding, sand mining, and quarry mining	Malawi is strengthening enforcement of riverbank protection regulations alongside community awareness campaigns, restoration of buffer zones, and promotion of sustainable farming practices outside protected areas and wetlands. Coordinated enforcement and monitoring are being enhanced to curb illegal resource extraction while promoting alternative livelihoods and regulated access to construction materials
weak compliance with city environmental by laws	Compliance with city environmental bylaws is also being improved through strengthened institutional capacity, consistent enforcement, and increased public sensitization on environmental regulations.

Target's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals



Lilongwe's urban biodiversity initiatives significantly advance multiple Sustainable Development Goals while aligning with international frameworks. They enhance SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) through expanded green and blue spaces that improve air quality, recreation, and climate resilience; support SDG 13 (Climate Action) via afforestation and riparian restoration for carbon sequestration and flood protection; promote SDG 15 (Life on Land) by conserving urban forests, wetlands, and riverbanks to halt degradation and boost biodiversity; and ensure SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) through regulated river systems that maintain freshwater quality and availability. These integrated efforts also support the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and African Urban Agenda, balancing urban expansion with environmental sustainability and community well-being.

2.1.13 National target 13

Enhance biodiversity inclusive and sustainable urbanization to increase benefits realized from urban green and blues spaces by 2035

Main action undertaken

Urban ecosystem restoration and greening have been strengthened through annual afforestation initiatives. The Nation has designated yearly National Forestry Season from 15 December to 15 April every. For instance, approximately 30,000 tree seedlings are planted each year in Lilongwe City. The establishment and management of public nurseries in the city and district councils provide tree and ornamental seedlings to residents. Sustainable freshwater management has been enhanced through regulation of water abstraction from urban rivers via permitting and licensing systems, ensuring sustainable use and protection of aquatic ecosystems. Cultural and recreational ecosystem services have been improved through the development and management of urban parks, green spaces, dams, and landscaped road reserves, increasing public access to nature and contributing to human well-being. Designation of genetic reserves in the sanctuary areas and national parks and other recreation centres ensure that the biodiversity in the urban green spaces is sustainably managed. Local biodiversity financing through the introduction of a to access the protected green and blue spaces. Inclusion of conservation actions in the conservation strategy of plant genetic resources targeting biodiversity occurring in the urban green and blue spaces.

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

Through various initiatives, Malawi targeted to create and maintain 100 hectares of new parks and recreational areas, fully protect 200 hectares of rivers and wetlands, and reestablish 500 hectares of forestry and agroforestry cover. These are areas in urban and peri-urban location in the country. Key achievements include the following: 30 hectares of new parks have been created (area 10 Dam Park, extension of Eden Park, Public space near area 10 Sana) 135, 000 trees planted along river banks of LL, Lingadzi, Mchesi, Nankhaka and Chankhandwe (equivalent to 122 hectares) 289, 500 trees have been planted and distributed to surrounding communities as part of afforestation efforts (equivalent to 263 hectares of forestry cover). Inclusion of conservation agricultural related species in the green and blue spaces draft strategy was reviewed. Genetic Reserves were designated in areas of tourists' attraction e.g. National Parks and Forest reserves.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

Target 13 share the same case studies provided under target 12. Many cities in the country are undertaking initiatives to support green and blue spaces in urban areas. The figure below is showing some green spaces managed by Lilongwe City Council in the city Centre of Lilongwe. Similar initiatives are also taking place in Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu.



Figure 10: green spaces in Lilongwe urban area

Table 14: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 13

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Inadequate resources to facilitate the gazetting of critical biodiversity hotspot sites.	Allocate adequate funding and technical support for site gazetting.
The absence of national guidelines for formal delineation of genetic reserves and other key conservation areas.	Develop clear national guidelines for conservation area designation.
Failure to fully implement existing strategies.	Strengthen the implementation and monitoring of biodiversity strategies.
Insufficient data to inform decision-making and limited resources for establishing green facilities.	Improve data collection and management systems, invest in green infrastructure.
Minimal integration of biodiversity considerations in urban planning.	Promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity into urban development planning.



K2.1.14 National target 14

Strengthen effective legal, policy and administrative capacity measures to ensure increase of benefits shared from the utilization of genetic resources, digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as associated traditional knowledge by 2035.

Main action undertaken

Malawi ratified the Nagoya Protocol in 2014, and since then, several administrative and policy measures have been undertaken to establish legal frameworks that support its implementation. The revised Environment Management Act of 2017, under Section 67, provides for access and benefit sharing (ABS). In addition to the Act, the country has developed ABS Guidelines that set out a stepwise process for accessing genetic resources in Malawi and for determining how benefits can subsequently be shared. To strengthen local knowledge and capacity to participate in ABS, the country developed its first Bio-Cultural Community Protocol with communities in Nsanje District, who are sustainably utilizing Jateorhiza palmata. This protocol has downscaled ABS to the community level and streamlined it with local governance structures. It will also serve as a prototype for other communities with genetic resources that attract users and can trigger ABS Mutually Agreed Terms (MATs). There have been ongoing capacity-building initiatives for stakeholders across the country on benefit sharing from ABS. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to, researchers, communities, policymakers, and non-governmental organizations. The ABS National Competent Authority has facilitated the negotiation of ABS contracts, which have resulted in meaningful benefits flowing back to the providers.

Summary of Progress and main outcomes

The development of a Bio-Cultural Community Protocol in Nsanje District has stimulated fair trade in Jateorhiza palmata. Before the protocol, collectors were paid only $0.02 per kilogram of the tuber, but now bio traders are paying $0.35 per kilogram. This improved earning has enabled communities to build better houses and purchase livestock. To reduce pressure on harvesting the tuber from the wild, the country-initiated community research on the domestication of Jateorhiza palmata. Communities successfully harvested their cultivated tubers in December 2024, demonstrating stewardship in the sustainable utilization of genetic resources. Several Mutually Agreed Terms (MATs) have been negotiated for genetic resources from a variety of plants, fish, fungi, and micro-organisms. Benefits received by providers include, but are not limited to, PhD and MSc scholarships, laboratory equipment for research laboratories, office equipment, and community water supply systems. The country has also streamlined ABS in non-traditional natural resource sectors such as public health. Extensive consultations were held between the National Competent Authority and the Ministry of Health on the scope of ABS for materials like human stool. The Ministry has successfully integrated ABS into its National Research Guidelines and Material Transfer Agreements. Malawi has recently concluded a MAT with a European user on the use of soil microbial diversity through Digital Sequence Information (DSI). The MAT is for commercial purposes, and an agreed percentage of royalties will be paid to providers upon discovery of any commercial application arising from the sequenced data originating from Malawi.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

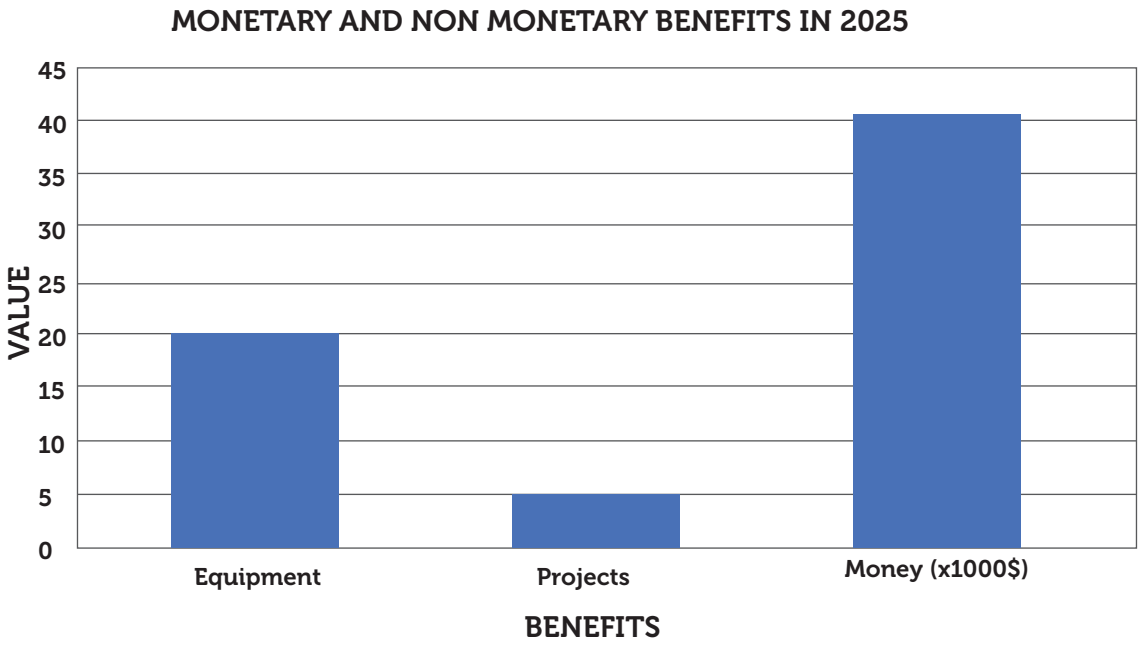


Figure 11: Monetary and non-monetary benefits in 2025

The country received 40,226 USD and assorted equipment and five projects as benefits from utilization of genetic resources as indicated in figure xxx above.





Domestication of Jateorhiza palmata
https://times.mw/planting-roots-of-wealth-domesticating-nsanje-districts-wonder tuber DSI for Commercial use

https://share.google/RP3LTdw08M9woY0t

Table 15: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 14

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Difficult to monitor the use of genetic resources once they leave the country.	Strengthen national monitoring and tracking systems for genetic resources, including the development of digital traceability tools and databases. Enhance international cooperation and compliance mechanisms to ensure transparency in the use of genetic resources and associated Digital Sequence Information (DSI).
	In addition, strengthen legal and institutional frameworks to support transboundary tracking and benefit-sharing.
Inadequate ABS capacity in both sectors and communities that provide these resources, which makes it challenging to effectively negotiate MATs	Investing in national and community-level monitoring systems, strengthening legal and institutional frameworks to track transboundary use of genetic resources, enhancing awareness and negotiation skills among providers, fostering partnerships with international research institutions, and leveraging digital technologies to improve traceability of genetic resources and DSI.

Target's Contribution to SDGs



Implementation of Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) measures contributes to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by linking biodiversity, genetic resources, and equitable development. It directly supports SDG 15 (Life on Land), Targets 15.6 and 15.9, by promoting fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources and integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning. It advances SDG 14 (Life Below Water), Target 14.7, by increasing economic benefits from sustainable marine resource use, and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), Target 2.5, by maintaining genetic diversity of crops, livestock, and related wild species through ABS arrangements. EN The target also contributes to SDG 1 (No Poverty), Target 1.4, by ensuring equitable access to natural resources for vulnerable communities and strengthens SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), Targets 17.6 and 17.16, through international cooperation and global partnerships for sustainable development.

Overall, ABS implementation fosters biodiversity conservation while promoting equitable resource use, sustainable livelihoods, and international collaboration. Implementation of Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) measures under this target contributes primarily to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by operationalizing its Nagoya Protocol, which ensures fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promotes sustainable use. It also supports the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) by maintaining the genetic diversity of crops and related wild species and facilitating access and benefit-sharing mechanisms that enhance food security and agricultural resilience. Through these frameworks, the target strengthens biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use, and equitable benefits for local communities and stakeholder

2.1.15 National target 15

Integrate biodiversity into development planning and natural capital accounting by 2035

Main action undertaken

A key step in integrating biodiversity into development is a clear understanding of its value. In Malawi, several studies have been carried out by different actors and institutions to assess and demonstrate the importance of biodiversity. As part of this effort, spatial products have been produced to estimate biomass and the extent of natural assets, contributing to ecosystem valuation. The country has already implemented the Mapping Biodiversity Priorities Project and is now undertaking the Spatial Biodiversity Assessment, Planning and Prioritization initiative (SBAPP). These processes have generated maps of key ecosystems and provided insights into their current condition. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) continues to serve as an important tool for embedding environmental considerations in development projects. The Government of Malawi revised its ESIA guidelines in 2025, to incorporate biodiversity. This update has strengthened opportunities for biodiversity to be taken into account in development planning. In addition, through the ongoing NBSAP updating process, Malawi is developing a Natural Capital Accounting framework for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. This framework is designed to improve data collection and to capture the contribution of these sectors to the national economy. By making the values of biodiversity more visible, the framework will help ensure that ecosystems are more systematically integrated into development decisions



Summary progress and main Outcomes

Studies on ecosystem valuation have increasingly improved understanding of biodiversity among non-environmental sectors. Several ecosystems now have recognized economic values. For example, Mwakwinja et al. (2021) estimated the value of Lake Malombe at US$124.36 million per year. The World Bank country assessment report of 2019 highlighted that forestry contributes about 5% of the national wealth, while Forsythe and Turpie (2016) estimated the value of ecosystem services in Elephant Marsh ranging between US$8 and 268 million per annum. These findings are supporting the integration of biodiversity considerations into development planning.

The Spatial Biodiversity Assessment, Planning and Prioritisation (SBAPP) has produced ecosystem maps that have been instrumental in identifying key biodiversity areas (KBAs) and designating them for protection. These KBA maps are now informing the ongoing update of the Physical Development Plan and will also be used in Environmental and Social Impact Assessment processes to guide development planning.

The revised Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Guidelines place strong emphasis on the mitigation hierarchy in evaluating development projects and on the use of biodiversity offsets. This approach facilitates the protection of critical habitats and endangered species within development projects. Biodiversity offsets serve not only as a conservation tool but also as an economic instrument to support biodiversity funding. Through the NBSAP updating process, Malawi has developed a tool for Natural Capital Accounting for Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. This tool will help quantify the contribution of these sectors to the economy while highlighting the value of associated ecosystems

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

Biodiversity has been successfully mainstreamed in Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Guidelines. The ESIA assessment tool has comprehensively considerations on biodiversity and ecosystem status map are among the reference document that are informing assessments. The Department of Physical Planning were engaged to integrate biodiversity in the physical and land use planning (photo above). Ecosystem status maps and maps for key Biodiversity Areas were instrumental in guiding engagement with the sector which also included the Mining and Tourism sectors.

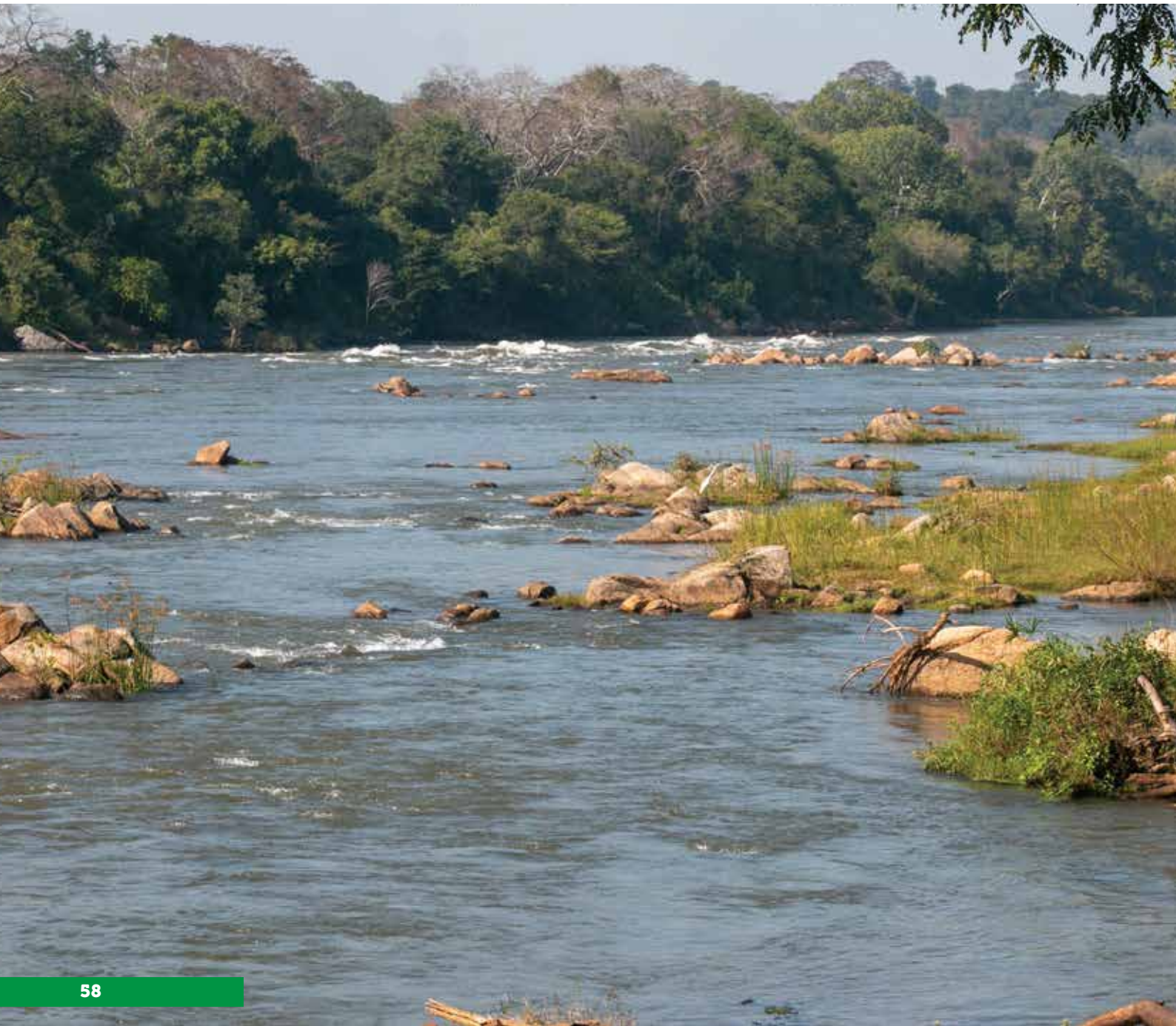
Table 16: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 15

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited number of ecosystems have been assessed due to resource constraints	Increase investment in biodiversity assessment and monitoring through enhanced government budget allocation and mobilization of partner support. Prioritize ecosystem assessments based on ecological significance and risk levels. Strengthen collaboration with academic and research institutions, and adopt cost-effective approaches such as remote sensing, GIS tools, and citizen science to expand ecosystem coverage.

Targets Contribution to SDGs



The target, "Integrate biodiversity into development planning and natural capital accounting by 2035," primarily contributes to SDG 15: Life on Land by promoting the sustainable management of forests, combating desertification, restoring degraded land, and halting biodiversity loss. It also indirectly supports SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities through the integration of biodiversity considerations into urban and regional planning; SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by encouraging the sustainable use and management of natural resources; SDG 13: Climate Action by enhancing ecosystem protection, climate resilience, and carbon sequestration; and SDG 14: Life Below Water through the inclusion of aquatic and coastal biodiversity considerations in integrated development planning and resource management.



2.1.16 National Target 16

Establish legal and administrative measures for businesses and financial institutions to assess and disclose their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity by 2035

Main action undertaken to implement the target

The Government of Malawi is implementing this target by developing, updating, and enforcing policies, legal instruments, and regulatory frameworks that require businesses to assess and disclose their environmental and biodiversity impacts prior to the commencement of major projects. Key instruments include the National Environment Policy, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Guidelines, the Environment Management (Waste Management and Sanitation) Regulations (2008), and standards enforced under the Malawi Bureau of Standards Act. Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments ensure that biodiversity considerations are incorporated into project design, implementation, and monitoring, thereby avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating adverse impacts on ecosystems and species. Compliance is further supported through environmental licensing conditions, routine inspections, and environmental audits enforced by the Malawi Environmental Protection Authority (MEPA) in collaboration with relevant institutions. The Government has also undertaken capacity-building initiatives through training programmes, technical guidance, and provision of resources to government officers, private sector actors, and other stakeholders to strengthen understanding and implementation of biodiversity assessment, risk management, and disclosure practices. These efforts support improved compliance, reporting, and accountability across sectors

Target Progress and main Outcomes

Significant progress has been made in integrating biodiversity considerations into development planning and business operations. By law, most development projects in Malawi are required to undergo Environmental and Social Impact Assessments prior to implementation, ensuring that biodiversity issues are identified and addressed early in project design. Environmental audits and post-approval monitoring have increasingly been used to track compliance with mitigation measures and license conditions. In the manufacturing sector, compliance with national and international standards is mandatory before products can be sold locally or exported, strengthening environmental accountability and reducing pollution-related impacts on biodiversity. Some large-scale agribusinesses, infrastructure projects, and extractive operations have begun integrating biodiversity safeguards and environmental performance reporting as part of corporate EN sustainability and compliance requirements. Stakeholder engagement processes involving government institutions, the private sector, civil society, and development partners have resulted in the establishment of collaborative platforms for sharing best practices on biodiversity assessment, reporting, and compliance. These platforms have encouraged a more coordinated and coherent approach to biodiversity management across sectors. Furthermore, alignment with international biodiversity initiatives has strengthened Malawi's institutional capacity and facilitated access to resources and expertise that support implementation of biodiversity-related safeguards at national and subnational levels.

Case study

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment processes have resulted in project redesigns, strengthened mitigation measures, and avoidance of environmentally sensitive areas in sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, manufacturing, and extractives. Environmental audits and compliance monitoring have contributed to improved waste management practices, pollution control, and reduced biodiversity impacts, demonstrating the effectiveness of legal and administrative measures in influencing business behavior.

Table 17: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 16

Challenges	Approaches to Further Implementation
Financial constraints limiting effective monitoring, inspection, and enforcement of environmental regulations.	Lobbying for increased budgetary allocation to the Environment and Natural. Engaging financial institutions to integrate biodiversity considerations into lending, investment, and risk assessment criteria.
Limited number of government officers to follow up on compliance of development projects Low awareness and limited understanding of biodiversity issues among many businesses, reducing compliance with assessment and disclosure requirements.	Resources Management (ENRM) sector during Parliamentary budget sessions.
Absence of an inventory or earmarked financing mechanisms within financial institutions (e.g. biodiversity or carbon-related levies) dedicated to biodiversity conservation.	Enhancing business registration and compliance procedures to enable tracking of biodiversity safeguards (e.g. through the Malawi Revenue Authority and Registrar of Businesses).
Limited integration of biodiversity considerations within financial risk assessment frameworks.	Requiring banks to explicitly include environmental and biodiversity risks as part of credit and investment risk assessments.

Target's Contribution to SDGs





Implementation of this target will contributes directly to SDG 12, Target 12.6 that encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle and SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institution, Targets 16.6, 16.7 and 16.10 which aim to develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels, ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making and ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms respectively.

2.1.17 National target 17

Strengthen implementation of biosafety measures while embracing benefits from biotechnology by 2035

Main action undertaken to implement the target

During the reporting period, several actions were undertaken to strengthen biosafety regulation and implementation. Key measures included the development of guidelines to support effective implementation of the Biosafety Act, including guidelines introduced in 2022 on genome editing and the regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) with stacked events. Capacity-building initiatives were conducted to enhance technical competencies, particularly through training of staff involved in confined field trials for GMO maize and strengthening compliance monitoring mechanisms under the Biosafety Act. Progress was also made toward improving the legal framework, with stakeholder consultations undertaken as part of the ongoing revision of the Biosafety Act (2002) to address emerging technologies and regulatory gaps. In addition, permits for GMOs were granted in accordance with established regulatory procedures, demonstrating continued operationalization of biosafety oversight and decision-making processes

Safety Assessment of food and feed derived from GM crops, guidelines for regulating stack events, genome editing guidelines have been developed to support effective implementation of the Biosafety Act. Capacity building initiatives have been conducted to raise awareness on biosafety and emerging technologies. Stakeholder consultations on revision of the biosafety act to enhance transparency and inclusive planning and decision making.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures



Figure 12: One of the GM Maize CFT site

Capacity in LMO Detection

The capacity of two laboratories has been strengthened to enable the detection of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs), thereby bringing LMO testing services closer to the public and reducing the need to send samples outside the country. The supported facilities include the Molecular Laboratory at Chitedze Agricultural Research Station and the Biotechnology Laboratory at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). Both laboratories were equipped with specialized LMO testing equipment, and more than 15 technicians from the two institutions received training in LMO detection and analysis. The technical expertise established at LUANAR is expected to ensure sustainability through the integration of LMO testing knowledge into academic training programmes for students. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, LUANAR supported the health sector by serving as a COVID-19 testing centre, leveraging similar laboratory testing procedures and technical capacity.

Table 18: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 17

Challenges	Approaches for Further Implementation
Limited financial, technical and institutional capacity for risk assessment, monitoring, and detection of living modified organisms.	Building national expertise and upgrading laboratory infrastructure for risk assessment and monitoring of living modified organisms, strengthening and updating biosafety legal and regulatory frameworks.
Weak regulatory enforcement and coordination among responsible institutions.	Improving inter-agency coordination.
Insufficient financial resources to support biosafety systems	Mobilizing sustainable financial resources.
Low public awareness and stakeholder engagement	Compliance systems and increasing public awareness and participation through education and outreach programmes.
limited capacity to control transboundary movement of LMOs at border points and inadequate mechanisms for monitoring compliance and enforcing liability and redress provisions.	Enhancing border control and compliance systems.

Target's Contribution to SDG



This target contributes to progress toward several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting safe innovation, sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and human well-being. The target supports SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), particularly Target 2.5, by enabling the safe development and use of biotechnology to improve crop productivity, resilience, and conservation of genetic diversity. It advances SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), Target 3.9, by ensuring biosafety regulations minimize risks to human health and the environment and contributes to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), Target 12.4, through sound management of biotechnology products and potential environmental impacts. The target also supports SDG 15 (Life on Land), Target 15.5, by preventing adverse effects of living modified organisms on biodiversity and strengthens SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), Targets 17.6 and 17.16, through scientific cooperation, technology transfer, and capacity building.

In terms of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the target directly contributes to implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety under the Convention on Biological Diversity, by ensuring the safe handling, transfer, and use of living modified organisms while promoting biotechnology benefits. It also complements the Nagoya Protocol through responsible use of genetic resources and equitable benefit sharing and supports objectives of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture by safeguarding genetic diversity while enabling innovation in agriculture. Overall, implementation of this target balances biosafety risk management with technological advancement, contributing to sustainable development, food security, biodiversity conservation, and responsible scientific progress

2.1.18 National target 18

Reducing harmful subsidies and scale up positive incentives for sustainable management of biodiversity by 2035

Main action undertaken to implement the target

The Government of Malawi, through the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), has launched a comprehensive national subsidy study aimed at identifying, assessing, and prioritizing subsidies that are harmful to biodiversity, while also proposing options for their redesign, repurposing, or phase-out. The study also assesses existing positive subsidies and recommends measures to enhance their effectiveness in supporting biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. In the transport sector, the Ministry of Transport provides incentives to promote cleaner mobility options. Longstanding duty exemptions on large buses have encouraged mass public transport, while recent reforms to vehicle import regulations (2025) extend duty exemptions to electric vehicles and reduce Value Added Tax (VAT) to 8%, regardless of vehicle age, promoting lower-emission transport alternatives. The Ministry of Energy is implementing subsidies that support access to clean and sustainable energy. These include reduced electricity connection fees in rural areas under the Malawi Rural Electrification Programme (MAREP), as well as reduced import duties on solar equipment and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). These measures aim to reduce reliance on fuelwood and charcoal, thereby alleviating pressure on forest ecosystems and biodiversity. In the agriculture sector, the Government has reduced fertilizer subsidies, which has contributed to lowering chemical loads in the environment. Ongoing reforms to the agricultural subsidy programme present opportunities to further repurpose subsidies toward biodiversity-friendly practices, such as climate-smart agriculture, soil and water conservation, and agroecological approaches. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture subsidizes irrigation equipment, which supports efficient water use and helps protect riparian buffer zones by reducing uncontrolled water abstraction and land degradation



Summary Progress and Main Outcomes

Energy sector: Subsidies supporting rural electrification have provided cleaner energy alternatives that reduce pressure on forests. Under MAREP Phase 8, approximately 20,000 households were connected to the national grid, while MAREP Phase 9 connected an additional 46,000 rural households. Increased access to electricity is expected to reduce overreliance on forest biomass for cooking and lighting, thereby protecting forest ecosystems and species habitats.

LPG subsidies have stimulated market growth, with the number of licensed LPG distributors increasing from 33 in 2021 to 64 by 2024, reflecting increased adoption of LPG as a household cooking fuel. Additional incentives support the uptake of biodigesters for biogas production, contributing to reduced biomass use and improved waste management.

Transport sector: Duty exemptions on large buses have enabled private operators to provide intercity public transport services, reducing per capita emissions compared to private vehicle use. • Expanded incentives for electric vehicles under the 2025 vehicle import regulations promote cleaner transport options and reduced pollution.

Agriculture sector: While agricultural subsidies have supported food security, they have also contributed to biodiversity pressures, particularly through increased chemical runoff affecting aquatic ecosystems and groundwater. Recognition of these impacts has informed ongoing reforms aimed at reducing negative biodiversity outcomes and repurposing subsidies toward sustainable and biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

The following initiatives were subsidized and they have proven to be successful in scaling up positive incentives for sustainable management of biodiversity.

- Malawi Rural Electrification Programme (MAREP) – expanded rural access to electricity,reducing pressure on forest resources
- Solar pumps and solar lighting programmes – promoting clean energy use in agriculture and households
- Electric vehicle incentives – encouraging low-emission transport options
- LPG and biodigester subsidies – supporting cleaner cooking and reduced biomass dependence

Table 19:Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 18

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited LPG supply due to foreign currency shortages, constraining wider adoption.	Finalizing and operationalizing the BIOFIN subsidy reform recommendations.
High upfront costs of electric vehicles and limited charging infrastructure.	Redirecting harmful subsidies toward nature-positive and climate-resilient practices.
Continued biodiversity impacts from conventional agricultural input subsidies.	Expanding clean energy and transport infrastructure to support uptake of positive incentives.
Sustainability and long-term financing of subsidy programmes.	Strengthening monitoring systems to track biodiversity impacts of subsidies.
Limited data on the full biodiversity impacts of subsidies across sectors.	Enhancing cross-sectoral coordination to align fiscal policies with biodiversity.

Target's Contribution to SDG



Implementation of Target 18 supports SDG 1 (No Poverty) by promoting sustainable livelihoods and improved access to energy, particularly for rural and marginalized communities. The target also advances SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) by encouraging the use of renewable and environmentally sound energy technologies. In addition, it contributes to SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) by reducing harmful pressures on ecosystems, supporting sustainable resource use, and enhancing the resilience of both aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity.

2.1.19 National Target 19

Increase biodiversity financing to at least USD 93 million per annum by 2035 to effectively implement biodiversity strategies and programs

Malawi has made significant progress in mobilizing financial resources for biodiversity conservation. The country has developed a National Biodiversity Finance Plan, which identifies financing gaps and proposes innovative financing solutions to sustainably fund biodiversity priorities. In addition, several national natural resource strategies, including the National Landscape Restoration Strategy, incorporate clear targets and associated f financing frameworks to guide investment in ecosystem restoration and conservation. Malawi has also advanced Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models in protected area management. As of 2025, One National Park, Two Wildlife Reserve, and one Forest Reserve are under PPP arrangements, resulting in increased financial investment, improved management effectiveness, and leveraged private sector resources for conservation. The country continues to develop and submit biodiversity financing proposals and has secured funding from multiple Official Development Assistance (ODA) sources and international partners. Notwithstanding external support, the Government of Malawi remains the primary source of biodiversity financing through annual national budget allocations that support core conservation functions, protected area management, regulatory enforcement, and ecosystem restoration initiative

Progress Summary and Main Outcomes

The Government of Malawi continues to serve as the primary source of biodiversity financing through the national budget, supporting core biodiversity governance and conservation functions. In the 2024/25 financial year, the national budget (approximately USD 4.6 billion) allocated an estimated 0.6% toward environmental EN conservation. Although this allocation remains modest relative to overall national expenditure, it demonstrates sustained domestic commitment to biodiversity protection.

Through implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Malawi has successfully introduced biodiversity budget tagging within the national budget framework. This reform enables Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to identify and allocate resources toward biodiversity-related programmes, improving tracking, transparency, and accountability of biodiversity expenditure.

The country is in the final stages of developing a National Biodiversity Offsets Framework, which is expected to mobilize additional conservation financing from development projects by integrating biodiversity safeguards into infrastructure and extractive sector investments.

Significant conservation gains have been recorded in protected areas managed under Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). These arrangements have strengthened species restoration, improved ecological management, and enhanced tourism performance. For example, Liwonde National Park generated approximately USD 600,000 in tourism revenue in 2024, reflecting improved wildlife recovery and park management effectiveness.

Malawi continues to receive support through Official Development Assistance (ODA), although biodiversity-specific funding remains limited relative to broader climate and environmental financing. Under the Global Environment Facility (GEF-7), Malawi received a STAR allocation of USD 8.2 million, of which USD 3,163,017 was directed to the biodiversity focal area. Under GEF-8, USD 4.4 million has been allocated to biodiversity. In addition, the European Union is supporting a EUR 60 million programme (UCHI), aimed at supporting Malawi's transition to sustainable, inclusive and climate-resilient food systems while preserving and restoring natural ecosystems.

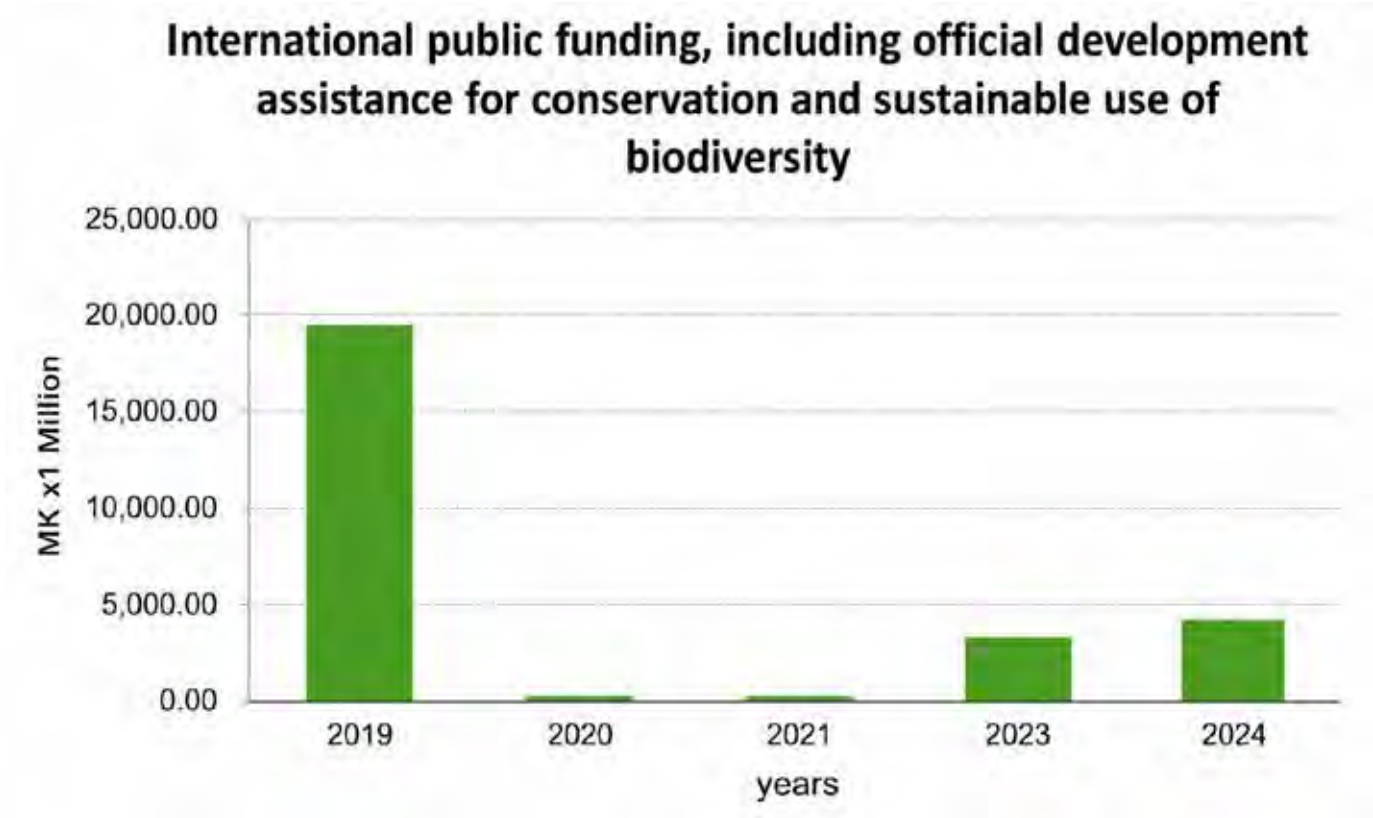


Figure 13: Levels of funding for biodiversity from international donors

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

https://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi-boldens-its-stand-to-continue-financing-the biodiversity-conservation-sector/ https://www.manaonline.gov.mw/index.php?option
https://africabrief.substack.com/p/private-sector-stakeholders-urged
https://www.africanparks.org/the-parks/liwonde/park-revenue-generation

Table 20: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 19

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited participation of the private sector in biodiversity financing.	Develop enabling instruments such as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards, Natural Capital Accounting frameworks, and Nature-Related Financial Disclosure (TNFD-type mechanisms) to strengthen private sector participation.

Target Contribution to SDGs



Effectively implement target 19 primarily contributes to SDG 15: Life on Land by ensuring adequate financial resources for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable land management initiatives. It also supports SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals through mobilization of financial resources, strengthening international cooperation, and enhancing capacity for implementation of biodiversity commitments. In addition, the target contributes to SDG 13: Climate Action by financing ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation initiatives that enhance climate resilience and carbon storage; SDG 14: Life Below Water by supporting conservation and sustainable management of aquatic ecosystems; SDG 1: No Poverty through investment in biodiversity-based livelihoods and ecosystem services that support vulnerable communities; and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by enabling sustainable resource management practices and promoting long-term environmental sustainability.

2.1.20 National target 20

Strengthen capacity in Science, Technology, Innovation, Research and enhance technical and scientific cooperation for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by 2035

Main action undertaken to implement the target

Malawi has advanced a broad set of actions to strengthen national capacity in science, technology, innovation, and research to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Indigenous and local knowledge has been systematically integrated into major national assessments including the National Ecosystem Assessment, the updated NBSAP, and the National State of the Environment and Outlook ensuring that community insights complement scientific monitoring. Capacity-building initiatives have expanded through technical trainings, field-based mentorship, and knowledge-exchange programmes targeting researchers, extension officers, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. Research institutions, particularly in the fisheries sector, have enhanced their capabilities through upgraded laboratories, staff training, improved funding streams, and strengthened collaboration with national, regional, and international partners. Malawi has also deepened technical and scientific cooperation through SADC, African Union, and global research networks, facilitating data sharing and methodological harmonization. Efforts to promote environmentally sound technologies have progressed through partnerships with universities and innovation hubs, including the deployment of digital tools such as GIS, drones, biodiversity mapping platforms, and mobile-based ecological monitoring applications. Furthermore, community-led research has been supported through participatory ecosystem mapping, species monitoring, and documentation of sustainable-use practices, ensuring that local knowledge systems and scientific approaches jointly inform biodiversity management.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

Lake Chilwa ILK–Science Partnership Integration of ILK with scientific fisheries monitoring has improved understanding of fish dynamics, strengthened sustainable harvesting practices, and informed adaptive management strategies

Technology-Transfer Pilots: Pilot deployment of solar-powered monitoring tools, mobile data-collection platforms, and digital mapping tools in protected areas and fisheries has enhanced the accuracy and timeliness of ecological monitoring, while building capacity at community and institutional levels.

Community Biodiversity Mapping Initiatives: Participatory mapping of critical habitats especially in biodiversity hotspots has strengthened decision-making in ecosystem management, land-use planning, and local conservation initiatives.





Table 21: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 20

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited and inconsistent financial resources for research, innovation, and technology deployment.	Expand funding mechanisms and enhance partnerships with development partners for research and technology transfer
Unequal access to technical infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas.	Strengthen national data-management systems to integrate ILK and scientific datasets
Gaps in national systems for consolidating ILK and scientific research outputs.	Increase scholarships, internships, and field-based training for young scientists and IPLCs.
Weak coordination among research institutions and fragmented data-sharing mechanisms.	Enhance monitoring of technology deployment and research outcomes at national and community levels.
Limited opportunities for local researchers to participate in regional and international scientific platforms.	Promote innovation ecosystems through universities, research centres, and community institutions.
Insufficient formal structures to guide systematic technology transfer and innovation uptake.	Improve coordination frameworks among government agencies, academia, and regional/global network.

Target Contribution to SDGs



Implementation of Target 20 strongly supports several Sustainable Development Goals and global frameworks. It contributes to SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) by strengthening national innovation systems and promoting the adoption of sustainable technologies; to SDG 13 (Climate Action) by integrating Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) with science to enhance adaptive responses to climate change; and to SDGs 14 and 15 (Life Below Water and Life on Land) by improving research capacities and monitoring systems that underpin effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The target also advances SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by fostering global, regional, and national cooperation on research, technology transfer, and capacity building, and supports the Paris Agreement by strengthening climate-resilient biodiversity management through enhanced data and innovation.

2.1.21 National target 21

By 2035, biodiversity data, information and knowledge is accessible to 50% of the Malawi population.

Main action undertaken to implement the target

Malawi has undertaken a number of actions to expand access to biodiversity data, EN information, and knowledge, leveraging both digital and non-digital platforms to reach diverse audiences. Key institutions including the National Herbarium and Botanic Gardens (NHBG), the National Plant Genetic Resources Centre (NPGRC), agricultural research stations, and the Forestry Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM) are capturing and digitizing biodiversity data, much of which is shared through national and global repositories such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) managed by the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST). The national Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) under the Convention on Biological Diversity provides a centralized hub for information exchange, complemented by sectoral communication strategies such as the National Environment and Climate Change Communication Strategy, the Invasive Alien Species Communication Strategy, and the National Biosafety Communication Strategy. A growing ecosystem of websites and social media platforms managed by government, civil society, and research institutions has broadened public access to biodiversity knowledge. Media engagement has also been strengthened through training of journalists across major outlets, resulting in increased production and dissemination of biodiversity-related content on radio, television, and online channels. In parallel, field extension officers have been equipped with skills and materials for community-level awareness, enabling the flow of accurate biodiversity information to remote and underserved populations. Collectively, these efforts demonstrate Malawi's commitment to ensuring that biodiversity knowledge is widely accessible and that all stakeholders are empowered to participate in conservation and sustainable use.

Summary of Progress and main Outcomes

Malawi continues to advance toward its target of ensuring that at least 50% of its population has access to biodiversity information by 2035. Significant progress has been achieved through the expansion of biodiversity datasets, especially on global platforms such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), where more than 469,000 species occurrence records are now accessible. The number of documented Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) has also increased, moving from zero in 2020 to 42 by 2025. Public-facing portals including the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM), sectoral websites, and social media channels have enabled broader sharing of biodiversity knowledge. Media professionals across institutions have been trained in environmental reporting, resulting in increased coverage of biodiversity issues on radio, television, and online platforms. Field extension officers have also facilitated community-level sensitization,

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

Case Example 1: Expansion of Species Occurrence Data. Through coordinated digitization efforts by NHBG, FRIM, agricultural research stations, and NCST, Malawi has significantly increased its species occurrence records on GBIF. This expansion has made Malawi one of the more data-visible countries in the region, providing decision-makers, researchers, and the public with access to reliable biodiversity information.

Case Example 2: Strengthening Media Engagement: training of journalists and media houses in environmental and biodiversity reporting has led to a noticeable increase in biodiversity content across radio shows, television programmes, and online articles. This has helped bring biodiversity conversations into mainstream public discourse, contributing to wider public awareness.

Case Example 3: Community-Level Biodiversity Outreach : Empowered field extension officers (fisheries, forestry, agriculture, wildlife) have been conducting village-level awareness sessions, helping remote communities understand EN biodiversity issues such as invasive alien species, endangered species, sustainable harvesting practices, and ecosystem restoration. This decentralized model has proven effective in reaching populations who would otherwise lack access to digital platforms

Table 22: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 21

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Data sharing among institutions remains fragmented, and coordination mechanisms are weak. Many agencies lack adequate technical capacity and resources for data mobilization,	To accelerate progress, there is need to invest in harmonized data management systems, strengthen institutional collaboration, and build technical capacity in biodiversity informatics
curation, and publication. Monitoring tools to measure public accessibility and use of biodiversity information have not yet been developed, limiting the country's ability to track progress	Developing standardized tools for monitoring information access, enhancing incentives for data sharing, and promoting community-driven knowledge initiatives will be essential for sustaining momentum
systematically. Limited financial resources further restrict the rollout of awareness activities and the development of digital infrastructure.	Mobilize sustainable financing through government budget allocation, development partner support, and innovative financing mechanisms. Prioritize cost-effective digital solutions and phased development of digital infrastructure, while integrating biodiversity awareness into existing communication and outreach programmes.

Contribution of the Target to SDGs



The implementation of Target 21 strongly supports several Sustainable Development Goals. It advances SDG 15 (Life on Land) by enhancing access to biodiversity information that informs conservation actions, habitat protection, and species management, and contributes to SDG 14 (Life Below Water) by improving the availability of aquatic biodiversity data needed for fisheries management and aquatic ecosystem resilience. Target 21 also supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by strengthening environmental literacy and promoting equitable access to biodiversity knowledge, and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by fostering data-sharing collaborations among government, academia, civil society, and global biodiversity platforms. In addition, the target reinforces Malawi's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly through the operation of the Clearing-House Mechanism, and supports national reporting to international and regional knowledge networks such as GBIF, IUCN, and relevant regional biodiversity facilities.

2.1.22 National Target 22

Achieve full representation and equal participation of women and girls, children and youth, and adopt a gender-responsive approach in the implementation of the NBSAP, local communities and persons with disabilities in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity respecting their culture and their rights over lands, resources and traditional knowledge by 2035.

Main action undertaken to implement the target

Malawi has made notable progress in promoting inclusive, gender-responsive, and rights- EN based approaches in biodiversity governance. Malawi carried out the National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA). In This process, a Multiple Evidence Base (MEB) approach was applied thereby systematically integrating Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) through community-led walking workshops. These workshops were conducted in Lake Chilwa, Kazuni, Zolokere, Khulubvi, and Mbenje Island communities, with the outcomes formally incorporated into the NEA report.

Malawi has also operationalised the Customary Land Act (2016) which has strengthened ommunity land rights through the recognition of customary estates and the piloting of Customary Land Committees in Traditional Authorities Mduwa and Mwambo. Decentralised governance structures, including Village Natural Resource Committees and Beach Village Committees, has also ensured formal representation of ILK custodians in local decision-making processes

The nation has also strengthened mainstreaming of inclusive and participatory decision making in biodiversity assessments. Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) dialogues held in 2024, including engagements linked to the CBD COP in Cali and national-level processes, have supported this process. Gender mainstreaming guidelines developed by the Environmental Affairs Department are being applied in protected area co-management agreements to enhance equitable participation.

Furthermore, the ongoing revision of NBSAP II integrates comprehensive inclusivity and gender-responsive measures, including the development of policies and legislation that address the needs of vulnerable groups, implementation of community-based biodiversity management involving women and marginalized groups, targeted awareness campaigns near protected ecosystems, and promotion of gender-sensitive alternative livelihoods. Malawi has also strengthened access and benefit-sharing mechanisms to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

Summary of Progress and Main Outcome

There has been a rise of women and youth holding executive posts in Village Natural Resources Committees. Indigenous and Local Knowledge has now explicitly ben integrated in national guiding environmental and biodiversity assessment process and reports including National Ecosystem Assessment and the National State f the EN Environment and Outlook. Furthermore, customary tenure mapping is underway in Mangochi & Machinga.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

Case Study 1. Lake Chilwa Wetland Management Plan (2018) EN

The Plan provides a strong example of inclusive and rights-based biodiversity governance through the formal recognition and application of Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK). Traditional knowledge on seasonal fishing closures has been officially acknowledged and incorporated into wetland management practices, reinforcing sustainable fisheries management. On Mbenje Island, long-standing customary rules on seasonal fishing closures continue to be observed and respected, contributing to the recovery and resilience of fish stocks while safeguarding community livelihoods. In parallel, co-management arrangements in Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve demonstrate effective integration of customary governance systems, with traditional leaders serving on the reserve's management board and local bylaws reflecting cultural taboos related to species protection.

Case study 2. Vwaza Marsh NEA: Integrating Indigenous Knowledge & Local Communities

The Malawi National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA), supported by UNESCO, UNDP, and UNEP-WCMC, demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive and participatory biodiversity governance. Between 2021 and 2022, over 200 community knowledge holders including women, elders, and traditional leaders were engaged across diverse districts to integrate Indigenous and Local Knowledge with scientific assessments. In areas such as Lake Kazuni within the Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve, Ngoni and Tumbuka communities are formally consulted in decision-making processes and receive 25% of reserve revenues, supporting sustainable access to resources such as fishing and plant harvesting. Targeted field dialogues, including separate discussions with women's groups at culturally significant sites like Mtsinja and Khulubvi Shrines, ensured that gender-specific perspectives were captured. These engagements revealed how customary laws and the stewardship role of elders underpin traditional conservation practices.

Case study 3: Gender-Responsive Agricultural Innovation: Seed Multiplication & Intercropping

a). Seed Multiplication Project in Northern Malawi (2011–2014: This initiative was implemented through farmers' groups and farmer research teams, with deliberate measures to ensure equal participation of women and men. Gender parity was achieved by maintaining a 50/50 balance in participation, while gender responsive tools such as the Gender Balance Tree were applied to address power relations within households and communities. The project actively included marginalized women, including female-headed and polygamous households, and systematically tracked sex-disaggregated outcomes at both household and community levels. As a result, women's agency in farming and natural resource management decisions was strengthened, access to quality seed improved, and more inclusive and resilient rural livelihoods were promoted, contributing to equitable biodiversity outcomes.

b). The CGIAR Mixed Farming Systems Initiative applied a participatory "mother and baby" trial approach that actively engaged women and youth in designing sustainable intercropping systems, particularly legumes with maize. Women played a leading role in selecting legume varieties, while both women and men jointly managed trial plots. The approach improved soil fertility, reduced labor burdens, and enhanced yields, with particular benefits for women and youth managing small landholdings. Overall, the initiative strengthened shared decision-making and demonstrated strong linkages between biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods.

c). Women-led Economic Empowerment: Greenhouses & Fisheries Through the Kambuku Cooperative Greenhouses, UN Women with support from KOICA established solar-powered greenhouses predominantly managed by women across Lilongwe, Salima, and Mzimba. By late 2023, the initiative had generated significant income, strengthened food security, and secured stable market linkages, including school supply contracts. More than 2,400 women were trained in climate smart agriculture, leadership, and enterprise development. The initiative significantly enhanced women's leadership, income, and decision-making power, delivering resilience benefits to entire communities

d). Gender Equality in the Fish Sector (REFRESH Project) Gender Equality in the Fish Sector (REFRESH Project) Under the USAID-supported REFRESH Project, women in fishing communities organized themselves into the Mwala Gender Group to expand their economic activities beyond capture fisheries. Training enabled women to engage in fish processing, trading, and diversified enterprises such as motorcycle services. These economic gains shifted household dynamics, with men increasingly sharing domestic responsibilities and recognizing women's contributions. The project fostered positive social change, strengthening women's empowerment and promoting more inclusive community development.

Case study 4. Cultural Empowerment via Art and Knowledge Exchange

Kungoni Centre (Dedza District)

The Kumbewu Project at the Kungoni Centre empowers women through integrated training in crafts, financial literacy, agriculture, health, and community information sharing. Women generate income from products made using sustainably sourced natural materials, strengthening both livelihoods and cultural expression. The initiative also fosters peer solidarity and intergenerational knowledge exchange. As a result, women's social agency and economic resilience are enhanced while supporting sustainable use of biodiversity

Case Study 5. Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Development Planning (IIED report, 2016); Insights for Enhancing Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Sustainable Intensification (2024 Report)

An IIED-supported process and subsequent research, including the 2024 report led by IITA in Lilongwe, highlights the integration of biodiversity considerations into development planning through gender-responsive approaches. The work emphasizes empowering women, youth, and marginalized groups in the sustainable intensification of mixed farming systems. By embedding gender equity and social inclusion into agricultural innovation, the initiative strengthens biodiversity outcomes and livelihood resilience. This approach provides practical insights for strengthening inclusive decision-making, improving access to resources and knowledge, and promoting equitable participation of women and marginalized groups in biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management.

Table 23: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 22

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited enforcement of customary rights due to inadequate financial and technical support at local council level, poor coordination and coherence in policy implementation, and lack of monitoring tools and disaggregated data across some sectors	Securing and enforcing rights over land and traditional knowledge systems, strengthening cross-sector coordination and policy integration, and enhancing data systems and monitoring frameworks across all sectors.
Deep-rooted cultural and social norms continue to limit the participation of youth and persons with disabilities in biodiversity-related decision-making and activities.	Investing in inclusive capacity building and applying human rights–based approaches to biodiversity conservation to promote equitable participation of youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups.

Target Contribution to SDG



The implementation of this target contributes to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting inclusive governance, gender equality, and equitable benefit-sharing in biodiversity management. The initiatives advance SDG 5 (Gender Equality) by strengthening women's participation in leadership and decision-making, enhancing women's rights to land and natural resources, and supporting gender-responsive policies aligned with national commitments. They also support SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of women, youth, Indigenous peoples, and local communities, thereby improving equitable access to biodiversity benefits. Contributions to SDG 15 (Life on Land) are reflected in efforts to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources and integration of biodiversity values into planning processes, while SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) is advanced through strengthened participatory governance, transparency, and access to information in biodiversity decision-making. These actions further operationalize Malawi's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through gender mainstreaming across biodiversity-related sectors and development planning

2.1.23 National target 23

By 2035, ensuring that women and girls are well-informed and have equal opportunities and capacities to meaningfully contribute to and actively participate in all levels of action, engagement, policy development, and decision-making processes related to biodiversity

Main action undertaken to implement the target

Malawi is implementing several initiatives to empower women and promote their EN active participation in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Women are increasingly involved in community-based natural resource management structures supported by the Department of Forestry and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife, contributing to local decision-making on forest and wildlife management. Livelihood programmes promote women's economic empowerment through activities such as beekeeping, agroforestry, mushroom production, and tree nursery enterprises, supported by organizations including Total LandCare and the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust. Energy and climate initiatives, implemented in collaboration with partners such as the United Nations Development Programme, promote energy efficient cookstoves and renewable energy solutions that reduce pressure on natural resources while easing women's labour burdens. Capacity-building, environmental education, leadership training, and access to village savings and loans schemes further strengthen women's skills, financial inclusion, and participation in biodiversity governance at community and national levels. There has been an on-going campaign for girl child in education sector including women in science. The database for women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics has been created alongside promotion of women in the field. Government initiated a 50:50 campaign to encourage women participation in politics which has led to women taking high level position in parliament.

Summary of Progress and Main Outcomes

Malawi is advancing women's empowerment by strengthening their participation in biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and national decision-making processes. Women are actively engaged in community natural resource management supported by the Department of Forestry and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife, while livelihood initiatives such as beekeeping, agroforestry, and tree nurseries implemented with partners to enhance women's economic opportunities. Energy and climate programmes led with the United Nations Development programme promote EN energy-efficient technologies that reduce environmental pressure and labour burdens. Complementary efforts include leadership training, financial inclusion through savings groups, promotion of girls' education and women in STEM, and the government's 50:50 campaign, which has increased women's representation in political leadership and decision-making Malawi is advancing women's empowerment by strengthening their participation in biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and national decision-making processes. Women are actively engaged in community natural resource management supported by the Department of Forestry and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife, while livelihood initiatives such as beekeeping, agroforestry, and tree nurseries implemented with partners to enhance women's economic opportunities. Energy and climate programmes led with the United Nations Development programme promote energy-efficient technologies that reduce environmental pressure and labour burdens. Complementary efforts include leadership training, financial inclusion through savings groups, promotion of girls' education and women in STEM, and the government's 50:50 campaign, which has increased women's representation in political leadership and decision-making.

Case Studies on Effectiveness of the Measures

https://www.ncst.mw/directory/women_in_science.php

Table 24: Challenges and Approaches for Further Implementation for Target 23

Challenges	Approaches for further implementation
Limited access by women and girls to advanced technical skills, training, and STEM-related opportunities in biodiversity and environmental management.	Expand targeted capacity-building programmes for women and girls in environmental sciences, biodiversity management, and STEM fields. Strengthen mentorship programmes and partnerships with academic and research institutions to support career development.
Unequal access to financial resources and productive assets limits women's ability to scale up biodiversity-related livelihood activities.	Strengthen financial inclusion mechanisms such as village savings and loans schemes, microfinance access, and targeted funding for women-led green enterprises. Promote women-focused livelihood support programmes in forestry, fisheries, and climate-smart agriculture.
Inadequate representation of women in higher-level policy, planning, and decision-making structures in biodiversity and environmental sectors.	Enforce and strengthen gender mainstreaming policies, including quotas and affirmative action measures in environmental governance structures. Promote leadership training and succession planning to increase women's representation at senior decision-making levels.
Persistent socio-cultural norms and gender biases in some communities limit women's full participation in biodiversity governance and decision-making processes.	Strengthen gender responsive awareness campaigns and community sensitization programmes to promote behavioural and cultural change. Engage traditional leaders and community structures to support women's inclusion in biodiversity governance and leadership roles.
Sustainability challenges in scaling up women-led biodiversity and livelihood initiatives beyond pilot and community levels.	Strengthen long-term financing mechanisms and institutional support for women-led initiatives, including partnerships with development partners, private sector actors, and government programmes to ensure scalability and sustainability.

Target's Contribution to SDGs



Effective implementation of National Target 23 contributes directly to progress toward several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting gender equality, inclusive governance, and sustainable resource management. The target aligns strongly with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality), particularly targets 5.5 and 5.b, by enhancing women's participation and leadership in environmental decision-making and improving access to knowledge and technologies. It also supports SDG 16 on inclusive and participatory institutions through strengthened community engagement in biodiversity governance, and SDG 13 and SDG 15 by ensuring women's active roles in climate action and biodiversity conservation initiatives.

The target further complements international commitments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, which promotes gender-responsive biodiversity planning, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, by advancing equal participation of women in environmental policy and natural resource management. By empowering women and girls with knowledge, skills, and leadership opportunities, Malawi strengthens inclusive conservation outcomes while advancing broader sustainable development and human rights objectives.

CHAPTER THREE: ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRESS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOALS OF THE KUNMING-MONTREAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of how the implementation of the national targets set in NBSAP III contributes to the achievement of the four goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Goal A (Protect and Restore) is supported by the highest number of national targets, reflecting its central role in biodiversity conservation. This is followed by Goal B (Prosper with Nature), which is underpinned by a substantial set of targets promoting sustainable use and mainstreaming of biodiversity. Goals C (Share Benefits Fairly) and D (Invest and Collaborate) are each advanced by two key national targets that directly contribute to the attainment of their respective objectives.

3.1 GOAL A: Protect and Restore

The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050;

- Human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels;
- The genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.

3.1.1 Summary of National Progress Contributing to Global Goal A

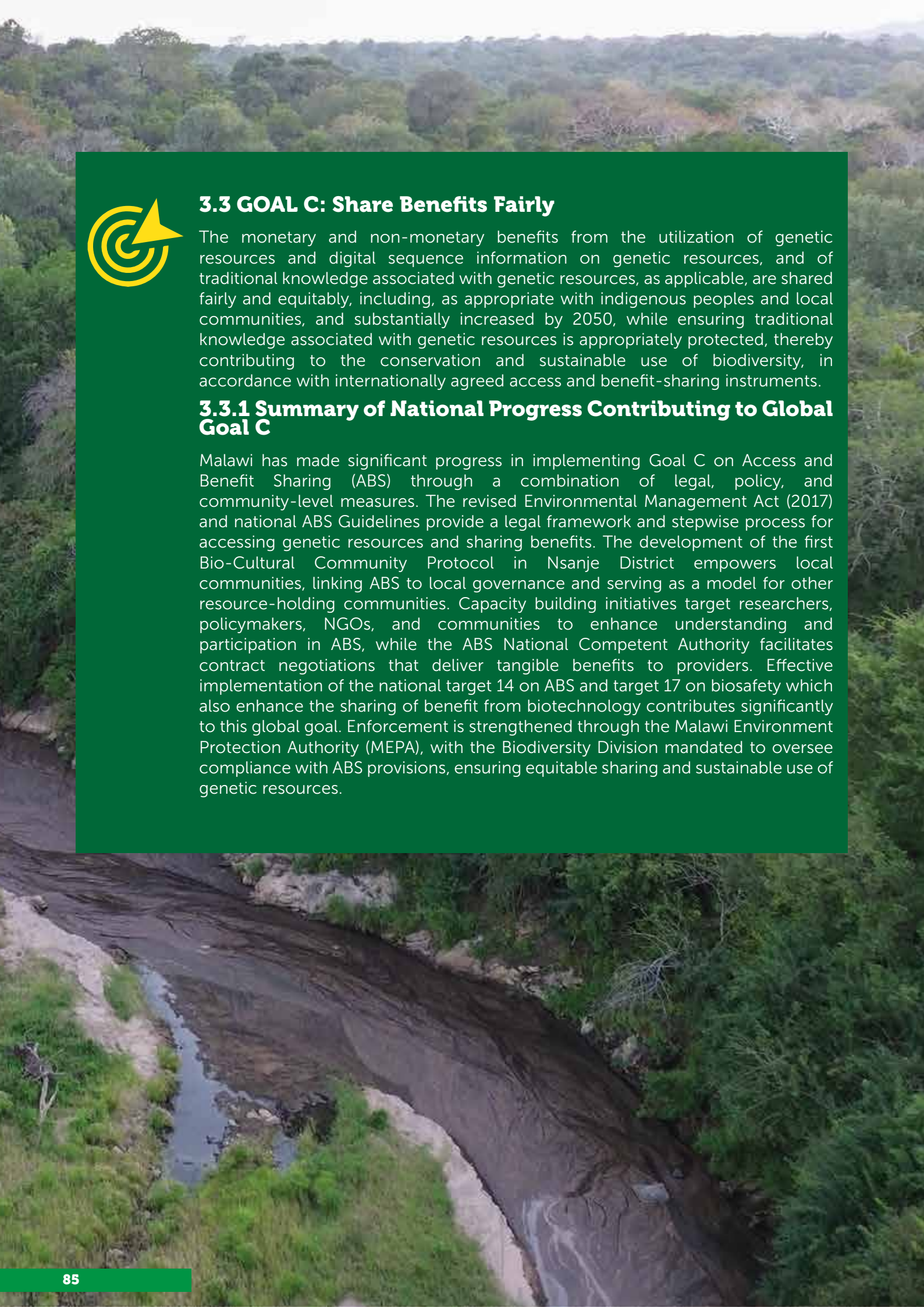
Malawi's comprehensive biodiversity initiatives through implementation of national targets 1-8 contribute directly to maintaining and restoring ecosystem integrity, connectivity and resilience. By designating approximately 24% of land for conservation including national parks, wildlife and forest reserves, nature sanctuaries and implementing community-managed areas, Malawi protects natural ecosystems while promoting connectivity across landscapes. Restoration efforts, covering 1.2–1.7 million hectares through agroforestry, natural regeneration, watershed rehabilitation, and wetland management, enhance ecosystem resilience and ecological functions. Species-focused interventions, including anti-poaching patrols, habitat protection, recovery and reintroduction programmes for elephants, cheetahs, black rhinos, giraffes, and wild dogs, alongside ex-situ conservation in gene banks, botanical gardens, and aquaculture centres, help halt human-induced extinctions, reduce species risk, and restore populations to healthy, resilient levels. Integrating Indigenous and Local Knowledge, participatory mapping, and sustainable resource management ensures genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species is maintained, supporting adaptive potential. Pollution control, invasive species management and community-based monitoring further safeguard ecosystem health, collectively contributing to long-term biodiversity conservation and sustainable benefits for people directly contributing to Goal A of the KM-GBF.

3.2 GOAL B: Prosper with Nature

Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050.

3.2.1 Summary of National Progress Contributing to Global Goal B

Through implementation of national targets 3, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, Malawi has implemented a comprehensive set of policies, regulatory frameworks and interventions that have mainstreamed biodiversity to ensure its sustainably used while enhancing its benefits to people. Land resources conservation promotes sustainable land management through soil and water conservation, forest restoration, watershed rehabilitation, private sector engagement, and community-led approaches, improving soil fertility, water availability, and local biodiversity. Urban and peri-urban ecosystems are restored through annual afforestation, public nurseries, and the development of parks, green spaces, and recreational areas, while freshwater resources are sustainably managed via permitting and licensing systems. Landscape and community-level restoration programmes, including Chia Lagoon, Elephant Marsh, and Lake Chilwa Basin initiatives, alongside wetland and aquatic ecosystem projects, strengthen ecosystem resilience and safeguard ecosystem services. These measures, reinforced by legislation, policies such as the NBSAP and ABS guidelines, and climate-resilient livelihood significantly contributes to Goal B of the KM-GBF.



3.3 GOAL C: Share Benefits Fairly

The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protected, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments.

3.3.1 Summary of National Progress Contributing to Global Goal C

Malawi has made significant progress in implementing Goal C on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) through a combination of legal, policy, and community-level measures. The revised Environmental Management Act (2017) and national ABS Guidelines provide a legal framework and stepwise process for accessing genetic resources and sharing benefits. The development of the first Bio-Cultural Community Protocol in Nsanje District empowers local communities, linking ABS to local governance and serving as a model for other resource-holding communities. Capacity building initiatives target researchers, policymakers, NGOs, and communities to enhance understanding and participation in ABS, while the ABS National Competent Authority facilitates contract negotiations that deliver tangible benefits to providers. Effective implementation of the national target 14 on ABS and target 17 on biosafety which also enhance the sharing of benefit from biotechnology contributes significantly to this global goal. Enforcement is strengthened through the Malawi Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), with the Biodiversity Division mandated to oversee compliance with ABS provisions, ensuring equitable sharing and sustainable use of genetic resources.

3.4 GOAL D: Invest and Collaborate

Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework are secured and equitably accessible to all Parties, especially developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of $700 billion per year, and aligning financial flows with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.

3.4.1 Summary of National Progress Contributing to Global Goal D

Malawi through the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) has identified the country's financial needs to effectively implement biodiversity conservation programmes. The Biodiversity Finance Plan has identified a number of innovative solutions to mobilized resources for biodiversity conservation. Under the same project the country is conducting a study to identify harmful and positive subsidies for biodiversity to inform policy. The country has mainstreamed biodiversity in the national budget to facilitate effective monitoring of biodiversity expenditure. Malawi has also initiated natural capital accounting in Forestry, Fisheries and Agriculture to provide information on their contribution to the national GDP to inform policy and national budget allocations. Implementation of national target 14 on Access and Benefit Sharing is also contributing towards this Goal D apart from national targets 18 and 19.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

4.0 Conclusion

This Seventh National Report demonstrates Malawi's continued commitment to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through coordinated policy reform, practical on the ground action, and inclusive stakeholder engagement. The country has made measurable progress across several national targets, particularly in ecosystem restoration, invasive alien species management, human–wildlife conflict mitigation, building capacity on detection of living modified organisms and species recovery, supported by strong legal frameworks and effective partnerships with development partners, civil society, and local communities.

Notable achievements include the expansion and improved management of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, significant advances in forest and landscape restoration, strengthened enforcement against wildlife crime, and the growing recognition of Indigenous and Local Knowledge as a vital component of biodiversity governance. Public–private partnerships, especially in wildlife conservation. have delivered tangible ecological and socio-economic benefits, while community-led approaches have enhanced ownership, compliance, and sustainability of conservation interventions.

At the same time, the report highlights persistent challenges that continue to constrain the full achievement of national and global biodiversity targets. These include inadequate and unpredictable financing, data gaps and limited monitoring coverage for certain taxa and ecosystems, increasing pressures from climate change, land-use change, invasive alien species, and competing sectoral development priorities. Capacity constraints at subnational levels and the need for stronger policy coherence and intersectoral coordination remain critical issues to address. Looking ahead, Malawi recognizes the importance of consolidating existing gains while accelerating action in areas where progress has been insufficient. Priority actions include operationalizing a comprehensive national biodiversity monitoring and evaluation system, mobilizing sustainable financing mechanisms, strengthening data collection and reporting, enhancing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches to addressing climate change, and deepening community participation and benefit-sharing. Greater alignment of biodiversity objectives with national development planning and sectoral policies will also be essential.

Overall, Malawi remains firmly committed to advancing the objectives of the Convention and achieving the goals and targets of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. With continued national leadership, strengthened partnerships, and sustained international support, Malawi is well positioned to scale up implementation, address remaining gaps, and contribute meaningfully to global efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss for the benefit of present and future generations.

Key Recommendations

To accelerate progress and achieve national and global biodiversity targets, the following strategic actions are recommended:

1. **Increase and diversify financing for biodiversity:** Strengthen domestic budget allocations, mobilize international climate and biodiversity finance, and promote innovative financing mechanisms such as biodiversity offsets, carbon markets, and public-private partnerships.
2. **Strengthen data systems and knowledge management:** Invest in national biodiversity monitoring systems, improve data-sharing mechanisms among institutions, and expand research on underrepresented species and ecosystems to support evidence-based decision-making.
3. **Enhance institutional and human capacity:** Build technical expertise across sectors through targeted training, recruitment, and partnerships with academic and research institutions.
4. **Accelerate adoption and implementation of the revised NBSAP:** Finalize and formally adopt the updated NBSAP, ensuring its integration into national development plans, sectoral policies, and budgeting processes.
5. **Promote integrated land-use planning and policy coherence:** Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination to balance conservation and development priorities, particularly in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and urban development.
6. **Scale up ecosystem restoration efforts:** Expand restoration initiatives to underrepresented ecosystems such as wetlands and aquatic systems, while strengthening monitoring frameworks to track outcomes and impacts.
7. **Strengthen community-based conservation and benefit-sharing:** Enhance support for local communities through secure tenure rights, equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, and livelihood diversification to sustain conservation gains.
8. **Address key drivers of biodiversity loss:** Implement targeted interventions to reduce deforestation, unsustainable harvesting, and land degradation, including promotion of sustainable agriculture and alternative energy sources.
9. **Enhance climate–biodiversity integration:** Align biodiversity actions with climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, promoting nature-based solutions to build ecosystem and community resilience.
10. **Improve enforcement and governance frameworks:** Strengthen compliance, enforcement, and coordination among institutions to combat illegal wildlife trade and manage invasive species effectively.


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