

# SIDS Coalition for Nature

## Message for International Day for Biodiversity

The world failed to meet the Aichi Biodiversity targets during the previous Decade, and what we have seen is the continuous decline in biodiversity, ecosystems are degrading, species are under threat of extinction, and biodiversity loss is being exacerbated due to climate change. Small island developing states (SIDS) is at the forefront and experiencing the impacts of these global change. This is why we SIDS, see the Global Biodiversity Framework as an opportunity, a second chance for the world to build back better and halt biodiversity loss. However, actions must be taken as of now, if we want to see positive changes.

SIDS recognize and understand the importance of biodiversity. SIDS have some of the most diverse and unique ecosystems in the world, and are home to and host rare endemic species. SIDS are considered as Big Ocean States (BOS) due to their large ocean areas and resources that lie within their jurisdiction and that principally underpin their national economies. Did you know for example that: (i) 19% of coral reefs in the world are in located in SIDS; (ii) SIDS make up a vast share (14%) of the world's coastline; (iii) 3.5% of SIDS is land, and 96.5% is ocean; (iv) SIDS' Exclusive Economic Zone is on average 28 times the country's land mass; (v) The combined EEZs of Mauritius and the Seychelles represent an area bigger than India.

Furthermore, SIDS are already taking action and leading by example, SIDS have been able to transform those unique structural marine characteristics for instance into opportunities. Regarding marine conservation for example, it is worth mentioning that (i) the size of Saint Lucia's declared marine reserve is the size of Germany; (ii) The declared Palau National Marine Sanctuary is twice the size of Mexico; (iii) Seychelles issued the World first sovereign Blue Bond; (iv) Belize is the first country in the Americas with debt swap for ocean scheme; (v) Fiji is amid the first countries to embark into ocean accounting for enhanced data-based decision making; etc...

With those facts and examples, one could say that while SIDS are often considered as a special case for sustainable development, they could also be considered as a special case for biodiversity. Unlocking our blue economy and finance potential will be key for our national sustainable development, strengthening and diversifying our economies, making us more resilient to future shocks.

It is in this context that [the SIDS Coalition for Nature was launched at high level during COP15](#) with the presence and participation of several Ministers, from SIDS and non-SIDS governments, as well as the UN Deputy Secretary General. The Coalition made a powerful [Call for Action](#) underlining 3 gap-bridging priorities for strategic partnerships in order for SIDS to be able to successfully implement the agreed ambitious biodiversity targets.

On the occasion of International Day for Biodiversity, the SIDS Coalition for Nature wanted to reiterate its support for Biodiversity and underline its 3 gap-bridging priorities.

- 1/ Increasing SIDS' access to concessional finance and mobilizing private investment and financing solutions for biodiversity conservation.
- 2/ Supporting SIDS' technical cooperation, technological transfer, environmental data management capacities;
- 3/ Accelerating biodiversity mainstreaming across sectors and synergies amid Conventions.

Across those 3 priorities, the SIDS Coalition for Nature is also strongly advocating for the development of SIDS-SIDS peer learning and cooperation schemes to facilitate the uptake of best practices and innovative nature-based solutions by SIDS, and for SIDS. SIDS have been leading by example and pioneering innovative solutions. Facing similar challenges, we can learn so much from each other.

Together with Seychelles, Belize, Cabo Verde and Samoa as co-leads, the Coalition is today gathering a total of 27 Countries. Those include 16 SIDS members across the 3 SIDS regions: Bahamas, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Guinea Bissau, Kiribati, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Samoa, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Trinidad and Tobago,

Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Also, we are honored to already have the endorsement of 11 countries as Friends of the Coalition who have added their voices to our call for action: Denmark, Germany, France, Japan Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. The membership of Coalition and Friends continues to expand and is designed to play a catalytic role to facilitate partnerships between the international community and SIDS in order to boost implementation at national and regional levels.

In 2023, the Coalition together with its Friends and partners is planning to build its own online presence website and advance its gap-bridging priorities for Nature and SIDS through a result-oriented approach with tangible outcomes -development of proposals, cooperation agreements and action roadmaps in synergies with international processes such as High Level Political Forum, the SDG Summit, COP28 and others to maximize impacts.

Within this Decade of Action, enhanced technical and financial support from the international community to SIDS and Nature is required more than ever. Greater and more urgent ambition requires larger and more targeted means of implementation.

Further [Gaps, Challenges and Constraints in Means of Implementing Biodiversity Objectives in SIDS](#), are detailed in a 2022 policy-oriented assessment which constitutes the rationale behind the establishment of the SIDS Coalition for Nature.

Thank you

The SIDS COALITION FOR NATURE