

Finance and Biodiversity Day

A COP15 Parallel Event, 14 December 2022, Montreal, Canada

<https://www.cbd.int/article/cop15-finance-and-biodiversity-day>



Gilles Kleitz

Executive Director for Sustainable Development Solutions

Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

For Gilles Kleitz, climate and biodiversity are major issues that must now become central to all initiatives for the future of our planet and therefore, central to development activities.

“Biodiversity is our life insurance,” he says. This is why AFD must make nature-based solutions attractive and tailor them to the countries in which they are effective. This is already the case for a number of projects financed by the development bank, from green cities and “sponge cities,” to agroforestry, reforestation, and sanitation networks.

Gilles Kleitz's role is to ensure that the preservation of ecosystems is taken into account in all of AFD's fields of activity (including water, transport, energy, health, employment).

Trained as an agricultural engineer, belonging to France’s Grand Corps of Bridges, Water and Forests, and holder of a PhD in political science, he has been working on the links between conservation and sustainable development for over 30 years.

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Throughout his career, he has addressed key aspects of natural resource management. After a technical cooperation mission in Zimbabwe (1989-1993), he coordinated the environmental team of the development NGO GRET (1994-1995), and then returned to Africa to conduct agronomical research for Cirad (1996-2001). He took this opportunity to finish his PhD on the implementation of biodiversity conservation policies in rural Africa.

He spent the next 10 years working for France's Environment Ministry, including as head of policy for wolves and bears, and then as coordinator of the National Biodiversity Strategy. Next, he became rapporteur for Grenelle Environment (Biodiversity group, GMO group), and then worked for the ministerial cabinet on issues such as biodiversity, national parks, hunting, forestry, marine protection and agroecology.

Gilles Kleitz joined AFD for the first time in 2010 as project manager working in the field of agriculture, forestry and biodiversity until 2013. At the same time, he was coordinator of the France-IUCN framework agreement and a UN expert for the Convention on Biological Diversity. He then became an advisor to the Minister for Development (2013-2014), tasked with AFD's environmental issues. He then took over management of the Guiana Amazonian Park for four years, before returning to AFD at the end of 2018 to coordinate AFD's initiatives on agriculture, rural development, biodiversity, water and sanitation.

In April 2022, he becomes AFD's Executive Director for Sustainable Development Solutions.



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Ecological Civilization-Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth

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