



# Mainstreaming and innovative Governance of Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean: Challenges and opportunities for Sustainability in developing planning and Agriculture

Report of virtual dialogue - CSO  
June 29, 2023

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## 1. Background

Achieving environmental commitments requires structural changes in our economies, especially in production methods and development planning (Harris et al., 2023). The current dominant way of producing food is unsustainable, contributing up to a third of greenhouse gas emissions, causing up to 80% of biodiversity loss, and using up to 70% of fresh water (UNSDG, 2023). Additionally, the constant demand for more food products without environmentally and socially responsible production leads to expanding cultivation areas, intensifying the use of agrochemicals, over-exploiting water, increasing soil erosion, decreasing pollinators and other native species, fragmenting and reducing ecosystems, among other loss and degradation processes (IPBES, 2019; SCDB, 2022; FAO, 2020; Yamaguchi et al., 2021). This is of vital importance in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), which is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world and home to mega-diverse countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. However, LAC also displays some of the highest inequalities and social exclusion worldwide (ECLAC, 2022). These internal asymmetries within each country must be corrected to improve the quality of life of the population and build more cohesive societies, preventing socioeconomic, political, and institutional fractures. In this context, ILPES and ECLAC propose a framework for the design, implementation, and evaluation of planning and public policies based on four axes: intersectorality, participation of multiple actors, articulation between levels of government, and intertemporality (Martínez, González, and Williner, 2023).

Likewise, the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) is also committed to achieving transformative changes in society by re-coupling the three dimensions of sustainable development. Therefore, strategic approaches to mainstreaming and governance for transformative change in favor of biodiversity are necessary to achieve the long-term objectives adopted by countries in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). It is also necessary to propose solutions based on intersectoral, multi-level, and multi-scale reasoning to achieve the implementation of biodiversity integration with integrative, inclusive, informed, and adaptive governance. We are at a crucial moment for joint action by all of society, for which it is essential to open neutral spaces for dialogue and debate among multiple actors.

## 2. Objectives

The organization of the three regional virtual dialogues with social actors (indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, academia), private sector actors (companies of different sizes, cooperatives, financial sector actors), academia; national and subnational governments, and technical-scientific advisors from governments addressed the mainstreaming and innovative governance of biodiversity in Latin America

## 2.1 Specific objectives

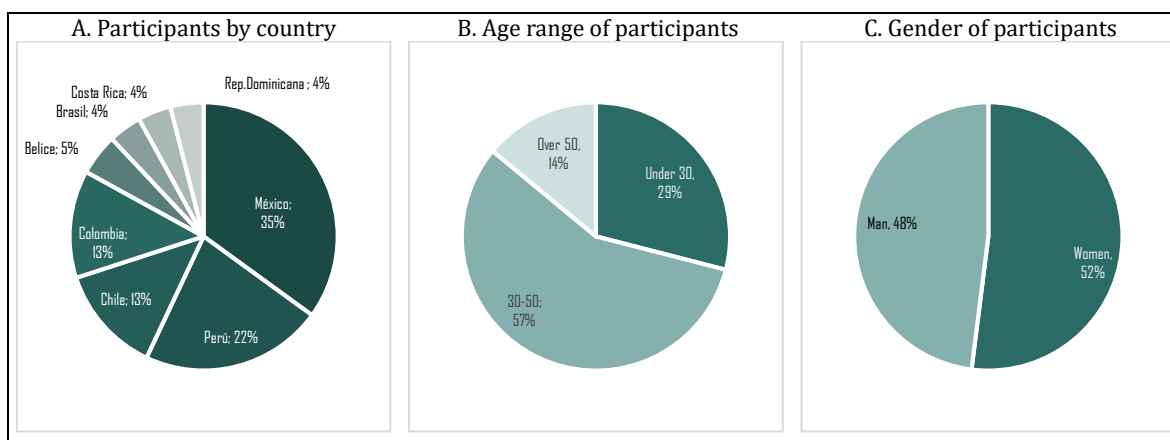
- Engage new actors in the discussion and reflection process, creating an informal and neutral space for dialogue on the transformative changes and just transitions needed to reintegrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Reflect on and debate how the KM-GBF can contribute to the promotion of sustainable food systems, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the region and the key factors as well as key factors for promoting coherent and systemic changes.
- Enhance the catalytic role of development planning from the governance framework, policies and monitoring for the implementation of instruments and/or actions that drive the transformative changes proposed by the KM-GBF.
- Identify and debate the main challenges, needs, best practices and opportunities for broad multi-actor early implementation of the KM-GBF, including biodiversity mainstreaming and innovative governance as tools for sustainable management of terrestrial and marine resources.
- Collect and generate key data and information for the development of future tools on biodiversity mainstreaming in development policies and innovative governance, promoting a regional vision on key issues and processes for the implementation of the KM-GBF under a "whole-of-government" and "whole-of-society" approach.

## 3. Participants

The informal virtual dialogue on "Mainstreaming and innovative governance of biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean: Challenges and opportunities for sustainability and development planning and agriculture" took place on Thursday, June 29, 2023. There were 23 participants representing Mexico, Peru, Chile, Colombia, Belize, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic, ensuring a representative regional participation at the continental level. However, participation was limited in the Caribbean and Anglophone scope, which addressed the perspective and needs of the organized civil society actors of the region. The participants were affiliated with women's organizations, youth groups, indigenous peoples and local communities, and were experts in agriculture, fishing, planning, and governance. 57% of participants were between the ages of 30-50, and about 30% were under 30, leading to intergenerational discussions and allowing different visions to be addressed; 52% were women and 48% were men (Figure 1). The higher presence of women might indicate a greater degree of women's involvement in topics related to biodiversity management

and an acknowledgment of the importance of addressing and including women in these matters.

Figure 1. Information of the participants of the virtual dialogue



## 4. Results of the preliminary questionnaire

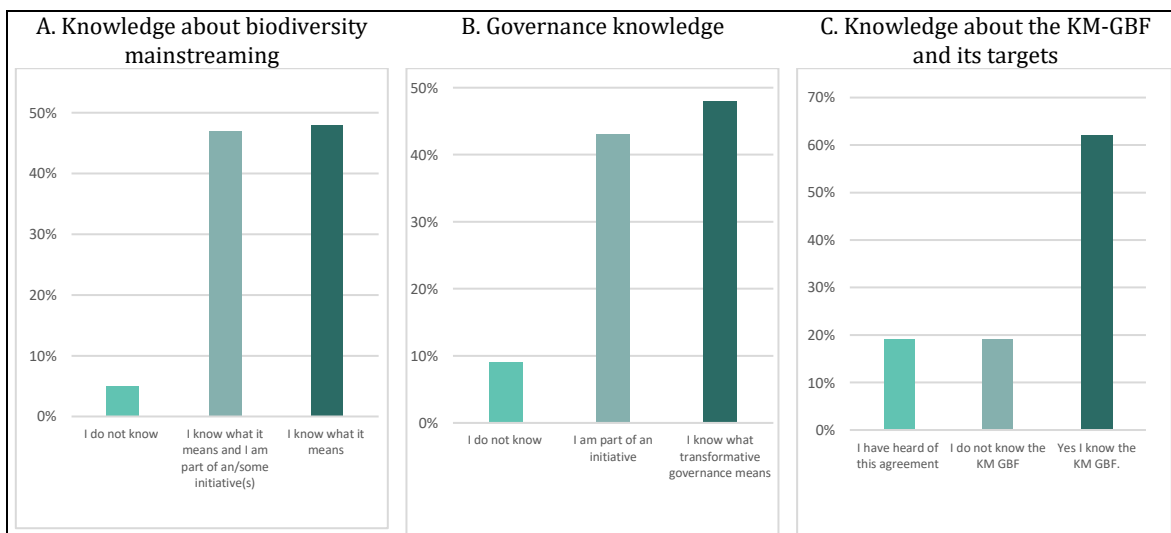
In order to gather the reflections of participants on the topics to be discussed during the dialogue, a brief questionnaire was carried out to assess the knowledge of stakeholders and their specific engagement in biodiversity integration initiatives and in biodiversity management from a participatory, informed, adaptive, and integrated governance perspective. A significant percentage (46%) of participants are aware of what biodiversity integration means, and 50% not only understand the concept but also actively participate in related initiatives. Regarding governance, the majority of stakeholders (50%) know what participatory biodiversity management entails, and 42% are involved in initiatives promoting enhanced governance mechanisms. Lastly, concerning the KM-GBF, 67% of stakeholders are acquainted with the framework. These findings suggest that there's a considerable degree of knowledge and awareness in the region about issues related to biodiversity and its governance. This is promising for addressing environmental and sustainability challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as for meeting the international commitments of the KM-GBF. The results are depicted in Figure 2.

Below are the biodiversity integration and management initiatives communicated by the respondents:

- Promotion, research, training, and advocacy work focused on a regenerative and territorial agroecology approach.

- Development of a food sovereignty proposal based on biodiverse and medicinal products, taking into account the impact of climate change.
- Integration of traditional knowledge in biodiversity recovery, emphasizing the role of indigenous women in its management.
- Youths affiliated with the Global Youth Network for Biodiversity are part of the CBD negotiation process. Currently, some are involved in the implementation of the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) at the national level, and in other processes, such as updating National Biodiversity Strategies.
- Participatory and inclusive governance in the Alto Huayabamba Conservation Concession.
- The Amarakaeri Communal Reserve Natural Protected Area has co-management between indigenous peoples and the Peruvian government. This involves an intercultural governance approach based on three principles: Interculturality, Trust, and Transparency. Currently, a REDD+ project is being promoted with RIA REDD+ Amazonian Indigenous guidelines for the full development or well-being of the associate communities of the reserve, fulfilling the reserve's creation objectives to maintain and conserve the area and its biodiversity.
- Recovery of biodiversity in Andean and Amazonian communities that have been registered with the intellectual property entity concerning indigenous knowledge about biodiversity.

Figure 2. Preliminary questionnaire results



## 5. Results of the round of discussions

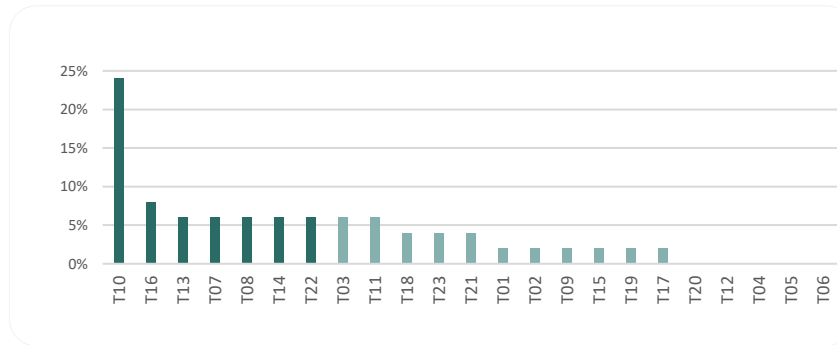
### 5.1 First round of discussions: The new global biodiversity framework and its link with the agriculture sector

#### 5.1.1 KM-GBF goals of the agriculture sector

The first question of the dialogues was posed with the aim of obtaining information on the importance of the KM-GBF goals to expedite the transition of the agriculture sector to the necessary sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean. The question raised was: What are the three most relevant KM-GBF goals to accelerate the transition of the agriculture sector towards sustainability? The results obtained were as follows (Figure 3):

- The target selected with the most potential to strengthen processes and public policies, driving the transition of the agriculture sector towards sustainability, is Target 10, chosen by 24% of respondents. It was the most voted for due to its emphasis on the transformative changes required in the agriculture sector. Participants underscored that to achieve this target, changes need to be made from the individual to the institutional level and requires a correlation among the 23 Target, applying a systemic approach and prioritizing consistent and continuous monitoring in their implementation.
- With 8% selection, in second place, is Target 16, which encourages and supports sustainable consumption and aims to halve food waste. It can be inferred that the actors participating in the dialogues consider reducing food waste as the second necessary action for the agriculture sector to be sustainable since it is estimated that 17% of total global production is wasted (UNEP, 2021).
- Similarly, the third place was recorded with the same number of votes for Targets 3, 4, 8, 11, 13, 14, and 22, each with 6%. Participants also mentioned that the GMDB-KM proposes working on the goals in a cross-cutting manner, so any action or project undertaken should reflect all related goals, especially if the aim is to promote sustainable agriculture, which depends on enabling factors.

Figure 3. Percentage of selection of each KM-GBF targets by the total number of participants in each dialogue, taking into account the relevance to expedite the transition of the agriculture sector towards sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean



### 5.1.2 Opportunities for advocacy by social and private actors for the implementation of the framework and the transition of the agricultural sector

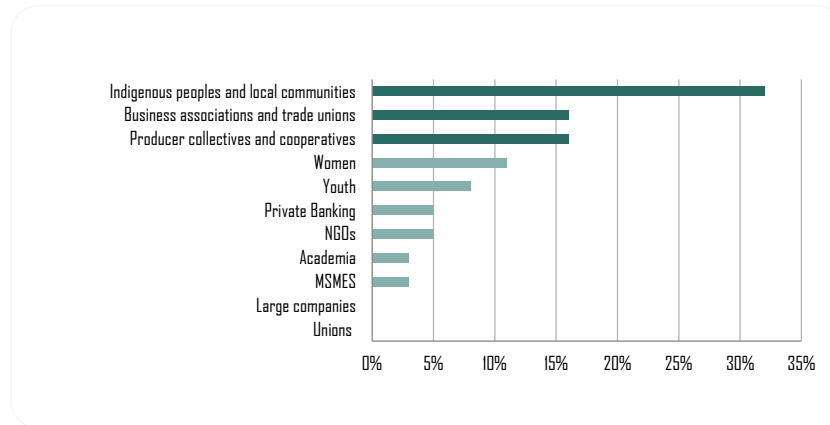
The second question of the dialogues was posed with the aim of obtaining information on the influence of social and private actors in expediting the transition of the agriculture sector to the necessary sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean. The question raised was: which of the following social and private actors has the greatest opportunity to influence the acceleration of the KM-GBF implementation and the transition of the agriculture sector? The results obtained were as follows (Figure 4):

- In first place, with 32% of total votes, are the IPLCs (Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities), highlighting the efforts they are making concerning biodiversity and the more visible negative impacts within their communities.
- There's a tie with 16% for Business Associations and Trade Unions with Producer Collectives and Cooperatives. These actors can play a significant role by promoting sustainable practices and collaborating on sustainable initiatives.

IPLCs have a crucial role that should be coordinated with local governments, following a bottom-up approach, without neglecting work with private banks and financing organizations. On the other hand, participants also commented that young people have an essential role as they will inherit the land, and they emphasized the limited effective influence of youth as significant change agents. While there are participation spaces at the global level, at the national level, this participation, if it occurs, is merely representative without tangible results. Likewise, IPLCs and agricultural, indigenous, impoverished, and uneducated youth should be included in governance spaces.

Figure 4. Percentage of selection of which of the following social and private actors has the greatest opportunity to influence to accelerate the implementation of the KM-GBF and the transition of the agricultural sector.





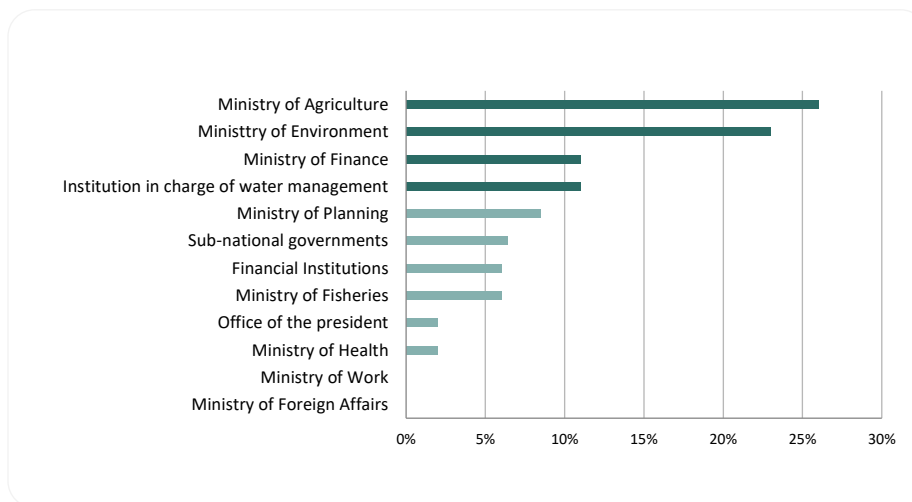
### 5.1.3 Advocacy opportunities for government actors for the implementation of the framework and the transition of the agriculture sector

The third question of the dialogues was posed with the aim of obtaining information on the influence of governmental actors in expediting the transition of the agriculture sector to the necessary sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean. The question raised was: which of the following governmental actors has the greatest opportunity to influence the acceleration of the KM-GBF implementation and the transition of the agriculture sector? The results obtained were as follows (See Figure 5):

- In first place, with 26% of the votes, the Ministry of Agriculture was selected, which is directly related to agriculture and can play a pivotal role in the sector's transition towards sustainability.
- With 23%, the second place went to the Ministry of the Environment, which is directly related to the fulfillment of environmental commitments.
- In third place, the Ministry of Finance and the Water Management Institution each received 11% of the votes.

It's believed that the Ministry of Agriculture should redirect its policies, restructure the incentives for land-use change, and increase incentives for greater sustainability in agriculture. It also holds significant weight in policymaking, similar to the Ministry of Planning, which doesn't exist in some countries of the region, which is why it didn't receive the majority of votes. The Ministry of the Environment was identified as the entity responsible for regulations. Participants believe that the most significant opportunity for influence will depend on the decision-making power that each ministry holds within the government.

Figure 5. Percentage of selection of which of the following government actors has the greatest opportunity to influence to accelerate the implementation of the KM-GBF and the transition of the agricultural sector



## 5.2 Second round of discussions: The challenges of comprehensive development planning and its link with biodiversity and agriculture in LAC

### 5.2.1 KM-GBF targets, sustainable planning processes and public policies for the transition of the agricultural sector

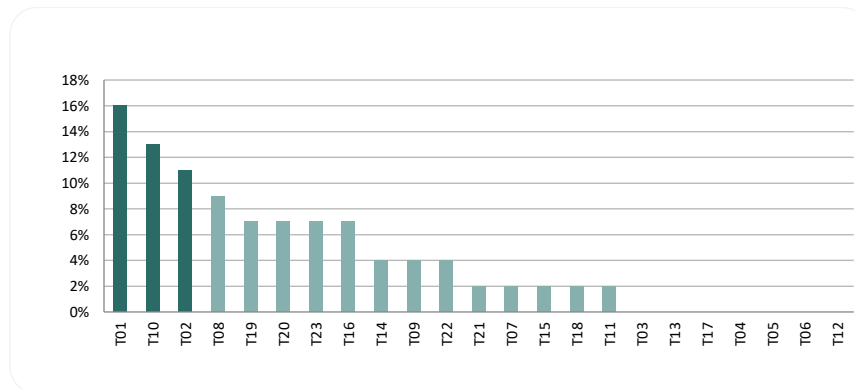
The first question, from the second block of dialogues, was posed with the aim of obtaining information about the importance of goals to support sustainable planning processes and public policies to expedite the transition of the agriculture sector to the necessary sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean. The question was: Which are the three most relevant KM-GBF goals to support sustainable planning processes and public policies to drive the agriculture sector's transition towards sustainability? The results obtained were as follows (See Figure 6):

- In first place, with 16% of the votes, is Target 1. Planning for land and marine use are considered fundamental aspects to promote sustainability in the agriculture sector, as it can help optimize the location of sustainably agricultural activities.
- In second place, with 13% of the votes, is Target 10, which is crucial for achieving an effective transition.
- In third place, with 11% of the votes, is Target 2. Ecosystem restoration addresses ecosystem degradation, improving soil quality and increasing pollinators and native species used in agriculture.

Furthermore, within the planning processes (Target 1), it's important to carry out territorial planning with participatory governance at the local level among all actors to generate long-term state public policies. In addition, Target 1 should be integrated and in synergy with agriculture. While not among the most voted, the actors commented that Target 20, strengthening capacities, is relevant for sharing knowledge and

experiences among all actors (social, private, and governmental), and driving the collective construction of public policies. Target 16, sustainable consumption, was mentioned as important for achieving food security without harming the ecosystem since consumption has been one of the elements that has most affected the environment and territories. Additionally, considering the failure of the Aichi Targets, one of the reasons is public awareness. Additionally, the mobilization of resources (Target 19), implementation actions, and monitoring need to be more direct to achieve the goals. Target 2 was chosen because restoration is rectified at all levels (community, government, academic). Finally, the actors asked: How to achieve the goals? What is missing? How can state policies be created, not just government policies?

Figure 6. Percentage of selection of which are the three most relevant targets to support sustainable planning processes and public policies to accelerate the implementation of the KM-GBF and the transition of the agricultural sector



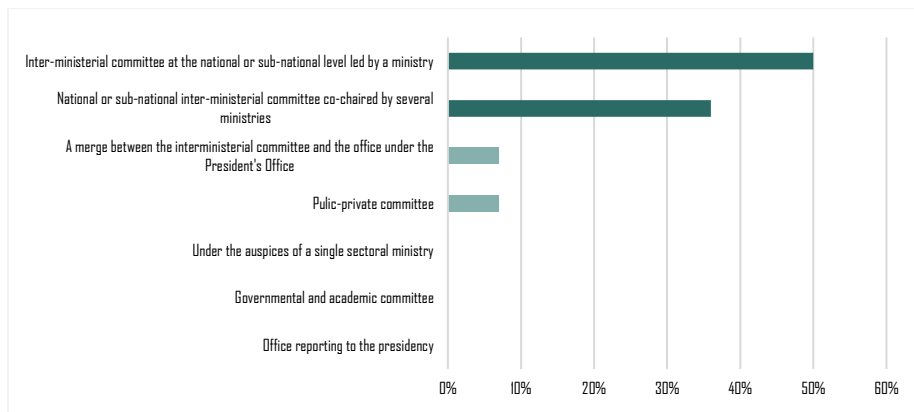
## 5.2.2 Governance mechanism and effective implementation of the global framework

The second question, from the second block of dialogues, was posed with the aim of obtaining information about which governance mechanism is most effective for implementation. The question asked was: From the perspective of development planning mentioned in the plenary by ILPES (multisectoral/ multistakeholder/ multiscalar/ intertemporal), which governance mechanism do you consider most appropriate for effective implementation? The results obtained were as follows (see Figure 7):

- Firstly, with a vast majority of 50% of the votes, participants chose, "A national or subnational inter-ministerial committee led by a single ministry." This suggests that most participants believe a centralized approach would be the most effective for successful implementation.
- With 36% of votes, in second place, they chose "A national or subnational inter-ministerial committee led by several ministries." This indicates that there's also a belief in the importance of involving multiple ministries and new actors in decision-making for the implementation of the KM-GBF.

Additionally, it was highlighted that these committees are heavily influenced by the government's organization for coordination. When the committee is chaired by a single ministry, some stalled processes might be triggered due to the ease of deeper, closer coordination. In the case where it's chaired by multiple ministries, it would depend on the combination of priority goals. However, it was mentioned that both governance mechanisms must maintain connections and collaborations among all key sectors, such as the education and tourism sectors. Some participants commented that among the proposed governance mechanisms, none explicitly included the social sector or acted as an umbrella organization, without a facilitator or main leader, that included all actors. Among the main challenges identified by the participants are the difficulty of involving vulnerable groups at the national level, the lack of continuity of public policies, the assignment of public positions without considering the technical level of the professional, and corruption.

Figure 7. Percentage of selection of which governance mechanism you consider the most appropriate for effective implementation



## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

- It's evident that challenges exist in the relationship between civil society and national governments in the context of the KM-GBF implementation. Firstly, a significant gap is observed between the actions of organized civil society and government policies, indicating the need for greater coordination and collaboration.
- The PICL, youth, and women, although addressing biodiversity loss with local actions, do not always align directly with the goals and guidelines of the KM-GBF. This underscores the importance of establishing stronger connections between these local efforts and international frameworks.
- There is a difficulty in bringing the actions of organized civil society from the local level to the national level, and for these to be supported by effective public

policies. This disconnection prevents the expansion and scalability of environmental solutions.

- There is a need to improve collaboration between institutions so that efforts are not diluted but effectively contribute to achieving national targets.
- While the representation of vulnerable groups in global biodiversity discussions is recognized, it is concerning that these groups often remain excluded from decision-making at the national implementation level. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure inclusive and equitable participation at all stages of KM-GBF implementation, guaranteeing the interests of all stakeholders are considered.

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