

Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity – Call for Evidence

1. Background

In March 2019, a new independent global review was announced by HM Treasury to assess the economic value of biodiversity and to identify actions that will simultaneously enhance biodiversity and deliver economic prosperity. This review on the *Economics of Biodiversity* is being led by Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta.

The review will report ahead of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in China in October 2020. The evidence in the review aims to help shape the international and UK response to biodiversity loss, including the successors to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It also aims to inform global action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals. The primary audiences for the review are economic and finance policy and decision makers who significantly influence the response to biodiversity loss through policy, finance and investment decisions.

The review has been asked to examine the evidence on:

- How biodiversity supports sustainable economic growth;
- The implications of further biodiversity loss for the prospects for economic growth over the coming decades, accounting for the interaction with other aspects of environmental degradation, including climate change;
- The impact, effectiveness and efficiency of existing national and international actions and arrangements to limit and reverse the loss of biodiversity and their impact on economic growth.

The review has been asked, based on this evidence, to provide an assessment of:

- A range of scenarios for enhancing global biodiversity compared with business as usual, focusing on the medium to long-term perspective and the relationship with economic growth; and
- The range of best practices, initiatives and interventions for industry, communities, individuals and governments that can simultaneously achieve the goals of enhancing biodiversity and delivering sustainable economic growth. This will draw out implications for the timescales for action and the range of scenarios above. It will recognise the interactions with climate change mitigation and adaptation needs and opportunities.

This Call for Evidence will contribute to the Dasgupta Review's advice. The Dasgupta Review will be based on a thorough consideration of robust, relevant, up-to-date evidence, including the existing work of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB).

The review team is currently using the following definition for biodiversity:

Biodiversity – Biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms, and at all levels including genes, species, and ecosystems. Different species combine together into communities that interact with the physical world to create ecosystems. The combination of all the ecosystems in the world and the spaces they occupy make up the biosphere.

2. Responding to the Call for Evidence

We encourage responses that are brief and to the point. Please provide a maximum of 400 words per question. You may also add links to supporting evidence. Please focus on sending only the best available evidence. You do not need to answer all the questions. Please answer only those questions where you have specific expertise and evidence to share. The Review Secretariat may follow up for more detail where appropriate.

The consultation period will run between 14 August 2019 and 6 November 2019. Copies of this document may be found on gov.uk.

Please send responses to any, or all, of the questions below to:
biodiversityreview@hmtreasury.gov.uk.

Please indicate if you are responding in a personal capacity or on behalf of a company or organisation. You must disclose all financial or other links between you or your organisation, and any company operating in a sector in, or connected with, the scope of our review. This should include stating whether any research you have ever conducted has received commercial funding from a company of this kind.

The Review Secretariat may choose to publish responses in full or in summary form. If you would not like all or part of your response to be published, please explicitly mark it as 'not for publication' and we will not publish it. However, as explained in the notice after the questions, we may be required to disclose this information under FOIA.

Please note the important information following the questions that sets out how your response will be treated and how any personal data you provided which identifies you or third parties will be handled.

3. Question and response form

When responding, please provide answers that are as specific and evidence-based as possible, providing data and references if needed. Please limit your response to a maximum of 400 words per question plus links to the best supporting evidence.

Part 1: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Science and Evidence

Question 1 (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Science): IPBES assessments and GEO6 will form an important part of the Review's assessment of the state of biodiversity, the biosphere and its ability to deliver ecosystem services. What further evidence should the Review consider in this area? What does the scientific evidence on global biodiversity and ecosystem condition decline suggest about the Earth's ability to continue providing services essential to human prosperity over different time periods?

ANSWER:

Question 2 (Limits): What is the best available evidence on the regenerative rates and carrying capacity of ecosystems e.g. fisheries? What is the best evidence on, and most compelling examples of, maximum sustainable yields, and where ecosystem thresholds and tipping points have been shown to affect sustainable economic growth?

ANSWER:

Part 2: Biodiversity and Economic Prosperity

Question 3 (Biodiversity and Economic Prosperity – Conceptual Framework): Biodiversity supports the provision of many ecosystem services, which are important for economic prosperity and growth. Economic growth also affects the demand for, and supply of, the Earth's resources. What conceptual frameworks and typologies clearly describe the relationship between biodiversity, ecosystem productivity and resilience, ecosystem services, economic prosperity and economic growth? Where have these frameworks been applied to reveal critical relationships? What are the most critical aspects of these relationships for the Dasgupta Review?

ANSWER:

Question 4 (Biodiversity and the SDGs): What are the links between biodiversity and economic prosperity that are most critical to synergies and trade-offs across the SDGs? How should sustainable economic growth be defined and measured given the evidence of how the SDGs and economic prosperity are affected by biodiversity loss? The review is interested in relevant links with biodiversity and economic growth across all the SDGs, particularly climate mitigation and adaptation, poverty reduction, food production, human health and wellbeing, consumption and production, and gender and broader inequalities.

ANSWER:

Question 5 (Impacts of Biodiversity Loss on Sustainable Economic Growth): What is the best evidence on the sustainability of current global economic growth, based on current rates of biodiversity loss? How much (if any) biodiversity loss needs to be stopped and/or reversed to achieve sustainable economic growth? Please reference any evidence or analysis that underpins your answers.

ANSWER:

Question 6 (Benefits of Tackling Biodiversity Loss and Costs of Inaction): What is the best evidence on the economic benefits of biodiversity? What evidence exists on who benefits from biodiversity? What positive business cases (win-wins) exist for tackling biodiversity loss e.g. impacts on jobs, productivity, income, human health outcomes? Conversely, what is the best evidence on the costs of current trajectories of biodiversity loss? What evidence is there of the distribution of these costs within and between countries?

ANSWER:

Question 7 (Cost and Risks of Action): What evidence exists of ‘transition risks’ from moving to actions needed to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity? What is the best evidence on the costs of these actions? What evidence suggests who will be most affected by these costs and risks?

ANSWER:

Question 8 (Opportunities from Tackling Biodiversity Loss): How can new technology assist with restoring biodiversity, while simultaneously delivering economic prosperity? e.g. artificial intelligence, biotechnology. What economic opportunities exist from protecting, restoring and enhancing biodiversity? e.g. learning from nature (biomimicry), biopharma, among others.

ANSWER:

Question 9 (Economic and Finance Decision Makers): Which sectors of the economy rely most on biodiversity and ecosystem services? How are they affected by biodiversity decline? Please provide strong case and/or sectoral examples and evidence on how changes in biodiversity (loss or gain) has affected, or been affected by, economic and finance decision-making.

ANSWER:

Part 3: Causes of Biodiversity Loss

Question 10 (Market and Institutional Failures): What are the main market and institutional failures affecting biodiversity? What is the best evidence (including case examples) that illustrate these failures?

ANSWER:

Question 11 (Economic Sectors): Which economic sectors have the biggest impact on biodiversity loss? Which economic sectors are most affected by biodiversity loss? Please reference evidence and analysis (including case examples) that underpin and illustrate your answers.

ANSWER:

Question 12 (Time): What evidence exists to suggest that balancing short and long timescales is a challenge for decision-making affecting biodiversity? Please provide evidence (including case examples) where short-term decisions have harmed biodiversity. How does this vary for different ecosystems and/or sectors? What should be the approach to discounting for actions that affect biodiversity?

ANSWER:

Question 13 (Business): What is the best evidence on the role the private sector (including the financial sector) plays in driving biodiversity loss and the direct and indirect impacts it has on biodiversity loss? What evidence shows the effect of biodiversity on firms' and investors' risks and/or returns in the short, medium and long term?

ANSWER:

Part 4: Actions to Tackle Biodiversity Loss and Support Economic Prosperity

Question 14 (Valuation and Accounting): Please provide evidence (including case examples) where marginal valuation, natural capital assessments and accounts are helping policy-makers and the private sector to improve decision making in ways that enhance biodiversity and deliver economic prosperity. What evidence exists on the factors that are most critical for this type of information to improve decision-making?

ANSWER:

Question 15 (Behaviour): What are the critical factors affecting people's behaviours that affect biodiversity? What affects the speed and scale of this behaviour change? What evidence exists for individual preferences versus social or 'socially-embedded' preferences (to conform or compete with others)? Please provide the strongest examples where policy makers and the private sector have effectively incentivised behaviour change to reduce biodiversity loss.

ANSWER:

Question 16 (Fiscal Policy and Regulation): What are strong examples of fiscal and regulatory policy instruments that have simultaneously enhanced biodiversity and supported economic prosperity? What is the best evidence on the impact and effectiveness of these actions? The review is interested in examples at all scales, including regulation, planning, taxation and government spending, including subsidies.

ANSWER:

Question 17 (Trade, Aid, International Finance and Climate): What measures can be taken to bridge across geographic boundaries when biodiversity loss in one location is driven by action or consumption elsewhere? What evidence exists on how international trade policy, aid policy, and international financial transfers can tackle biodiversity loss? What are the potential win-wins in also tackling climate mitigation and adaptation with such policies and transfers?

ANSWER

Question 18 (Private Sector and Finance): What are the most effective actions that the private sector generally, and finance sector specifically, can take and have taken that both enhance biodiversity and deliver economic prosperity? What actions should government take to enable the private sector and finance to take these actions? What evidence exists on the impact on biodiversity loss and economic prosperity of rules on financial disclosure, standards and certification schemes, and policies affecting investment decisions?

ANSWER:

Question 19 (Technology): What technologies are proving effective for ecosystem restoration and management while also supporting economic prosperity? What is the role for technological change in the short, medium and long-term to improve consumption and production efficiency? Note the review is interested in technologies across a broad range of sectors that have implications for biodiversity e.g. food production technologies.

ANSWER:

Question 20 (Other Comments): Please provide any other comments or evidence you think the Dasgupta Review should consider in its advice on how simultaneously to enhance biodiversity and achieve economic prosperity. The review welcomes evidence on where economic and financial decision makers in both the public and private sector can have the greatest impact.

ANSWER:

4. Processing of Personal Data

This notice sets out how HM Treasury (the data controller) will use your personal data for the purposes of this consultation for the Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity, and explains your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

The data we collect about you (Data Categories)

The personal data that we collect may include the name, address, email address, job title, and employer of the correspondent, as well as their opinions. It is possible that respondents will volunteer additional identifying information about themselves or third parties.

Legal basis of processing

The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. The task is requesting evidence or obtaining opinion data in order to develop good effective proposals and recommendations to government.

HM Treasury may use the contact details provided to contact respondents during the consultation period in order to request clarification or further information regarding the response provided where this is deemed necessary.

Special category data

We do not expect that any special category data will be processed.

Purpose

Any personal information will be processed for the purpose of obtaining evidence from members of the public and representatives of organisations and companies about departmental policies, proposals, or generally to obtain public opinion data on an issue of public interest.

Information and data provided to the controller in response to this call for evidence will be used by Professor Partha Dasgupta and the Dasgupta Review Secretariat to support their independent review of the economics of biodiversity.

Whom we share your responses with (Recipients)

Information provided in response to consultations may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes, in particular those under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004, the GDPR and DPA.

Where you consider that the information you provide should not be disclosed under these regimes, you should state that you are providing the information in confidence and explain why you consider the information to be confidential. If the controller receives a request for disclosure of the information, they will take full account of your explanation, but they cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on HM Treasury.

The Dasgupta Review's work will be independent of government. It will make a final report with its recommendations before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in China in October 2020.

Where someone submits special category personal data or personal data about third parties, we will endeavour to delete that data before publication takes place.

Where information about respondents is not published, it may be shared with officials within public bodies involved in this consultation process to assist them in developing the policies to which it relates. Examples of these public bodies appear on gov.uk.

As the personal information is stored on HM Treasury's IT infrastructure, it will be accessible to HM Treasury's IT contractor, NTT. NTT will only process this data for HM Treasury's purposes and pursuant to the contractual obligations they have with HM Treasury.

How long we will hold your data (Retention)

Personal information in responses to consultations will generally be published and therefore retained indefinitely as a historic record under the Public Records Act 1958.

Personal information in responses that is not published will be retained for three calendar years after the consultation has concluded.

Your rights

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed and to request a copy of that personal data.

You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.

You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.

You have the right, in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested), to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where it is processed for direct marketing purposes.

You have the right to data portability, which allows your data to be copied or transferred from one IT environment to another.

How to submit a Data Subject Access Request (DSAR)

To request access to personal data that the controller holds about you, contact:

HM Treasury Data Protection Unit
G11 Orange
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

dsar@hmtreasury.gov.uk

HM Treasury provides a secretariat function to the Dasgupta Review.

Complaints

If you have any concerns about the use of your personal data, please contact HM Treasury via this mailbox: privacy@hmtreasury.gov.uk.

If HM Treasury is unable to address your concerns to your satisfaction, you can make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, the UK's independent regulator for data protection. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
0303 123 1113

casework@ico.org.uk

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

Contact details

The controller for any personal data collected as part of this consultation is HM Treasury, whose contact details are:

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1 Horse Guards Road
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SW1A 2HQ
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020 7270 5000

public.enquiries@hmtreasury.gov.uk

The contact details for HM Treasury's Data Protection Officer (DPO) are:

The Data Protection Officer
Corporate Governance and Risk Assurance Team
Area 2/15
1 Horse Guards Road
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SW1A 2HQ
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privacy@hmtreasury.gov.uk