Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra’s Official Development Assistance

Annual results estimates report 2025

November 2025

We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment. We aim to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. We also support our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries.

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List of Acronyms

AHSS Animal Health Systems Strengthening
CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
CHIPP Blue Planet Fund: Championing Inclusivity in Plastic Pollution
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
EBF Eco.Business Fund
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization
FCDO Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
GBF Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GBP Great British Pounds
GCBC Global Centre for Biodiversity and Climate
GFCR Global Fund for Coral Reefs
GPAP Global Plastic Action Partnership
GPS Global Programme for Sustainability
ICF International Climate Finance
IWT Illegal Wildlife Trade
KPI Key Performance Indicator
LCA Low Carbon Agriculture
LDNF Land Degradation Neutrality Fund
LLF Legacy Landscapes Fund
MPA Marine Protected Area
OCPP Blue Planet Fund: Ocean Country Partnerships Programme
ODA Official Development Assistance
OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECM Other Effective Conservation Measure
ORRAA Blue Planet Fund: Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance
PA Protected area
R&D Research and development
SACD Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development
SCCCS Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain Solutions
SDG Sustainable Development Goal
TA Technical Assistance
TNFD Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures
USD United States Dollars

Main findings

Defra's ODA programming has delivered the following results in developing countries:

- from April 2019 to March 2025, over a million hectares were brought under sustainable management practices
- from April 2016 to March 2025, over 355,000 people benefitted from new or strengthened livelihoods
- from April 2022 to March 2024, over 48,000 people benefitted from improved tenure or access rights.

Introduction

Official Development Assistance (ODA) is defined as resource flows to developing countries and multilateral organisations, which are provided by official agencies, like the UK government, or their executive agencies. It is measured using the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) definitions of ODA.

Defra is one of several government departments to administer the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget, accounting for 1.3% of UK ODA in 2024. 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.

Sections 1 and 2 of this report present initial results estimates for a selection of the Defra International (DI) KPIs up to March 2025. The reporting periods covered vary by indicator depending on data availability, and are stated for each KPI in the section above. These are biodiversity and poverty-focussed metrics for Defra ODA programmes, designed to complement our reporting on climate impacts through the annual UK government ICF KPIs. We also include case studies from programmes to illustrate the broader results achieved through Defra's ODA. For more information on the DI KPIs, plus other available data on ODA programmes, see How we measure impact.

Section 3 presents a summary of Defra's portfolio of ODA programming as of 2025.

Note: All results in this release are estimates based on programme-level data, which contain a level of uncertainty – see the data quality section for more details.

Defra annual results estimates 2025

Total achieved results estimates

The cumulative results for Defra International (DI) KPIs up to March 2025 are summarised in **Table 1**. A detailed breakdown of reported results for each KPI is provided in the following section.

Table 1: Cumulative results for Defra International (DI) KPIs up to March 2025

Theme	KPI number	KPI name and unit	Reporting period	Achieved result
Biodiversity	ICF KPI 17	Area under sustainable management practices (hectares)	April 2019 to March 2025	1,079,429 hectares
Biodiversity	DI KPI 1a	Area supported through restoration practices (hectares)	April 2019 to March 2025	19,924 hectares
Poverty	DI KPI 7	People benefiting from strengthened or new livelihoods (count)	April 2016 to March 2025	355,778 people
Poverty	DI KPI 8	People with improved tenure or access rights (count)	April 2022 to March 2024	48,396 people

Context on current results

13 of 31 programmes (42%) that have been active during the reporting period up to March 2025 are now reporting results against at least one of these indicators. This is an improvement in coverage since last year when 10 programmes were reporting results.

Some programmes will not have reported on 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. We expect reporting coverage to continue increasing over time as the DI KPIs become more established.

For more information on Defra’s full ODA results reporting framework, including updates on potential additional indicators under consideration for future years’ reporting, see Table 2 in Section 3 of this report.

Data quality

Why these are "results estimates"

Defra collects data across its programmes from a wide variety of sources, by different partners, operating in different contexts, and methods used may vary. We support our delivery partners with guidance and advice to enhance the quality of their data and help them align to agreed methodologies.

Prior to analysis, ODA analysts review data returns from teams, check the results and supporting information, and determine whether any adjustment factors are necessary in order to publish the results.

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. For this reason, we refer to our results as estimates, and they are not classified as Official or Accredited Official Statistics.

Defra endeavours 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.

Reporting periods

For reporting purposes, we consider our results by financial year (April to March). This is consistent with UK government annual ICF reporting. In reality, programmes may have different reporting periods depending on their own reporting cycles. Where this is the case, we will assign their results to the most appropriate reporting period.

The reporting periods covered vary by indicator depending on data availability, and are stated in the relevant section for each KPI.

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 focus on "achieved results" and 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. Results estimates in this report are presented cumulatively across the reporting period up to March 2025. We do not publish specific estimates of the results achieved in individual years. This reflects our approach of counting each person, area or entity benefitting from our programmes only once towards the total result for an indicator to avoid double-counting, even where support may be provided through a given programme over several years. It also reflects the high likelihood of our receiving historic data updates as new programmes report data that may be backdated to cover a longer period of Defra funding. This is because teams need time to integrate relevant indicators into programme-level monitoring frameworks to capture their contributions against the standard indicators.

Revisions and corrections

Defra aims to take a cautious approach to reporting results estimates. We will reduce figures reported if there is any uncertainty using agreed adjustment factors in line with the established approach for UK government annual ICF results reporting, to avoid overclaiming our impact (for more information, see the ICF Supplementary Guidance: Additionality and Attribution).

Given the nature of these estimates and the way in which they are measured, in some instances new evidence will mean we revise our historic figures. Some reasons for this include:

- programmes providing backdated data on Defra funding which includes results achieved in earlier years of the reporting period
- resolution to previous uncertainty over data quality, and removal of adjustment factors
- programmes updating or correcting their methodologies

In such cases existing results will be updated for accuracy in the next annual publication. We will explain any historic changes in the relevant indicator section as needed.

If we find an error in results after publication, our response will depend on the scale of the impact. Where an error could change the findings presented, we will issue an unscheduled correction. We will correct any minor errors along with any other data revisions in the next annual publication.

Data disaggregation

To protect sensitive data, we may suppress publication of disaggregated results in cases where reporting volume is insufficient. This is usually applied in cases where fewer than 2 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 Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data's Inclusive Data Charter, all people-based results data should be disaggregated by sex, age, geographic location and disability status. This year, we have sufficient programmes reporting sex disaggregated results to include breakdowns in this publication, as well as limited age disaggregation for one indicator, and limited geographic disaggregation for another indicator. The volume of programmes reporting disaggregation by disability status, and age and geographic location (urban or rural) for other indicators, was still below the threshold for disclosing this data.

We have also included additional disaggregated information as specified in the methodology for each indicator, for example on benefitting country, where data allows for this.

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.

Section 1: Biodiversity reporting

This section presents data for 2 out of the 3 sub-indicators that are aggregated and reported under DI KPI 1 'area under ecological management, restoration and protection (hectares)'. This is followed by a case study 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

This indicator aggregates 3 area-based sub-indicators to report the headline indicator DI KPI 1 'Area under ecological management, restoration and protection (hectares)'. 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 2 of the sub-indicators (ICF KPI 17 and DI KPI 1a) are reporting data with the third (DI KPI 1b) expected to report in 2026. The total number of hectares benefitting from ecological management and restoration from April 2019 to March 2025 is 1,099,353 hectares, reported by 9 programmes (Figure 1). These are: Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance, Global Fund for Coral Reefs, Blue Forests, UK Blue Carbon Fund, Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Eco Business Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, Rural Sustentavel, and Cities4Forests.

Figure 1: total cumulative area under ecological management (hectares) as a result of Defra ODA funding, April 2019 to March 2025

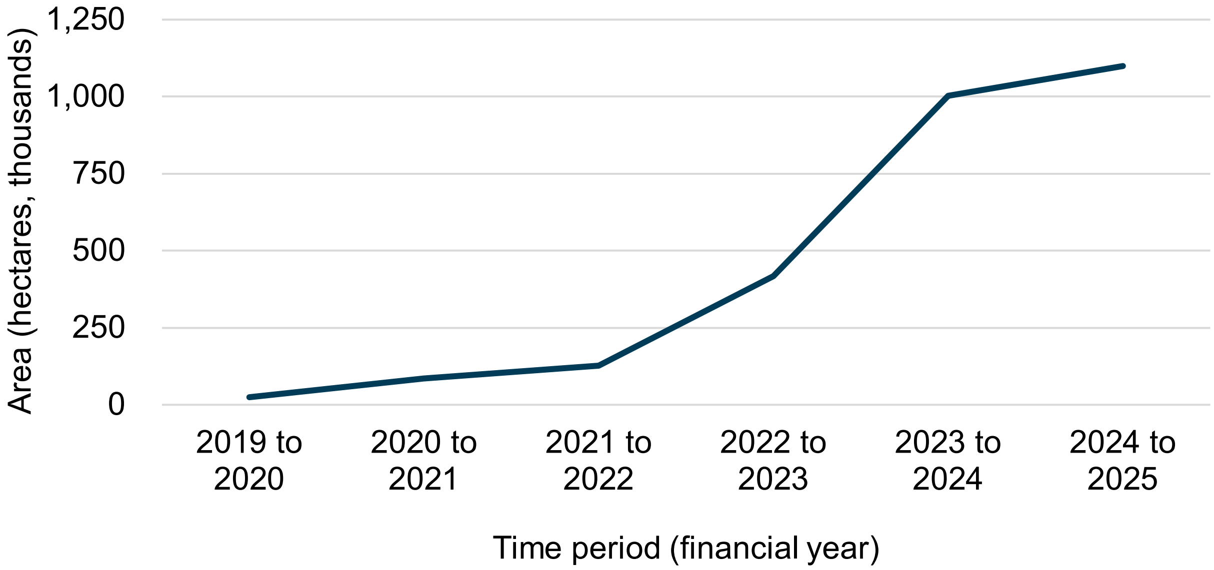

Figure 1 shows a line graph of the cumulative results for DI KPI 1 from April 2019 to March 2025. The Y-axis shows the number of hectares (thousands) that have been placed under management or restoration as a result of Defra ODA. The X-axis show the financial years from April 2019 to March 2025. The increase is steady from year ending March 2020 to year ending March 2022, with a steeper increase in areas reported from year ending March 2022 to year ending March 2024, followed by a less steep increase from year ending March 2024 to year ending March 2025.

All 3 sub-indicators of DI KPI 1 are goals under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), with management, protection or restoration reflected in 7 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 both exacerbates, and is exacerbated by, climate change. It is associated with biodiversity loss and increased carbon emissions. It reduces the benefits that people derive from the natural environment, including contributions to their livelihoods, health and wellbeing. By managing, restoring and protecting ecosystems sustainably we can mitigate these impacts, making them more resilient to future climate shocks and helping to stabilise global food systems, thereby reducing risks to UK supply chains, food security, and economic resilience.

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 from April 2019 to March 2025 is 1,099,353 hectares. Of this total:

- 1,079,429 hectares benefitted from sustainable management practices (ICF KPI 17) through Defra ODA support, reported by 9 programmes,
- 19,924 hectares benefitted from restoration practices (DI KPI 1a) as a result of Defra ODA support, reported by 4 programmes,
- the third sub-indicator "areas designated as protected or other effective conservation measure (OECM)" is expected to report in 2026.

The 9 programmes reporting on ICF KPI 17 are: Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance, Global Fund for Coral Reefs, Blue Forests, UK Blue Carbon Fund, Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Eco Business Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, Rural Sustentavel, and Cities4Forests.

The 4 programmes reporting on DI KPI 1a are: Darwin Initiative Challenge Fund, Rural Sustentavel, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, and Cities4Forests.

For this indicator, the total hectares reported is disaggregated across 3 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. All programmes reporting provided some disaggregation, however this was not always across all three categories. Available disaggregated results are provided below.

Benefitting country was disaggregated for 771,602 hectares (70%) of results reported, giving information on the geographic spread of management and restoration activities. The 40 countries reported under DI KPI 1 can be seen in Figure 2, with Indonesia and

Tanzania reporting the largest areas under ecological management and restoration overall.

The ecosystem type was disaggregated for 502,972 hectares (46%) of results reported, giving information on the type of ecosystem that was receiving either management or restoration practices. Where disaggregated results were given, the most common ecosystems reported were shoreline systems (60%), intensive land-use (19%) and brackish tidal systems (15%).

The practice type was disaggregated for 493,828 hectares (45%) of results reported, giving information on the intervention type that was implemented to manage or restore the area. Where disaggregated results were given, the most common practice types reported were coastal management (42%), vegetation management (20%), fisheries management (19%), and forest management (16%).

Figure 2: countries benefiting from management or restoration practices under DI KPI 1, April 2019 to March 2025

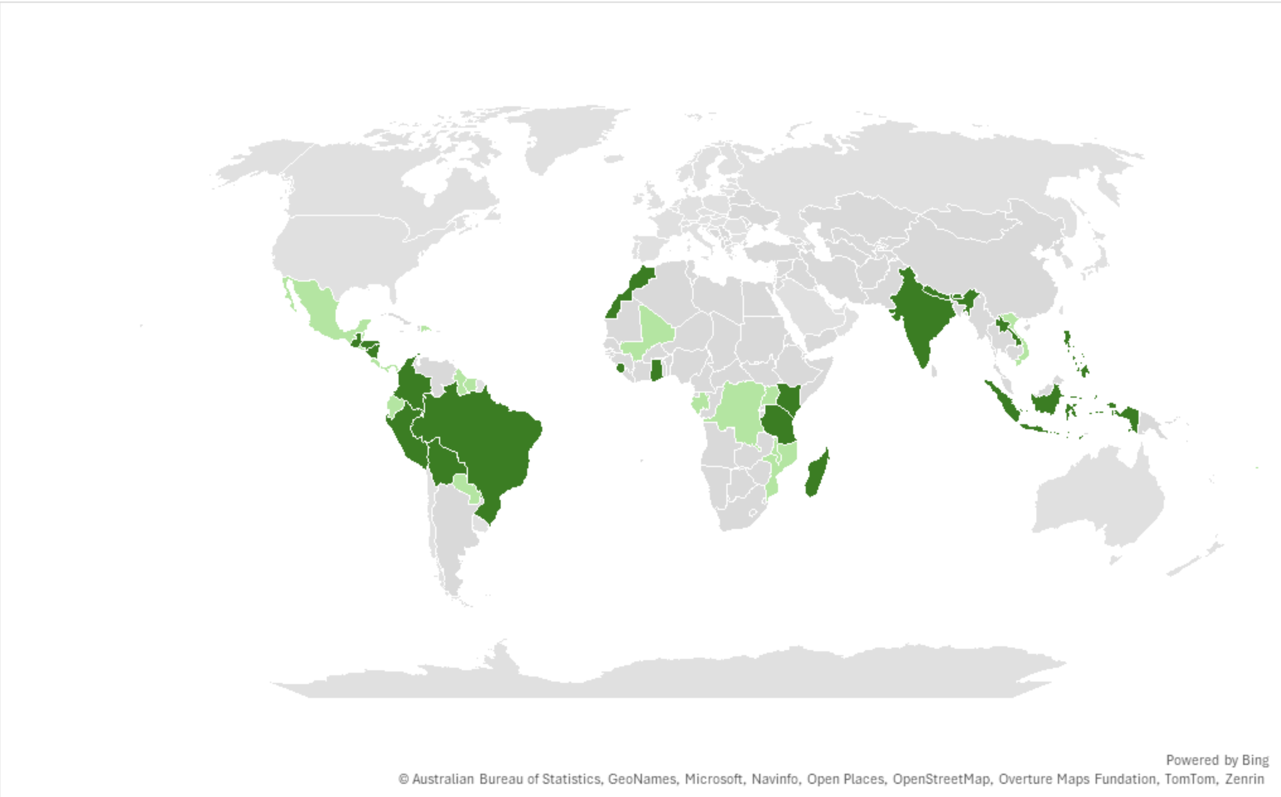

Figure 2 shows a map of the world with the 40 countries reporting DI KPI 1 highlighted. Of these, Defra ODA supported 19 countries to place land under both sustainable management and restoration, shown in dark green: Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Tanzania. The other 21 countries received only one type of support and are shown in light green. Of these, 20 countries received support for sustainable management only. These are Belize, Comoros, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Guyana, Malawi, Maldives, Mexico, Federated States of Micronesia, Mozambique, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Uganda, Vietnam. Mali is the only location benefiting from restoration practices alone.

Case Study: Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR)

Coral reefs are home to more than 25% of marine biodiversity and provide ecosystem services valued at almost USD 9.9 trillion (GBP 7.7 trillion) annually. More than 500 million people depend on reefs for food, jobs and coastal defence. The Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) aims to ensure Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) receive consistent funding for effective governance, enforcement, and locally-led reef positive initiatives. It does so via sustainable financing models, early-stage investments, and partnerships with the private sector. With improved financial sustainability, MPAs can deliver lasting economic and ecological benefits to the communities that depend on them, breaking cycles of poverty and environmental degradation.

Project example: Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is the second largest MPA in Belize, encompassing approximately 72,000 hectares and forming part of the Mesoamerican Reef’s largest estuarine system. The livelihoods of many people in the area are under threat due to overfishing and environmental degradation. The Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD), supported by GFCR, co-manages the MPA, monitoring the coral reef, overseeing surveillance and enforcement, and promoting sustainable fishing practices via education and outreach programmes.

SACD is building a more resilient, conservation-driven economy for Sarteneja by blending ecological stewardship with socio-economic development. For example, it provides educational tours of rivers, coastal wildlife and marine ecosystems, which generated over 200,000 Belize Dollars (75,910 GBP) income in 2024, supporting SACD’s financial stability and generating local jobs, service payment, and profit share streams for the local community. The tours have helped also local families diversify their income away from fishing.

Section 2: Poverty and people reporting

This section presents data for 2 indicators relating to people and poverty. Case studies are included to demonstrate Defra’s ODA work in these areas.

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

This indicator measures the number of 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 approach used in this guide was developed by Chambers and Conway in 1991 and Department for International Development (DFID) in 1999 and complemented by the work of Norton and Foster in 2001 and Thennakoon in 2012.

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, refer to the indicator methodology note.

The total number of people benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods as a result of Defra ODA from April 2016 to March 2025 was 355,778 (Figure 3). This was reported by 10 programmes in total. These are: Environmental Pollution Programme, 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 Sustentavel, and Cities4Forests.

Figure 3: total cumulative number of people benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods as a result of Defra ODA funding, April 2016 to March 2025

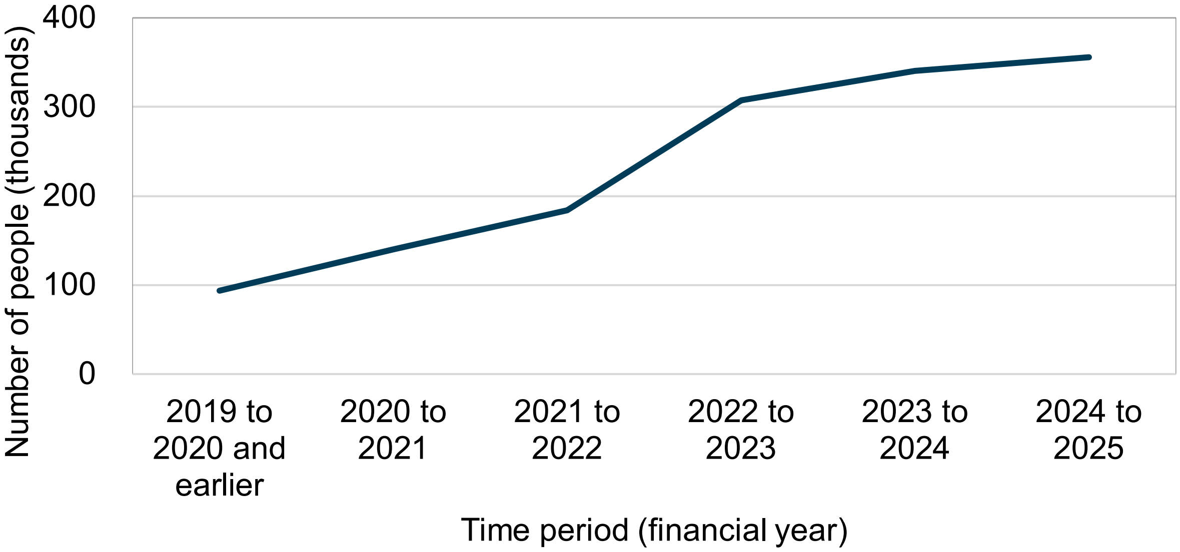

Figure 3 shows a line graph of the cumulative results for DI KPI 7 from April 2016 to March 2025. The Y-axis shows the number of people (thousands) benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods as a result of Defra ODA. The X-axis show the financial years from April 2019 and earlier to March 2025. The period covering 2019 to 2020 and earlier aggregates figures from April 2016 to March 2020, to avoid disclosure of individual programme figures. The increase in people reported is steady from the period ending March 2020 to year ending March 2022, with a steeper increase in areas reported from year ending March 2022 to March 2023, followed by a more gradual increase from year ending March 2023 to year ending March 2025.

Globally, around [700 million people] still live in extreme poverty with more than three quarters of those living in rural areas. Many rural households are reliant on natural resource-based livelihoods that are particularly exposed to frequent economic, man-made and natural risks that [threaten their livelihoods].

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, and 2) the sector under which the livelihood falls. Of programmes reporting this KPI 90% 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 status and geographic location. For this indicator the volume of programmes reporting was below the adopted threshold for disclosing disaggregated results, with the exception of sex, and the age category “youth” (defined as between 15 and 25 years of age). Results were disaggregated by sex for 3% of results, of which 6,549 men (54%) and 5,584 women (46%) benefitted. 661 individuals were identified as youths (0.2% of total result). Defra recognises that disaggregation by these dimensions is a requirement for people-based reporting and is working towards increased disaggregated reporting, in line with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data’s Inclusive Data Charter.

For this indicator, the support to livelihoods can be reported as having either created a new livelihood opportunity (like new employment) or it can strengthen an existing livelihood (such as make it more resilient to shocks). Of the results reported 225,766 (63%) could be disaggregated, of which 152,661 people (68%) had benefitted from strengthened livelihoods while 70,767 people (31%) benefitted from new livelihoods created, and 2,338 (1%) were recorded as benefitting from both strengthened and new livelihoods. The type of support to livelihoods (new or strengthened) was not reported for the remaining 130,012 people (37% of overall results) reported at this time.

Last year's report incorrectly reported the number of people who benefitted from strengthened livelihoods in 2020 to 2023 as 156,453. The correct figure for 2020 to 2023 was 137,295.

The sector that the livelihood falls under was disaggregated for 308,755 people (87%) reported, giving more information on the different sectors in which Defra’s work is supporting people. Of results that were disaggregated by sector, 3 sectors were reported: waste management (40%), agriculture (34%) and fisheries and aquaculture (27%).

Last year’s report included a disaggregation by livelihood type for this indicator. This has since been removed due to low programme reporting and high overlap with the sectoral disaggregation.

Case Study: eco.business Fund (EBF)

The eco.business Fund (EBF) is a public-private impact investment fund that supports sustainable business and consumption practices aimed at biodiversity conservation, responsible use of natural resources, and combating climate change. It is managed by

Finance in Motion, a global impact asset manager dedicated to sustainable development in emerging markets and developing economies.

EBF finances business practices that conserve nature and foster biodiversity, generating both environmental and financial returns. Its investments focus on sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, and tourism, primarily through loans that embed sustainable lending practices in financial institutions in target regions. A smaller proportion is through direct investments in business. EBF's impact investing is supported by a donor-funded Technical Assistance programme that equips institutions and end-borrowers with the knowledge and tools to embed sustainable practices into their financial systems and improve their land management. EBF's investment portfolio stood at USD 680 million (GBP 527 million) in 2024.

Defra invested £20 million into EBF's Latin America and the Caribbean sub-fund in 2016, followed by £12.6 million in 2019. It also supports the Fund's Technical Assistance programme. Along with other public investors like Germany, Defra's funding not only directly contributes to sustainable loans but also helps de-risk for other investors, attracting private capital that is essential for driving change at scale. Between 2016 and 2024, Defra's investment leveraged approximately three times its value in combined public and private finance.

Loans from the EBF have helped avoid 3.8 million tonnes of GHG emissions and over 30 million tonnes of water. They have supported the livelihoods of 750,000 people through sustainable agricultural businesses and contributed to the sustainable management of 1.2 million hectares of land.

The eco.business Fund's results attributable to Defra funding to date include supporting:

- USD 360 million (GBP 279 million) of sub-loans for sustainable businesses and farmers
- 2 million tonnes of water saved
- 320,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide sequestration
- 90,000 hectares of sustainable land management
- 78,000 jobs

Loan example: Caja Cusco, Peru

In 2024, EBF loaned the equivalent of USD 15 million (GBP 11.6 million) to Caja Municipal de Ahorro y Crédito Cusco S.A. (Caja Cusco). Caja Cusco is a leading Peruvian microfinance institution specialising in financial inclusion in rural areas, in sustainability, and in development opportunities for rural smallholder farmers. This includes indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), such as Quechua smallholders in the high Andes. Caja Cusco has a robust Environmental and Social Management System in place to ensure responsible business practices. It specialises in loan products that support low-carbon agriculture, protection of native vegetation, and cultivation of growing native crop species. For example, native potato varieties are typically worth three times the value of regular potatoes and contribute to on-farm biodiversity. More than half Caja Cusco's clients are women, and it offers a dedicated loan product for women-owned businesses. EBF's loan supports Caja Cusco's efforts to finance sustainable practices that promote biodiversity, sustainable natural resources use, and climate change adaptation.

Figure 4: Image of diverse native maize, tuber and potato varieties grown by a Quechua woman using a microloan from Caja Cusco

Figure 4 shows a table covered with a variety of native maize, tuber and potato varieties in a marketplace. Photo credit: William Norman, Defra.

DI KPI 8: People with improved tenure or access rights

This indicator measures the number of people who have had an improvement in their land tenure or access rights as a result of Defra ODA programming support. Tenure reflects relationships between people and land directly, and between individuals and groups of people in their dealings with land and natural resources. Within this KPI, the term 'land tenure and access rights' can be used to refer to lands, water bodies, coastal seas, fisheries, pastures, forests, wildlife and in some cases mineral resources.

Our programmes aim to ensure individuals and communities have the access and security they need in order to make an adequate standard of living, to have a place to live in security, peace and dignity and to develop their cultures.

For further details, see the indicator methodology note.

The total number of people benefitting from tenure or access rights as a result of Defra ODA from April 2022 to March 2024 was 48,396 (Figure 5). This was reported by 3 programmes in total. These are: Darwin Initiative, UNDP Climate Promise, and Rural Sustentavel. No programmes have yet reported results achieved in the year ending March 2025.

Figure 5: total cumulative number of people with improved tenure or access rights as a result of Defra ODA funding, April 2022 to March 2024

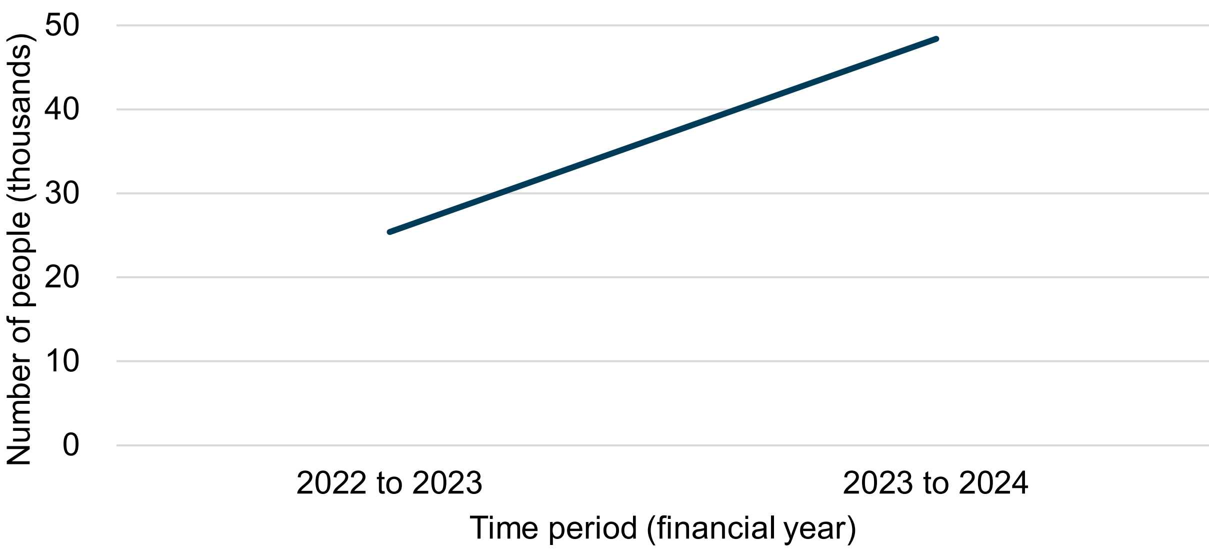

Figure 5 shows a line graph of the cumulative results for DI KPI 8 from April 2022 to March 2024. The Y-axis shows the number of people (thousands) that have had their tenure or access rights improved because of Defra ODA. The X-axis shows the financial years from April 2022 to March 2024. The chart shows that the number of people with improved tenure or access rights has almost doubled over this period.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) links access to land to food production, as well as shelter and community development. How tenure and access rights are addressed, and how stakeholder interests are supported, have a direct impact on the livelihoods and security of people dependent upon it. Equitable land tenure contributes to sustainable development by reducing poverty, food insecurity, gender inequality, forced migration, and resource conflicts. Land tenure rights are also recognised within SDG targets 1.4, 2.3, and 5.a, all of which relate directly to equitable land tenure security. The CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework has integrated local land rights, indigenous land rights and gender equity throughout their 2030 targets aiming to reduce biodiversity loss.

Disaggregation of DI KPI 8

For this indicator, the total number of people reported should be disaggregated across 3 areas: 1) the country in which the targeted beneficiaries are based, 2) the level of tenure or access rights reported and, 3) the scale of tenure (whether the tenure security is at the local, regional or national level). Of programmes reporting this KPI 100% provided some form of disaggregation, however, this was not always across all listed categories. Available disaggregated results are provided in this section.

The country in which the targeted beneficiaries are based was recorded for 31,371 beneficiaries (65% of overall results). Improved tenure or access rights were reported in the following countries: Brazil, Cambodia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, and Tanzania. This list excludes 3 countries with fewer than 100 beneficiaries.

For this indicator, the level of tenure or access rights reported was recorded for 11,458 people (24% of overall results). Of these, 8,375 people (73%) had benefitted from access rights, while for 3,083 people (27%) the level reported was registered freehold or equivalent. The level of tenure or access rights was not reported for the remaining 36,938 people (76% of overall results) reported at this time.

Programmes are also asked to disaggregate the total number of people reported by sex, age, disability status and geographic location. For age and disability status indicators, 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, disaggregation by sex was provided for 11,489 people (24% of overall results). Of these, 5,308 people (46%) who benefitted from improved tenure and access rights were female, while 6,181 beneficiaries (54%) were male. Sex was not reported for the remaining 36,907 people (76% of overall results) reported at this time.

Some limited disaggregation by geographic location was also provided for this indicator, with 11,458 people identified as living in rural areas (24% of overall results). Geography was not reported for the remaining 36,938 (76% of overall results) reported at this time.

Case study: Darwin Initiative

The Darwin Initiative awards grants that enable low and middle-income countries to conserve their unique biodiversity, reduce poverty, enhance food security and address climate change. Since 2022, Darwin Initiative projects have enabled countries to manage 591,000 hectares of habitat more sustainably, and 130,000 people to improve their resilience to natural disasters and climate change.

The Darwin Initiative supports projects that empower rural and Indigenous communities to play a central role in decisions about the lands and biodiversity they rely on. By promoting inclusive, rights-based conservation, the Initiative aims to strengthen both ecological integrity and community well-being.

Project example: Ridge to Reef - Enhancing Biodiversity and Livelihoods in West Papua (DAREX005)

West Papua's forests and seascapes rank among the most ecologically significant on Earth—rich in biodiversity and essential to global environmental health. Through a Darwin Initiative grant, local indigenous people are securing the rights to govern, protect and benefit from forests that have sustained their communities for generations.

In 2 districts of West Papua, Indonesia, Fauna and Flora International and its local partners have assisted 540 households to secure the rights to govern nearby forest. Additionally, project partners have assisted 126 households to agree rules to govern fishing their seas and secure official recognition for these marine protected areas. Securing legal access for these communities marks a pivotal achievement — enabling communities to guard against illegal logging, overfishing and the unsustainable use of natural resources.

As a result, over 26,000 hectares of forest – an area equivalent to nearly 40,000 football pitches – has a brighter future. Meanwhile, poor and isolated coastal communities in West Papua have agreed rules to sustainably fish 16,000 hectares of seascape, safeguarding their incomes and food security for future generations.

As the project approaches its target to benefit 800 households, it demonstrates a scalable model for inclusive, rights-based conservation that benefits local communities, supports resilience, and protects biodiversity.

Figure 6: Recording observations during patrols in Malayauw village, Sorong, West Papua, Indonesia

Figure 6 shows a man in Malayauw village in Sorong, West Papua, Indonesia, standing in front of a tree and recording observation during a patrol. Photo credit: Fauna & Flora (provided by the Darwin programme team)

Section 3: Defra's ODA portfolio

The information presented in this section provides an overview of Defra's current portfolio of Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes.

What is Defra ODA?

Official Development Assistance is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation 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 is committed to delivering £11.6bn of its ODA as International Climate Finance (ICF) between 2021/22 and 2025/26, of which £3bn should be Nature finance. 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.

Our ODA portfolio

Defra's ODA portfolio in the year ending March 2025 includes 28 live programmes. Our current ODA portfolio is delivered through a combination of bilateral (57%) and multilateral (43%) mechanisms, with multilateral programming being delivered through institutions working globally. Multilateral partners for Defra's ODA include the World Bank, 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 World Bank's Global Program on Sustainability), blue finance mobilisation (through the World Bank'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 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.

Where we work

The information in this section presents a best estimate of the geographic footprint at the time of publication in 2025, with the caveat that this may change as programmes adapt and grow.

Defra's current ODA programmes are delivered across a range of ODA eligible countries, focused on locations where the potential for impact on poverty, biodiversity and climate outcomes is greatest. Spend is primarily delivered across regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, South and 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. The 10 countries with the highest estimated level of Defra ODA spend in the year ending March 2025 are Indonesia, Madagascar, Kenya, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Peru, Tanzania, Ecuador and Vietnam.

How we measure impact

Defra’s ODA Results Framework

In 2023, Defra developed an ODA Results Framework 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 standardised Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Existing International Climate Finance (ICF) KPIs

Climate-related KPIs that are reported annually as part of the cross-government ICF results publication, capturing combined results against 15 indicators from all ICF-eligible ODA programmes across 4 departments, including Defra. For more information on the results, as well as access to the KPI methodology notes, see UK International Climate Finance results.

Defra International (DI) KPIs

Additional biodiversity and poverty-focussed indicators developed by Defra to complement its reporting on climate impacts through the ICF KPIs. Of these, methodology notes were developed and published for 5 indicators in January 2025, and one is covered by an existing ICF KPI methodology note (ICF KPI 17). For more information, review the published DI indicator methodology notes.

A standardised KPI is one with a set methodology to which reporting must align. 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.

An up-to-date version of the Results Framework can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Full Defra ODA Results Framework, 2025

Theme	KPI number	KPI Name	Unit	Status
Biodiversity	ICF KPI 17	Area under Sustainable Management Practices	hectares	Published: ICF results
Biodiversity	DI KPI 1a	Area under Ecological Restoration	hectares	Published: DI results
Biodiversity	DI KPI 1b	Extent of Protected Areas	hectares	Reporting expected in 2026
Biodiversity	DI KPI 2	Species threat reduction	count	Decision to be made in 2026
Biodiversity	DI KPI 5	Solid Waste and Pollution Avoided	tonnes	Reporting expected in 2026
Biodiversity	ICF KPI 8	Ecosystem Loss Avoided	hectares	Published: ICF results
Biodiversity	ICF KPI 10	Value of Ecosystem Services Generated or Protected	£	Published: ICF results
Climate	ICF KPI 1	People Supported to cope with effects of Climate Change	count	Published: ICF results
Climate	ICF KPI 4	People with Improved Resilience	count	Published: ICF results
Climate	ICF KPI 6	GHG Emissions Reduced or Avoided	CO2 tonnes	Published: ICF results
Poverty	DI KPI 7	People benefitting from strengthened or new livelihoods	count	Published: DI results
Poverty	DI KPI 8	People with Improved Tenure or Access Rights (Land and Sea)	count	Published: DI results
Poverty	DI KPI 9	People with Improved Income	count	Decision to be made in 2026
Poverty	DI KPI 10	People with Improved Food Security	count	Decision to be made in 2026
Finance/TC	ICF KPI 11	Private Financed Leveraged	£	Published: ICF results
Finance/TC	ICF KPI 12	Public Finance Leveraged	£	Published: ICF results
Finance/TC	ICF KPI 15	Evidence of Transformative Change	score	Published: ICF results
Technical Assistance	TA KPI 1	Number of countries supported with TA	count	Published: ICF results
Technical Assistance	TA KPI 2.1	Number of beneficiaries (individuals) supported	count	Published: ICF results
Technical Assistance	TA KPI 2.2	Number of beneficiaries (organisations) supported	count	Published: ICF results
Technical Assistance	TA KPI 3	Number of climate or nature policies informed	count	Published: ICF results
Technical Assistance	TA KPI 4	Improved climate or nature policy development or implementation	count	Published: ICF results

Broader ODA impacts

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 standardised indicators in this framework. 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.

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.

User feedback

We welcome your feedback. Email any comments or suggestions to ODAhub@defra.gov.uk.

Annex 1: Defra ODA Programmes

Table A1 includes all Defra ODA programmes which have been active at any point between April 2019 and March 2025, including programmes which have now closed, although not all of these programmes have reported contributions to the results estimates in this publication. Further details and important documents for each programme can be found on DevTracker by searching the programme ID.

Table A1: Defra ODA programmes and DevTracker IDs, April 2019 to March 2025

Programme Name	Programme IATI Identifier
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 (OCPP)	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-UNDPCP
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-IWTCF-R9
Innovate4Nature (I4N)	GB-GOV-7-Innovate4Nature
Kew ODA core support	GB-GOV-7-ALB-KEW001
Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDNF)	GB-GOV-7-PO009-LDN
Legacy Landscapes Fund (LLF)	GB-GOV-7-30x30LegacyLandscapesFund
Nature Positive Economy	GB-GOV-7-NPE
Rural Sustentavel	GB-GOV-7-GB-GOV-7-ICF-PO013-LCP2
Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain Solutions (SCCCS)	GB-GOV-7-32CPL-00499-KA
Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)	GB-GOV-7-TNFD-PO002
Ukraine Agricultural Reconstruction and Environmental Protection Projects Fund	No IATI Identifier