



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra's Official Development Assistance

Annual results report 2024

January 2025

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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List of Acronyms

BF Blue Forests

DAC Development Assistance Committee

DEFRA Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DESNZ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

DI Defra International

DSIT Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization

FCDO Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

GESI Gender, Equality and Social Inclusion

GPAP Global Plastic Action Partnership

ICF International Climate Finance

KPI Key Performance Indicator

LCA Low Carbon Agriculture

ODA Official Development Assistance

OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OECM Other Effective Conservation Measure

PA Protected area

RS Rural Sustentavel

SCCCS Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain Solutions

SDG Sustainable Development Goal

TA Technical Assistance

Executive summary

This publication has two sections. Section 1 presents a range of results achieved through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Official Development Assistance (ODA), including programme-specific case studies and early reporting against new standardised Defra International (DI) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) designed to estimate the early impacts of Defra's ODA portfolio of programming in relation to biodiversity and poverty. Each of these new KPIs have a published methodology note that should be consulted for further information on definitions and monitoring guidance. For more information, please see the [DI indicator methodology notes](#). Section 2 presents a summary of Defra's portfolio of ODA programming and its geographic footprint as of 2024.

The Defra ODA Results Framework used in this publication does not capture the full benefits of Defra's ODA programmes because individual programmes have context-specific aims that are not all covered by the indicators in this framework. Overall, this report provides a selection of early indicators to illustrate the impact of our ODA portfolio.

Introduction

Defra's ODA programming supports developing countries to reduce poverty, tackle climate change and halt and reverse global nature loss. As for all UK ODA, it must also contribute to gender equality.

In 2023 Defra developed an ODA Results Framework (**Table 1**) that aims to quantify and aggregate portfolio-level impacts of our ODA programming across five themes (Biodiversity, Poverty, Climate, Finance and Technical Assistance) using a combination of new and pre-existing standardised¹ Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- **Existing International Climate Finance (ICF) KPIs:** Climate related KPIs that are reported annually within the cross government ICF results publication, capturing combined results against these indicators from all ICF eligible ODA programmes across four departments: Defra, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). These are a mix of core ICF KPIs and

¹ A standardised KPI is one with a set methodology that reporting must align to. Using standard methods gives Defra the ability to quality assure the data we receive and publish estimates of the impact of multiple ODA programmes using a single common definition relevant to multiple programmes.

Technical Assistance (TA) KPIs. KPI methodology notes can be found here: [UK International Climate Finance methodologies](#).

- **New Defra International (DI) KPIs:** New biodiversity and poverty focused indicators developed by Defra to complement its reporting on climate impacts through the ICF KPIs. Of these, methodology notes have been developed and published for five indicators in January 2025, and one is covered by an existing ICF KPI methodology note (ICF KPI 17). The three remaining indicators are planned for development in 2025 (DI2: Species threat reduction, DI9: Improved income, DI10: Improved food security). For more information please review the Published [DI indicator methodology notes](#).

This report presents initial results estimates for a selection of the newly established Defra International KPIs, covering the years 2020 to 2023.

Table 1: Full Defra ODA Results Framework

Theme	#	KPI Name	Unit
Biodiversity	ICF 17	Area under Sustainable Management Practices	ha
Biodiversity	DI 1a	Area under Ecological Restoration	ha
Biodiversity	DI 1b	Extent of Protected Areas	ha
Biodiversity	DI2	Species threat reduction	#
Biodiversity	DI5	Solid Waste and Pollution Avoided	Ton
Biodiversity	ICF8	Ecosystem Loss Avoided	ha
Biodiversity	ICF10	Value of Ecosystem Services Generated or Protected	£
Climate	ICF1	People Supported to cope with effects of Climate Change	#
Climate	ICF4	People with Improved Resilience	#
Climate	ICF6	GHG Emissions Reduced or Avoided	CO ton
Poverty	DI7	Number of Sustainable Livelihoods created or protected	#
Poverty	DI8	People with Improved Tenure or Access Rights (Land and Sea)	#
Poverty	DI9	People with Improved Income	#
Poverty	DI10	People with Improved Food Security	#
Finance/TC	ICF11	Private Financed Leveraged	£
Finance/TC	ICF12	Public Finance Leveraged	£
Finance/TC	ICF15	Evidence of Transformative Change	Score
Technical Assistance	TA1	Number of countries supported with TA	#
Technical Assistance	TA2.1	Number of beneficiaries (individuals) supported	#
Technical Assistance	TA2.2	Number of beneficiaries (organisations) supported	#
Technical Assistance	TA3	Number of climate or nature policies informed	#

Technical Assistance	TA4	Improved climate or nature policy development or implementation	#
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Context on current results

For this initial publication, three of the total nine DI KPIs were assessed as having sufficient data coverage to allow for publication of initial results estimates. As it is the first year of programme reporting on these indicators, it was not expected that all DI KPIs would have sufficient data reported to allow for publication, nor that all Defra ODA programmes would be able to report contributions against all DI KPIs. This reflects the time that is needed to integrate relevant indicators into programme-level monitoring frameworks and complete an initial 12-month period of data monitoring to allow programmes to capture their contributions against the standard indicators.

A total of ten Defra ODA programmes, representing 38% of the total number of Defra ODA programmes over the period 2020 to 2023 (and 36% of the total value of programmes at this time), are currently contributing to at least one DI indicator results reported in this first publication. The results in this initial publication therefore represent a minority of what is delivered through Defra’s ODA spend. While part of Defra’s impact will always need to be captured through programme-specific results indicators capturing the unique benefits achieved through a given programme design, objective, context and set of geographies, it is our ambition to capture *more* of Defra’s ODA programme impact through our reporting against these DI indicators over time.

In next year’s publication due in late 2025, we aim to increase reporting to cover seven DI indicators and to include reported contributions from around 16 programmes, which will represent 59% of the total number of Defra ODA programmes as of 2024. For the remaining three DI indicators (DI2, DI 9 and DI10), methodologies are under development and will be completed in 2025, with first reporting expected by 2026. Therefore, over time, Defra’s public reporting on these DI indicators will capture a greater proportion of Defra’s ODA spend and impacts and better represent our portfolio, although they will not provide a comprehensive measure of our ODA impact.

Defra’s ODA impacts go beyond portfolio-level DI KPIs

The Defra ODA Results Framework used in this publication does not capture the full benefits of Defra’s ODA programmes, because individual programmes have context-specific aims that are not necessarily covered by the indicators in this framework. Some programmes will not have reported all relevant indicators due to capacity constraints, data limitations, reporting lags, or considerations of proportionality or value for money of the monitoring requirements. Overall, we always aim to provide a conservative estimate of Defra ODA results rather than overclaim our impact.

All programmes will have a data story specific to their programme told through their logical framework, a programme monitoring tool that uses programme-specific indicators to track and report progress, as the primary accountability mechanism for every programme funded by UK ODA. More information about each of Defra’s programmes, including their programme-specific results, can be found in **Annex 1** where [Development tracker](#) codes are listed. In this report we have also included a range of examples to illustrate the broader results achieved through Defra’s ODA, which can be found in the KPI reporting sections of this report in the form of case studies.

Defra annual results estimates 2024

Total achieved results estimates

The cumulative results for Defra International (DI) KPIs 2020 to 2023 are summarised below (**Table 2**). For those KPIs not yet reported, the table indicates the year when we expect to begin reporting results, or to finalise the indicator methodology for future reporting. A detailed breakdown of reported results for each KPI is provided in the following section.

Table 2: Cumulative results for Defra International (DI) KPIs, 2020 to 2023, including expected reporting dates for those not yet reporting

Theme	#	KPI Name and unit	Achieved 2020 to 2023
Biodiversity	ICF 17	Area under sustainable management practices (hectares)	392,007ha
Biodiversity	DI 1a	Area supported through restoration practices (ha)	6,492 ha
Biodiversity	DI 1b	Area designated as protected or other effective conservation measure (OECM) (hectares)	Reporting in 2025
Biodiversity	D12	Species threat reduction	Methodology to be developed in 2025
Biodiversity	D15	Solid waste and pollution removed or reduced (tonnes)	Reporting in 2025
Poverty	D17	People benefiting from strengthened or new livelihoods (#)	306,205 people
Poverty	D18	People with improved tenure security or access rights (#)	Reporting in 2025
Poverty	D19	People with improved income (#)	Methodology to be developed in 2025
Poverty	D10	People with improved food security (#)	Methodology to be developed in 2025

Why are these “results estimates”?

Defra collects data across its programmes to account for what is achieved through its ODA portfolio and to ensure it is having a positive impact on people’s lives in terms of aspects related to poverty and wellbeing, and also on biodiversity. Programme data is collected from a wide variety of sources, by different partners, using different methods, operating in different contexts. Although we and our partners strive to maximise data quality through our reporting, the quality of the data we receive (in terms of accuracy and completeness) can vary due to the particularly challenging environments in which we operate. This is one reason why we refer to our results as **estimates** and why they are not classified as Official or National Statistics.

Defra strives to apply best practice in data quality and transparency and has voluntarily followed the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) when producing our annual results report. Our [Statement of voluntary compliance with the code of practice for statistics](#) demonstrates the steps we have taken to improve the trustworthiness, quality and value of Defra’s results estimates.

The second reason we refer to our published DI KPI results as estimates is because the process for results aggregation is intentionally designed to estimate the minimum total benefits of our ODA spending in a given results area. We strive to ensure that each person, area or entity benefitting from our programmes is only counted once towards the total result for an indicator to avoid double-counting and take a conservative approach to any results we report, rather than risk overstating our results estimates.

Defra attributed cumulative results estimates

As this publication presents estimates of the results of Defra’s ODA spend, we make efforts to ensure all the results reported are attributable to Defra spend specifically. This includes our reporting on DI indicators and on programme-specific results case studies. In cases where Defra is a partial funder of a larger programme (for example, multilateral programming), Defra attributed results are calculated based either on a pro rata share of total programme result according to the proportion of funding provided by Defra, or by reporting results only of the specific workstreams that Defra funds. This ensures we do not overclaim the results that Defra spend was responsible for delivering. This approach to reporting attributed results is in line with the established approach for UK Government annual ICF results reporting.

Data in this report is presented cumulatively and does not detail the results achieved for each individual year within a given reporting period (for this publication, the period 2020 to 2023). This is because experience shows we are likely to receive historic data updates as new programmes report data that may be back-dated to cover a longer period of Defra funding, and in such cases existing results are updated for accuracy in future publications. One of the common reasons for historic data changes is a result of Defra’s conservative approach to reporting results estimates. Defra will reduce figures reported if there is any

uncertainty using agreed adjustment factors; this avoids any overclaiming of our impact (for more information, please see the [ICF supplementary Guidance: Additionality and Attribution](#)). If new evidence is produced that resolves this uncertainty, adjustment factors can be removed to allow full historic results to be reported later.

This initial results publication contains the overall cumulative results estimates achieved since 2020, up to 2023. A substantial number of Defra programmes have been contributing to the achievement of results on these KPIs since 2020, for this reason we are including this retrospective reporting in our first publication. We will continue to report cumulative results achieved since 2020 as an annual time series going forwards.

Data disaggregation

To protect sensitive data, we may suppress publication of disaggregated results in cases where reporting volume is insufficient, consistent with the approach taken for the established UK International Climate Finance annual results report. This is applied in cases where less than three programmes have reported, or when fewer than 100 individual beneficiaries are reported for a category. This approach ensures that potentially sensitive information on programme beneficiaries is not identifiable.

In line with the [Inclusive Data Charter](#), all people-based results data should be disaggregated by sex, age, disability and geography. This year, the volume of programmes reporting disaggregation by sex, age, disability or geography was below the threshold for disclosing this data. While barriers to data collection exist, Defra recognises that disaggregation of data by sex, age, geographic location and disability status is a requirement for people-based reporting and provides vital insights into who is benefitting from Defra's ODA programming. We are working with our delivery partners to strengthen data disaggregation in accordance with the Inclusive Data Charter. We aim to include at least partial sex disaggregated reporting in our next annual results report in late 2025.

Section 1: Biodiversity reporting

This section presents data for two out of the three sub-indicators that are aggregated and reported under DI KPI 1 'Area under ecological management, restoration and protection (hectares)'. This will be followed by case studies of Defra's ODA work in this area.

DI KPI 1: Area under ecological management, restoration and protection as a result of Defra ODA support (ha)

This indicator aggregates three area-based sub-indicators to report the headline indicator DI KPI 1 'Area under ecological management, restoration and protection (ha)'. These are:

- ICF KPI 17: Area under sustainable management practices (hectares)
- DI KPI 1a: Area under restoration practices (hectares)
- DI KPI 1b: Area designated as protected or other effective conservation measure (OECM) (hectares)

Together these indicators measure the area that has benefitted from sustainable management, restoration or protection as a direct result of Defra ODA funding. These types of interventions are essential for improving biodiversity and nature’s contributions to people.

For this publication two of the sub-indicators (ICF 17 and DI 1a) are reporting data with the third (DI 1b) reporting in 2025. The total number of hectares benefitting from ecological management and restoration is **398,499 hectares**, reported by eight programmes from 2020-2023 (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1: graph showing the cumulative annual results achieved for DI KPI 1 from 2020 to 2023.

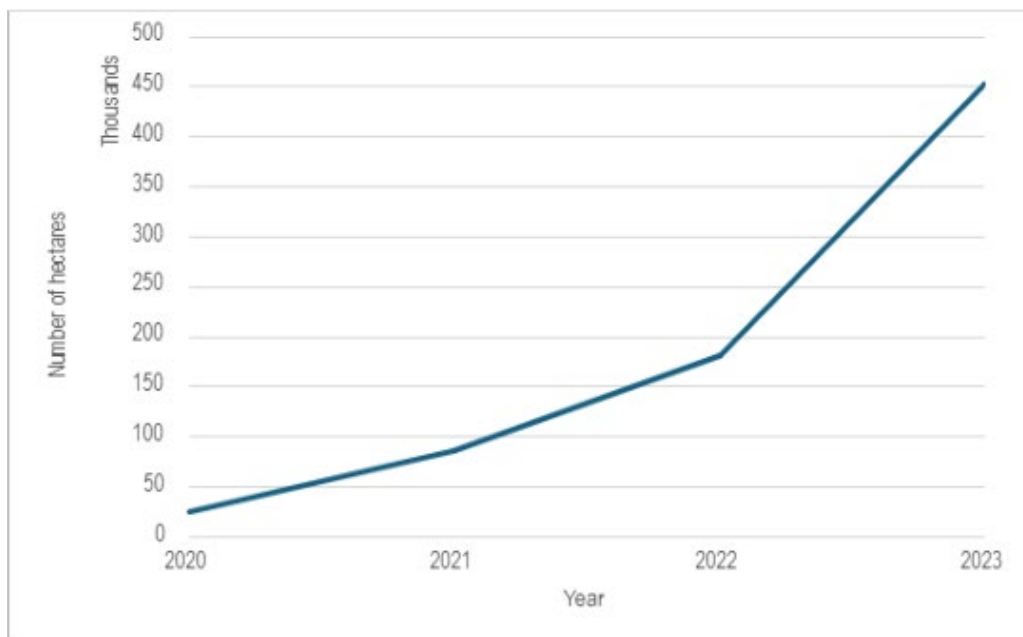


Figure 1 shows a line graph of the cumulative results for DI KPI 1 from 2020 to 2023. The Y-axis shows the number of hectares (thousands) that have been placed under management or restoration as a result of Defra ODA. The X-axis show the years 2022 to 2023. The increase is steady from 2020 to 2022, with a steeper increase in areas reported from 2022 to 2023.

All three sub-indicators are goals under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), with management, protection or restoration reflected in seven of the GBF’s 19 targets. Target 3 specifically highlights that conserving the world’s biodiversity through protected areas (PAs) and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs) is: ‘a

proven method for safeguarding both habitats and populations of species and for delivering important ecosystem services and multiple benefits to people’.

Ecosystem degradation is a major driver of biodiversity loss and carbon emissions, which both exacerbates, and is exacerbated by, climate change. It reduces the benefits that people derive from the natural environment, including contributions to their livelihoods, health and wellbeing. By working to manage, restore and protect ecosystems sustainably we can mitigate these impacts, protecting ecosystem services and biodiversity, while also making them more resilient to future climate shocks.

Ecosystem restoration objectives are also included in many international initiatives, such as the ‘1 billion hectares of ecosystem restoration by 2030’ target for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, Land Degradation Neutrality for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi Target 15. Similarly, sustainable management interventions support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 12.2 on sustainable management and effective use of natural resources, and SDG targets 14.2 and 15.1 on sustainable use and restoration of land and sea ecosystems.

Disaggregation of DI KPI 1

The total number of hectares receiving ecological management and restoration is **398,499 hectares** from 2020-2023. Of this total:

- **392,007 hectares** benefitted from sustainable management practices (ICF 17) through Defra ODA support, reported by eight programmes²
- **6,492 hectares** benefitted from restoration practices (DI KPI 1a) as a result of Defra ODA support, reported by three programmes³
- the third sub-indicator “areas designated as protected or other effective conservation measure (OECM)” is expected to report in 2025 with four programmes projected to contribute

² The eight programmes reporting ICF 17 are: Global Fund for Coral Reefs, Blue Forests, UK Blue Carbon Fund, Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Eco Business Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, Rural Sustantavel and Cities4Forests

³ The three programmes reporting DI 1a are: Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund and Cities4Forests

For this indicator, the total hectares reported is disaggregated across three areas: 1) by country(s) where the area is located, 2) by the area's ecosystem type and, 3) by the type of practice implemented. Over time, reporting with this disaggregation will provide insights into the mechanisms and focus of our programming that will support learning, evaluation and future programming design for increased impact. Of programmes reporting 88% provided some disaggregation, however this was not always across all three categories. Available disaggregated results are provided below.

Benefitting country was disaggregated for 118,524 hectares (30%) of results reported, giving information on the geographic spread of management and restoration activities. The 21 countries reported under DI 1 can be seen in **Figure 2** with Brazil, Indonesia and Madagascar reporting the largest areas under ecological management and restoration overall.

The ecosystem type was disaggregated for 160,770 hectares (40%) of results reported, giving information on the type of ecosystem that was receiving either management or restoration practices. The most common ecosystems reported were Intensive land-use – agriculture (58%), brackish tidal biome – mangroves (33%) and artificial wetlands - aquafarms (6%).

The practice type was disaggregated for 160,770 hectares (40%) of results reported, giving information on the intervention type that was implemented to manage or restore the area. The most common practice types reported were vegetation management (55%), forest management (37%) and aquaculture (6%).

Figure 2: Map showing the disaggregation of countries that are benefiting from management or restoration practices under DI KPI 1, 2020 to 2023

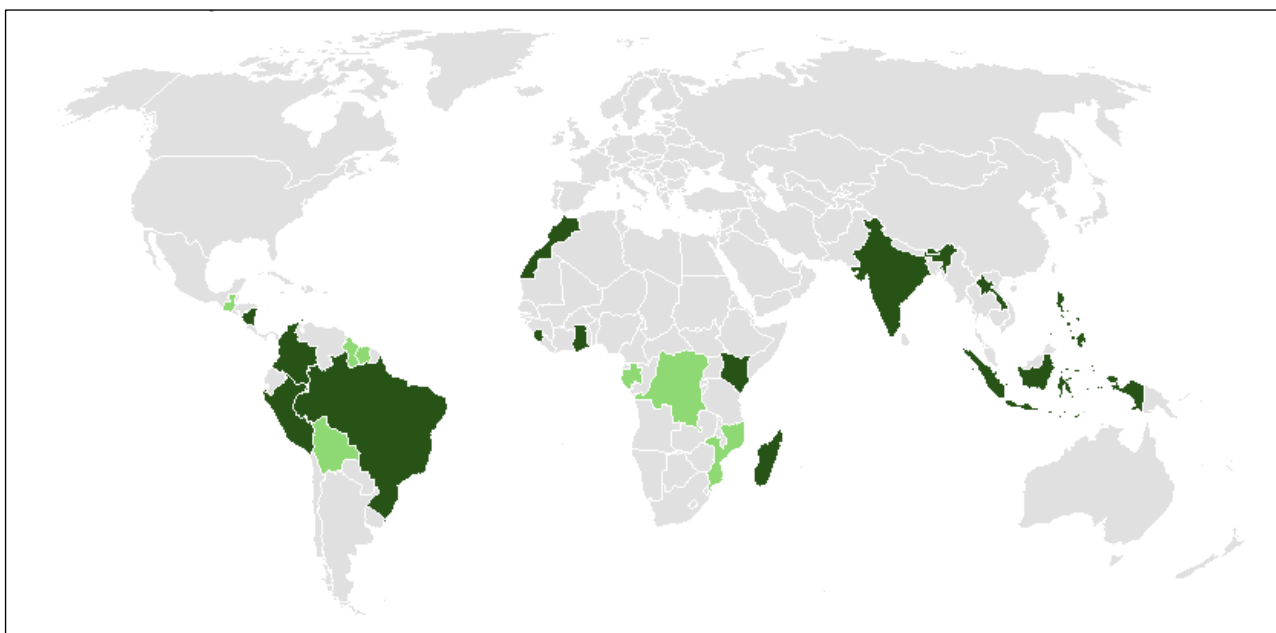


Figure 2 shows a map of the world with the countries reporting DI 1 indicated. Those countries having received Defra ODA support to place areas under sustainable

management and restoration are shown in dark green (21 countries: Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone and Suriname). Those countries receiving only sustainable management and not restoration are in light green (14 countries: Bhutan, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Morocco, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines and Sierra Leone). No locations are yet benefiting from restoration practices alone.

Case Study: Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDNF)

The Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Fund is an impact investment fund that brings together public and private investors to fund triple bottom line (people, planet, profit) projects that contribute to land degradation neutrality.¹ Land degradation neutrality is a major global challenge that was officially set as part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015. The LDN Fund was initiated at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Conference of the Parties 13 (COP 13) in China in 2017, and began operations in 2018 for a limited period of 15 years.

The Fund focuses on supporting land rehabilitation and sustainable land use projects worldwide (**Figure 3**) by mobilising investment (\$208 million) into large-scale, profit-generating sustainable land management projects that comply with high environmental and social standards. Along with other public investors like the Canadian, French and Luxembourgish governments and development agencies, Defra's £10 million investment in 2019 directly funds projects, but also reduces the risk for investors, drawing in private finance, for example from European insurance companies and North American pension funds to a sector perceived as being higher risk.

Figure 3: Image of a eucalyptus nursery from a Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Fund project site



Figure 3 shows a eucalyptus nursery within a field where several rows of wooden tables containing eucalyptus saplings can be seen growing. These, once ready, will be distributed for planting. Image source: William Norman, Defra.

The thirteen projects funded by LDN are varied but typically involve sourcing raw materials from hundreds or thousands of smallholder farmers who are practicing sustainable land management, then processing and marketing them centrally to add value and improve incomes. Commodities include cocoa, coffee, bananas, timber and natural pharmaceuticals. By 2033, LDN aims to have supported 350,000 ha under sustainable land management, 70,000 smallholders benefitting from jobs, and 25 million tonnes of carbon dioxide sequestered.

Project example 1: Sustainable artemisinin and quinine extraction, Madagascar

Investments in Aqre Group support the sustainable extraction of the high-value natural antimalarial ingredients artemisinin and quinine used to synthesise malaria treatments. Working with 15,000 smallholder farmers on 5,000 hectares, Aqre's model delivers reduced ecosystem pressure, higher biodiversity and improved livelihoods compared to large-scale artemisinin production. Planting of new trees takes place in areas that have been degraded by intensive farming and slash-and-burn agriculture, sequestering carbon dioxide and creating new, sustainable income sources instead for farmers living in poverty.

Project example 2: Habitat banks, Colombia

Investment in Terrasos supports the creation of Habitat Banks that allow for the consolidation of environmental investments for biodiversity net gain in areas of significant species richness, where natural ecosystems are at high risk from human use (for example, mining, agriculture, and urbanisation). Habitat Banks provide a means for the private sector to contribute to biodiversity preservation and land regeneration through the improvement or restoration of ecosystems, as well as contributing to sustainable social and economic development in rural areas.

Land Degradation Neutrality Fund's results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- reforested 5,000 hectares land
- avoided the release of 109,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide
- supported the jobs of 7,600 people in the agriculture sector
- 9,700 hectares contributing towards land degradation neutrality

Case Study: Blue Forests Initiative

The Blue Forests programme is delivered by the UK non-governmental organisation (NGO) Blue Ventures and seeks to protect, restore, and sustainably manage mangrove forests and reduce the poverty of the coastal communities that rely on them. The programme operates in Madagascar (**Figure 4**) and Indonesia and is delivered through community-led initiatives that address the unsustainable demand for, and management of products from, mangrove habitats. This may include mangrove wood for charcoal and building materials, and pressures on species populations due to high levels of overfishing.

Figure 4: Image of mangrove monitoring in the Madagascar site of the Blue Forest initiative



Figure 4 shows 2 members of the Blue Forest initiative programme monitoring and recording a tree within a mangrove in Madagascar as part of the management and restoration work conducted by the Blue Forest programme. Image source: Leah Glass, Blue Ventures.

Mangroves are among one of the most endangered habitats with 20% of the world's mangroves estimated to have been lost in the past 40 years due to clearance for development, overexploitation, and aquaculture, linked to a lack of land tenure rights and appropriate management techniques. Blue Forests implements a model for the sustainable management of mangrove habitats that supports coastal communities by transferring the right to manage and use coastal resources to communities themselves, through government approved management plans. This enables local communities to invest in sustainable long-term use and identify market value for the diverse ecosystem services that mangrove habitats provide.

During its lifetime, Blue Forests aims to protect around 80,000 hectares of mangrove forests; deliver around 1.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide savings via carbon sequestration, and benefit over 70,000 people through the provision of ecosystem services and access to alternative livelihood opportunities.

Blue Forest's results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- avoided the release of over 660,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide through work to manage and protect mangrove areas
- over 58,400 hectares of mangrove forest area protected or under sustainable local management
- increased the value of mangrove forest ecosystem services at programme sites, including shoreline protection, pollution abatement and protection from sedimentation, by more than USD \$659,000 per year (through the ecological management of mangroves)

Poverty and people reporting

DI KPI 7: People benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods as a result of Defra ODA support (#)

This indicator measures the number of beneficiaries (people) who have benefitted from their livelihoods being strengthened or from alternative livelihood opportunities being created as a result of Defra ODA funding. This indicator focuses on wider considerations than just income or employment status of an individual; it also looks at many other factors that are likely to protect or increase sustainability of existing livelihoods. This indicator uses the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework' to help organise factors that enhance livelihood opportunities allowing us to capture a wide range of relevant support through our ODA programmes.

The sustainable livelihoods framework is one way of thinking about poverty reduction. It focuses on factors that impact people's ability to make a living or that might make them less secure. This includes aspects such as income, vulnerability, food security, and well-being. It emphasises policy and institutional changes, as well as direct support to improve access to natural, social, and financial resources. Like multidimensional poverty frameworks, this approach better seeks to capture the range of relevant development activities carried out through Defra ODA. For further details, please refer to the indicator methodology note.

The total number of people benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods as a result of Defra ODA was **306,205** from 2020 to 2023 (**Figure 5**). This was reported by nine programmes in total⁴.

Figure 5: Graph showing the cumulative annual results achieved for DI KPI 7 from 2020 to 2023

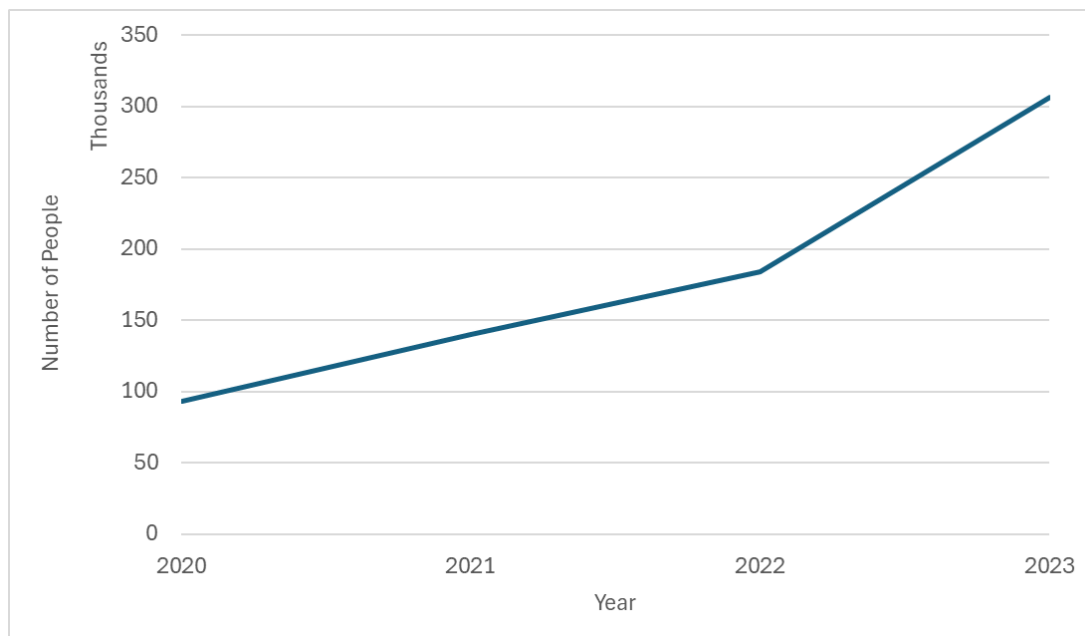


Figure 5 shows a line graph of the cumulative results for DI KPI 7 from 2020 to 2023. The Y-axis shows the number of people (thousands) that have had their livelihoods supported or new ones created of Defra ODA. The X-axis shows the years 2022 to 2023. The increase in people reported is steady from 2020 to 2022, with a steeper increase in areas reported from 2022 to 2023.

Globally, around 700 million people still live in extreme poverty with an estimated 78% of those living in rural areas⁵. Many rural households are reliant on natural resource-based livelihoods that are particularly exposed to frequent economic, man-made and natural risks

⁴ The nine programmes reporting DI 7 are: Global Plastic Action Partnership, Global Fund for Coral Reefs, Blue Forests, Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, Eco Business Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, Rural Sustantavel and Cities4Forests

⁵ World Bank. 2018. Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2018: Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle. World Bank, Washington, D.C. World Bank.

that threaten their livelihoods⁶. In many cases these people do not have the resources to cope with such shocks and stresses. In the absence of social protection, rural families may be forced to cope in ways that further increase their vulnerability and undermine their future income generation capacity.

Interventions that strengthen or create sustainable livelihoods also support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) goal 8 on decent work and economic growth and more broadly the SDG goal 1 on poverty, goal 3 on inequality. This KPI captures Defra's support both directly through the financial benefits that may be provided by either strengthened or new livelihoods, and indirectly through reducing pressures that could lead to increased insecurity in their occupations. In addition, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework target 9.2 makes clear that the increased security of existing traditional livelihoods and occupations is important for achieving sustainable management of land and sea.

Disaggregation of DI KPI 7

For this indicator, the total number of people reported should be disaggregated across three areas: 1) whether the livelihood was strengthened or created, 2) the sector the livelihood falls under and, 3) the employment type and. Of programmes reporting this KPI 89% provided some form of disaggregation, however, this was not always across all listed categories. Available disaggregated results are provided in this section.

Programmes are also asked to disaggregate the total number of people reported by sex, age, disability and geographic location. For this indicator the volume of programmes reporting was below the adopted threshold for disclosing disaggregated results. Defra recognises that disaggregation by these dimensions is a requirement for people-based reporting and is working towards this goal, in line with the Inclusive Data Charter.

For this indicator, the support to livelihoods can be reported as having either created a new livelihood opportunity (e.g. new employment) or it can strengthen an existing livelihood (e.g. make it more resilient to shocks). Of the results reported, 156,453 people (48%) had benefitted from strengthened livelihoods while 70,767 people (22%) had had new livelihoods created. The type of support to livelihoods (created or strengthened) was not reported for the remaining 98,143 people (30%) reported at this time.

The sector that the livelihood falls under was disaggregated for 279,701 people (91%) reported, giving more information on the different sectors that Defra's work is supporting

⁶ FAO, [Safeguarding and enhancing land-based livelihoods](#), 2016

people within. Of results that were disaggregated by sector, three sectors were reported: waste management (39%), agriculture (36%) and fisheries and aquaculture (25%).

The livelihood type was disaggregated for 272,096 people (89%) reported. This is more granular than the sector and indicates the type of work people are involved in. Of those results disaggregated by livelihood type, five types were reported: informal waste workers (40%), unspecified informal work (26%), unspecified formal work (28%), formal work through small farmers associations (6%), and formal work through reef positive business (<1%).

Case Study: Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP)

The Global Plastic Action Partnership delivered by the World Economic Forum (WEF), brings together governments, businesses, academia, and civil society to tackle plastic pollution and increase investment in circular economy transition. The programme is delivering results at both global and local scales. By March 2024 GPAP had established 17 impartial and inclusive stakeholder coordination groups called National Plastic Action Partnerships (NPAPs).

NPAPs work in-country to establish baselines for pollution, standardise metrics and create national action plans and roadmaps that inform national waste management and policy. Half of all partnerships established through GPAP now have published action roadmaps.

So far, members of the GPAP network have committed £2.37bn to initiatives focused on reducing plastic pollution. Based on their last member survey, 50% of GPAP partners self-identify as women and 20% self-identify as coming from a marginalised community, targets GPAP has reached two years early.

Project example: Inclusive Recycling project, Oaxaca, Mexico

The inclusive recycling project (**Figure 6**) aims to improve working conditions and promote recognition of rights for informal recyclers across three municipalities. It provided direct support to informal recyclers through integration, training, empowerment, and professionalisation. 62 recyclers and 15 municipality contractors participated in this project, 52% of whom were women. Involving municipal officials raised awareness of the importance of labour inclusion, helped to formalise the recyclers' door-to-door collection and supported them to create their own businesses. The project improved the recyclers' understanding of their rights and opportunities as a collective through entrepreneurship and labour rights training. As a result of the project, two new recoverable waste collection routes and a collection centre have been established by the recyclers.

Figure 6: Image of participants of the from the inclusive recycling project from Global Plastic Action Partnership



Figure 6 shows several participants taking part in a meeting on the site of the inclusive recycling project from Global Plastic Action Partnership in Oaxaca, Mexico. Image source: SiKanda.

Global Plastic Action Partnership's results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- supported the creation of 19 National Plastic Action Partnerships across Southeast and South Asia, Africa and Latin America
- influenced 41 policies and plans and 8 roadmaps to better address plastic waste including supporting development of the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Assessments for the plastics value chain
- supported over 11,900 people in the informal waste sector, providing personal safety packages during COVID-19 to protect them from exposure in high-risk operating environments in Ghana, Nigeria, Vietnam, India and Indonesia

Case Study: The Biodiversity Challenge Funds – Darwin Initiative

The Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs) consist of three of the UK Government's competitive grants:

- Darwin Initiative, established in 1993, has been funding projects that help conserve biodiversity and support the communities that live alongside it through locally led projects worldwide
- the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund is a 10-year-old scheme that provides support to innovative and scalable projects to reduce pressure on wildlife from illegal trade and, in doing so, reduce poverty in developing countries

- Darwin Plus was launched in 2012 to deliver long-term strategic outcomes for the unique biodiversity, the natural environment and improving resilience to climate change within the UK Overseas Territories

The BCFs are open challenge funds that run annual calls for proposals following the UK financial year with the launch of a new Round announced in May. Proposals do not require applications to be led by a UK organisation or for applicants to have a UK partner.

The Darwin Initiative awards grants that enable developing countries to conserve their unique biodiversity, reduce poverty and address climate change. It is likely the UK government's longest and more widely recognised contribution to developing countries' capacity to protect nature. Established in 1992, the Darwin Initiative has awarded more than £230m to over 1,320 projects safeguarding the environment for local people and enhancing the ability of national and local stakeholders to deliver future biodiversity and poverty reduction benefits (example project in **Figure 7**).

The Darwin Initiative contains [four schemes](#) targeting different angles of conservation efforts as follows:

- innovation: tests novel approaches that if proven could scale
- capability and capacity: focuses on developing the capability and capacity of national and local organisations
- main projects: are based on good evidence and are expected to deliver strong results, whilst demonstrating the potential to scale further
- extra: initiatives show a clear scaling pathway, building on good evidence from previous BCF projects.

Figure 7: Picture from the Darwin project DAREX004 in Tanzania



Figure 7 shows a Darwin Initiative project ([DAREX004](#)) 'Partnering for a biodiverse, prosperous and resilient Tarangire Ecosystem landscape' in which members of the project partner group Mama Asali can be seen presenting beeswax products for sale during the Kilifair event in Arusha, Tanzania. The project aims to save one of the largest wildlife migrations by keeping habitat and movement corridors open and improving the lives of pastoralist and hunter-gatherer communities that rely on these lands. Planned activities support livelihood enterprises linked to biodiversity such as beekeeping, women's rangeland guardians and eco-tourism. Picture sourced from the Darwin programme team.

Project example: Darwin Initiative project [DAREX005](#) - Ridge to Reef Conservation in West Papua, Indonesia

West Papua is home to some of the most biodiverse tropical wilderness in the Asia-pacific with the majority of the areas plants, birds and mammals being endemic to the area (not found elsewhere on earth). The key drivers of biodiversity loss in this landscape are deforestation caused by illegal logging, forest conversion, illegal wildlife trade and unsustainable practices.

To address these issues the project promotes collaborative protected area management to conserve West Papua's terrestrial and marine biodiversity. By employing gender-sensitive and participatory approaches they aim to improve the capacity for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to effectively manage these biodiverse areas. Part of this work is focused on enhancing the tenure security and legal access rights to the natural resources in these protected areas for long-term sustainable resource management. These local

efforts are vital for maintaining healthy ecosystems, supporting species recovery, and providing essential services.

The project has supported the livelihoods of over 40 villages through improved legal access to forest and marine resources, community-based enterprise development and improved value chains. Community patrols and partner led studies have helped to document 1,196 species, including 109 endemics. Regional policies are under development to establish a framework for private sector performance-based payments for environmental services to support long-term community-based management of the areas.

Across the Darwin Initiative challenge fund projects, results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- a total of 21,151 indigenous people have benefitted from strengthened land tenure
- the programme improved the capability and capacity of 1,034 national organisations
- influenced 119 policy, regulation, or standards consultations by ensuring biodiversity conservation or poverty reduction evidence was considered
- assisted marginalised people to set up 276 sustainable livelihood enterprises
- implemented improved sustainable agriculture practices across 1,380 hectares of land, benefiting 17,871 people

Climate reporting

Defra uses the established International Climate Finance KPIs to capture its contribution to climate impacts at portfolio level, as part of an annual cross-government (FCDO, DESNZ and Defra) publication '[UK International Climate Finance results 2024](#)'. This section focuses on case studies that showcase some of Defra's specific work in this area.

Case Study: Low-carbon Agriculture (LCA) for avoided deforestation and poverty reduction Phase II (Rural Sustentável)

The Rural Sustentável programme aims to reduce deforestation by improving agricultural land use practices among rural producers in Brazil, through the adoption of Low-Carbon Agriculture (LCA) - directly supporting the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture's implementation of the Low-Carbon Agriculture (ABC+) Plan. LCA can improve agriculture production whilst protecting native vegetation. Activities which are supported by the programme include agroforestry, recovery of degraded pasturelands and the adoption of integrated livestock-forest-crop systems.

With over 4,500 farms adopting at least one of these activities, it is expected that by the end of the programme over 31,000 people (farmers, technical agents and students) will have benefitted. This will support more sustainable systems of agricultural production and provide more sustainable livelihoods for rural communities across three projects within the following Brazilian biomes: Amazon (**Figure 8**), Cerrado, and Caatinga

Figure 8: Image of the indigenous community coffee farm within the Amazon biome of Rural Sustentavel



Figure 8 shows the projects Paiter Surui indigenous community coffee farm where lines of coffee plants can be seen growing. The project supports the sustainable production of six commodities including acai, round sish and coffee. Image sources from the Defra programme team.

Project example: The Caatinga biome, Northeast Brazil

Agriculture plays a key role in Caatinga with approximately 32% of all Brazil's farmers located within it. Traditional agricultural practices, such as the use of slash and burn and overgrazing, are common, causing land degradation and increasing desertification. As a result, the Caatinga has become the third most degraded biome in Brazil.

The project has provided technical assistance and training to small and medium-size local farmers to support the adoption of climate-smart technologies. Over 225 workshops and field days have already been conducted, helping to train over 1,500 farmers and 650 technical agents on LCA. As a direct result of project interventions, over 850 hectares of land has been brought under sustainable management so far. Support to value chains and market access has strengthened the capacities of small farmer organizations through the financing of collective benefits, such as water storage, seedling nurseries, small-scale storage facilities, and tools for compost production.

Rural Sustentável results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- prevented the release of over 500,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide through avoided deforestation low carbon agriculture work
- LCA sustainable practices implemented across over 46,000 hectares of land;
- supported around 17,000 people through improved agriculture and land use practices, and provided LCA training to over 8,100 farmers and 3,900 young people
- avoided the ecosystem loss of 6,000 hectares of land through the recovery of degraded pastures

Case Study: Cities4Forests

The Cities4Forests initiative, delivered by the World Resource Institute (WRI), links cities with forests and nature at three scales: inner forests (such as city trees, urban parks, and other green infrastructure), nearby forests (such as upstream watersheds) and faraway forests (especially tropical forests). Cities4Forests seeks to accelerate the conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of nature, to benefit cities, forests, and local communities. There are three pillars of the programme: on-the-ground technical assistance programmes, support for new policies and practices, and efforts to unlock investments to catalyse progress on nature.

Project Example: Kochi, India enacts Nature-Based Solutions to build long-term climate resilience

Kochi, India is a growing financial and industrial hub that is home to 6.5 million people. Because the city sits less than 5 meters above sea level, it is particularly vulnerable to coastal erosion, flooding and other climate-induced hazards. Meanwhile, declining green space is exacerbating these issues and increasing local temperatures.

One key project is the Kawaki initiative, established in 2021 (**Figure 9**). Through Kawaki, which means 'to make a grove' in Malayalam, WRI India and local communities worked together to establish urban forests to reduce extreme heat and floods. Urban trees cool the surrounding air, mitigate urban heat island effect, hold soil in place to prevent erosion, and increase water absorption to alleviate flood risks. This work has bolstered resilience against extreme heat and floods in the most vulnerable neighbourhoods of Kochi. These successful examples of leveraging nature-based solutions informed a guidance document for resilient planning leading to efforts to integrate nature in disaster risk and climate action planning.

Figure 9: Image of the Cities4Forests Kawaki initiative in Kochi, India



Figure 9 shows 2 members of the nature-based solutions project in Kochi, India standing next to the project site where they aim to build long-term climate resilience in climate vulnerable areas. Image source: World Resource Institute (WRI), Cities4forests.

Project Example: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, leverages integrated tools to enhance urban resilience and NBS strategies

Cities4Forests has supported Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to improve urban greening and resilience through science-based practices, providing crucial guidance in a region challenged by low tree survival rates from restoration initiatives. Tree cover mapping (**Figure 10**) has provided novel baseline data that serves as a crucial resource for the Addis Ababa Urban Development and Green Development Bureau, guiding tree planting decisions. The Nature based Solutions (NbS) guide for urban resilience was launched in June 2022 to help city leadership facilitate rapid risk assessments and pilot project planning, shaping tree planting strategies and urban greening efforts across sub-Saharan African cities.

Figure 10: Tree cover mapping from the Cities4Forets programme in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

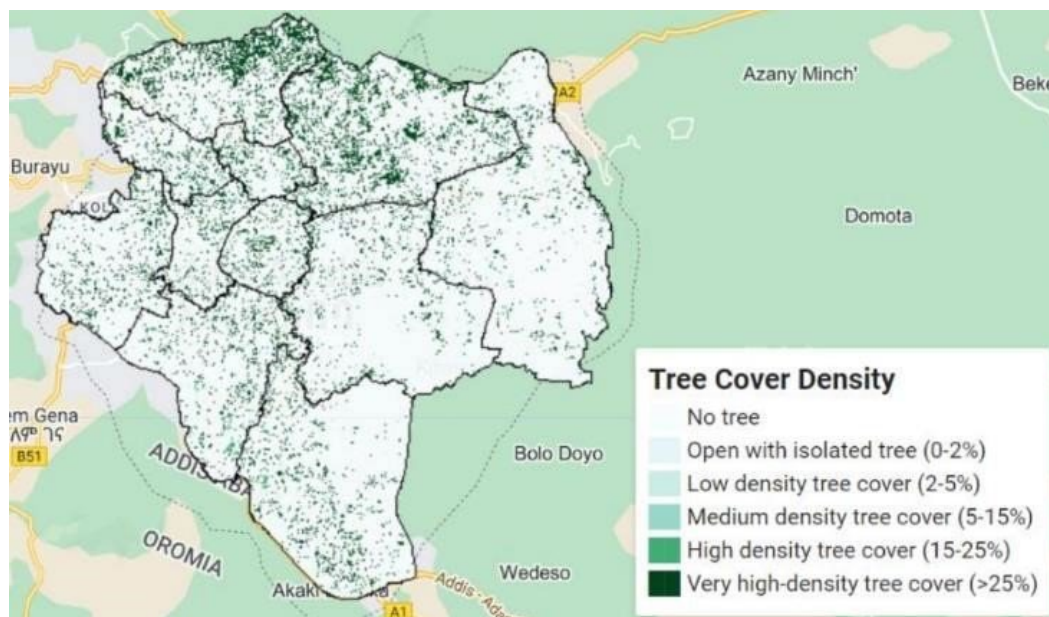


Figure 10 shows a map of tree cover density in Addis Abba, Ethiopia, from ‘no tree’ to ‘very high-density tree cover (>25%)’ from the Cities4Forests urban resilience project. Images sources from World Resource Insitute (WRI), Cities4Forests.

The development of the Tree Species Selection and Silvicultural Management Guidelines for Addis Ababa, made in partnership with the [Gulele Botanical Garden](#), is a scientific framework emphasizing the “[right species, right place](#)” approach, providing essential support for evidence-based decision-making, optimized nursery practices, and strengthened partnerships among government agencies, nurseries, and conservation groups to keep trees alive and healthy.

Cities4Forest results achieved with Defra funding to date are as follows:

- supported over 332,600 people to become more climate resilient
- reduced or avoided the release of over 16,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide
- directly enhanced the livelihoods of more than 2,500 people
- improved access to finance of 21 nature-based solution projects as a result of adopting Cities4Forest instruments or recommendations

Section 2: Defra’s ODA Portfolio

The information presented in this section provides an overview of Defra’s current portfolio of Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes. It presents a best estimate of the

geographic footprint at the time of publication in 2024, with the caveat that this may change as programmes adapt and grow.

What is Defra ODA?

Official Development Assistance is defined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Defra's ODA focuses on supporting developing countries to address the triple threats of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution to create a world free from poverty on a liveable planet.

All UK ODA expenditure must comply with the International Development Act (2002, updated in 2014) as the applicable legal framework, which requires ODA programmes to demonstrate that they are 'likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty' and further, 'likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender'.

The UK has committed to spend £11.6bn of its ODA as International Climate Finance (ICF) from 2021/22–2025/26, with at least £3bn of this ringfenced for nature ICF spend. ICF represents a UK Government commitment to support developing countries to undertake mitigation and adaptation actions to prevent and tackle the challenges caused by climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation.

What programming do we deliver?

Defra's ODA portfolio in 2024 includes 27 programmes that work broadly across four thematic areas (**Table 3**), though many of these programmes are cross-cutting and support multiple thematic areas.



Our current ODA portfolio is delivered through a combination of bilateral (33%), multilateral (56%) and mixed (11%) mechanisms, with multilateral programming being delivered through institutions working globally. Key multilateral partners for Defra's ODA include the World Bank (WB), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) among others. Defra supports a range of work through its multilateral partners, including natural capital accounting (through the WB's Global Program on Sustainability), blue finance mobilisation (through the WB's PROBLUE programme), and implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (through the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, hosted by the Global Environment Facility). In addition to its main ODA programmes detailed in this annex, Defra contributes to several ODA-eligible multilateral environment agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal Protocol, Basel and Minimata Conventions.



To find out more about Defra's current ODA programming please see Annex 1 for a full list of active programmes, and programme ID codes that allow the programmes to be

identified on [Development Tracker](#). This site contains further information and key documents for each ODA programme.

Defra is reviewing its future priorities for ODA programming for 2026/27 onwards as part of the UK Government’s Spending Review and will include further details about its ODA portfolio in the next Defra annual results report in late 2025.

Table 3: Thematic areas of Defra ODA programming

Number of programmes	Thematic area
14 programmes	<p>Protecting and restoring critical ecosystems and species to support adaptation, reduce emissions, and reduce poverty</p>
	<p>Land and sea use change is the primary driver of biodiversity loss, alongside over-exploitation of nature (e.g. through overfishing or intensive agriculture). Defra is supporting programmes working in highly biodiverse landscapes to restore and protect habitats and species to deliver nature, climate and poverty outcomes. This includes marine ecosystems, where we restore and protect mangroves, coral reefs and reduce plastic pollution.</p>
6 programmes	<p>Leveraging finance for nature</p>
	<p>There is an estimated annual funding gap of \$700 bn per year needed to reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2030. This funding needs to come from all sources, including the private sector. We support impact investment funds to increase private finance investment in sustainable land management and agriculture, and coastal and ocean natural capital. Defra has also helped to create a framework for the private sector on nature-related risks.</p>
3 programmes	Integrating nature into decision-making

	<p>The Dasgupta review demonstrated that economies globally do not sufficiently recognise the value of nature. Defra invests through UN agencies to integrate nature into Nationally Determined Contributions; to support developing countries to reform policies; and to build nature markets. Through the World Bank, we also support developing countries with data collection and analysis on natural capital, to help inform national planning.</p>
<p>4 programmes</p>	<p>Science, innovation and technology</p>
	<p>We provide policy-relevant research on biodiversity, climate and poverty, including through science and innovation programmes to support partner Governments and the global community. We are developing a sustainable cold chain centre of excellence model in Africa which is designed for replication in developing markets to improve livelihoods by reducing food and vaccine loss, whilst mitigating the environmental impacts of greater access to cooling and cold chain.</p>

Where do we work?

Defra’s current ODA programmes are delivered across a range of ODA eligible countries (Figure 11), focused on locations where the potential for impact on poverty, biodiversity and climate outcomes is greatest. Spend is primarily delivered across three regions: Sub-Saharan African, South/Southeast Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Internal analysis of global data on nature dependency, poverty, biodiversity levels and threats, irrecoverable carbon tipping points and in-country risk supports this geographic focus.

Annex 1: Defra ODA Programmes

Table below includes all Defra ODA programmes active in 2024, although not all of these programmes have reported DI KPI data into this publication. Further details and key documents for each programme can be found on [DevTracker](#) by searching the programme ID.

Programme Name	Programme ID
Animal Health Systems Strengthening (AHSS)	GB-GOV-7-AHSS-36850
Biodiverse Landscapes Fund	GB-GOV-7-BLF
Blue Planet Fund: Blue Forests	GB-GOV-7-BPFBLUEFORESTS
Blue Planet Fund: Championing Inclusivity in Plastic Pollution (CHIPP)	GB-GOV-7-BPFCHIPP
Blue Planet Fund: Fiji Blue Bond	GB-GOV-7-BPF-FijiBlueBond
Blue Planet Fund: Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR)	GB-GOV-7-BPFGFCR
Blue Planet Fund: Global Plastics Action Partnership (GPAP)	GB-GOV-7-BPFGPAP
Blue Planet Fund: OCEAN Challenge Fund	GB-GOV-7-BPFOCEAN
Blue Planet Fund: Ocean Country Partnerships Programme (OCP)	GB-GOV-7-BPFOCPP
Blue Planet Fund: Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA)	GB-GOV-7-BPFORRAA
Blue Planet Fund: ProBlue	GB-GOV-7-BPFPROB
Blue Planet Fund: UK Blue Carbon Fund	GB-GOV-7-BPF-BCF
Cities4Forests	GB-GOV-7-PO020-C4F
Climate Promise	GB-GOV-7-ICF-UNDP
Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund	GB-GOV-7-DarwinInitiative
Darwin Plus Challenge Fund	GB-GOV-7-DPLUS
Eco.Business Fund (EBF)	GB-GOV-7-ICF-P0003-EcoB
Environmental Pollution Programme	GB-GOV-7-EQ
Global Biodiversity Framework Fund Investment	GB-GOV-7-ICF-PO0015-GEF7
Global Programme for Sustainability (GPS)	GB-GOV-7-GB-GOV-7-ICF-PO014-GPS
ICF R&D: Global Centre for Biodiversity and Climate (GCBC)	GB-GOV-7-ICF-P0011-RD
Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund	GB-GOV-7-IWT-CF-R9
Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LND)	GB-GOV-7-PO009-LDN
Nature Positive Economy	GB-GOV-7-NPE
Rural Sustentavel	GB-GOV-7-GB-GOV-7-ICF-PO013-LCP2
Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain Solutions (SCCS)	GB-GOV-7-32CPL-00499-KA
Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)	GB-GOV-7-TNFD-PO002