

November 2025 Mainstreaming Champions Group Virtual Meeting - Focus on Agriculture

Date: November 4, 2025

Time: 8am-10am Mexico City; 3-5pm CET; 9am ET

Meeting co-chairs: Belgium and Mexico

Topic and questions

Following the April BMCG meeting on mainstreaming biodiversity into agriculture, there was strong interest in discussing more approaches and examples. This session explored:

- What strategies or policies have helped your country integrate biodiversity into agriculture?
- What challenges do you face in aligning agriculture development and biodiversity goals?
- What support would help accelerate progress in this sector?

Agenda:

Time	Topic
0-10	Welcome and introductions <i>Lead: Julie D'Havé, Belgium</i>
10-90	Integrating biodiversity into the agriculture sector <i>Moderator: Julie D'Havé, Belgium</i> <u>Presentations:</u> Example from Belgium: CIPRESA & Science-Policy interface in mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture <i>Speaker: Jens Warrie</i> Expert Sustainable Food Systems – Biodiversity service, Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment Example from South Africa: Mainstreaming biodiversity in the agriculture sector <i>Speaker: Tsamaelo Malebu</i> South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Example from Mexico: Biodiversity mainstreaming in agriculture in Mexico <i>Speaker: Sofía Treviño Heres</i> Secretaría de Agricultura
90-100	Planning the next meeting for December 2025 or January 2026 <i>Lead: Andrea Cruz, Mexico</i> <i>Proposal: Members discussion—stocktake of group progress, feedback on meeting format, strategic planning, expanding leadership</i>
100-115	Any other business <i>Lead: Andrea Cruz, Mexico</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcoming webinar on mainstreaming nature into infrastructure, December 4

Attachments

- [Presentations](#)
- [Recording](#) with Passcode: Ds*2#1L=

Attendees

1. Alejandro Banol Salazar, Colombia
2. Andrea Cruz, Conabio, Mexico
3. Andres Prieto, TNC
4. Elisabeth Kim, Canada
5. Horacio Rodriguez, TNC
6. Karen Clark, Canada
7. Katie Minderhoud, PBL, The Netherlands
8. Jens Warrie, Belgium
9. Jessika Carvajal, Colombia
10. Johanna Niemivuo-Lahti, Finland
11. Julie D'Havé, Belgium
12. Julie Sperling, Canada
13. Linda Krueger, TNC
14. Luca Chinotti, WWF
15. Mariana Salazar-Alfaro, TNC
16. Marina von Weissenberg, Finland
17. Martha Nglowera, Tanzania
18. Melissa Valverde, NBSAP Accelerator Partnership
19. Sofia Trevino Heres, Mexico
20. Suzanne Ozment, TNC
21. Tsamaelo Malebu, SANBI, South Africa
22. Tulio Medina, Peru
23. Ivana Benitez Landa, ICLEI

Summary of the meeting and outcomes**1. Welcome and introductions**

Julie D'Havé, Belgium opened the meeting, introduced the call and first-time participants to the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Champions Group meetings introduced themselves.

2. Integrating biodiversity into the agriculture sector

Julie D'Havé, Belgium moderated this agenda item.

Sofia Treviño Heres [PPT] presented the experience of Mexico in mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture since COP13 in Cancun and its evolution through the 2020-2024 sectoral and the current 2025-2030 sectoral plan, priorities and projects.

She highlighted that COP13 initiated national processes such as the publication of sectoral strategies for biodiversity mainstreaming, the establishment of the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Center within the Ministry of Agriculture, and the EQB EVAB project focused on agriculture. The current administration upgraded the sustainability and climate resilience office within the

Ministry to a vice-minister level, signalling strong political commitment.

The sectoral program aims to consolidate food sovereignty and rural well-being while promoting sustainability and climate resilience. It includes thematic priorities such as agroecological transition, reduction of hazardous pesticides (including a recent presidential decree banning 35 highly hazardous pesticides under a One Health approach), reduction of deforestation through livestock initiatives, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and climate change mitigation and adaptation (e.g., Aroma coffee resilience project). Flagship projects include Origen, Agribiumix, Farm Plus Mexico, PolyLAC, CONECTA, and others.

From the experience of Mexico, the following lesson learned were highlighted:

- Political will is one, if not the, most important element for action.
- Evidence-based policy and decision-making are key for success.
- International cooperation for development is paramount.
- There is no unique blueprint for biodiversity mainstreaming.
- Climate change is a prime common leverage agenda for different sectors.
- Biodiversity, climate change, land degradation and pollution are interlinked and are cross-cutting issues to the agriculture sector.
- Time-framing initiatives to underpin action are of the highest relevance.
- Understanding the different values for the different sectors is of prime importance.
- Inter and intra-sectoral collaboration, institutional engagement, and participatory processes involving relevant stakeholders is imperative.

Tsamaelo Malebu, SANBI [\[PPT\]](#) presented the example of South Africa in mainstreaming biodiversity in the agricultural sector.

SANBI, established under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, plays a central role as a statutory, science-policy interface institution. It leads regular National Biodiversity Assessments, develops spatial tools and guidelines, and co-creates land use plans with government, NGOs, and communities. Tangible examples include stewardship programs (e.g., Biodiversity and Wine Initiative, Grasslands Programme), guidelines for grazing and invasive species, and mapping of strategic water source areas.

South Africa stands out for its comprehensive, legally mandated spatial planning system. The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) requires all sectors—including agriculture—to participate in integrated spatial planning, predict where their activities will develop, and coordinate these plans through Spatial Development Frameworks. This unified approach brings all sectors to the table, enabling early identification and mitigation of land use conflicts and ensuring that biodiversity priorities are embedded alongside other development needs. Tsamaelo highlighted:

- The critical process of translating fundamental science to policies.
- The need to co-create tools and guidance on mainstreaming with the relevant sectors.
- Integrated spatial planning as a critical tool for mainstreaming.
- The contribution of biodiversity stewardship approaches to open the discussion and show how biodiversity can contribute to other sectors.
- Cross-sectoral extension approaches to maximize impact.
- Importance of data management and systems

Jens Warrie, Belgium [PPT] presented the example of the **Comparing Innovative Practices Regarding Ethical and Sustainable Aspects (CIPRESA)** initiative aiming to overcome polarization and promote informed decisions on sustainable agriculture. CIPRESA is a structured, criteria-based methodology that compares agricultural innovations (such as GMOs, alternative proteins, or new pesticides) and their alternatives using preset ethical, environmental, and socioeconomic criteria. The process is designed as a rapid “quick scan” to inform policy debates, drawing on literature and expert judgment (primarily from the public sector and academia, with second-line involvement of private sector and NGOs), and is intended to support national implementation of CBD Targets 10 and 21.

Key lessons highlighted:

- Discussing trade-offs instead of risks helped depolarize a difficult debate.
- Stakeholder appreciation for the attempt given the fragmentation of food policy.
- Competencies between ministries remain an issue, feasibility of possible solutions in term of governance to be determined.

From the exchange of views that followed the presentations, the following issues were discussed:

- The importance of spatial planning for mainstreaming (not used to its full potential) and whether the BMCG has any role to play in strengthening it within the CBD.
- Many challenges remain on spatial planning including the lack of integration of different spatial plans (sectoral or at different administrative levels) and lack of adequate resources. Disasters caused by e.g. lost vegetation can trigger changes.
- It is very impactful to set biodiversity-preconditions (e.g. on avoiding deforestation or even on restoration) to access subsidies.
- Whether/how those initiatives can be linked to discussions on food systems pathways.
- Importance of using language that the target sector will understand.
- Importance of developing common narratives among governments, NGOs and private sector.

3. Planning the next meeting / AOB

Andrea Cruz, Mexico moderated this agenda item.

For the **next meeting of the BMCG** it is proposed to focus on taking stock of the work done this year by the group, how we worked together, what we can do next. The meeting can take place in January or February. We need two members to co-chair this discussion. We will circulate a poll to identify the date and circulate a survey to gather inputs.

On December 4, The Mainstreaming Champions Group will host its first open webinar, coordinated by WWF and TNC. The topic is on mainstreaming nature into infrastructure. This is the first webinar of a series aimed to create more space for discussion on mainstreaming for a broader audience and contribute to make more visible the BMCG. Register [here](#).

As usual, if you have any update or information that you would like to share, please feel free to share them by email or via Whatsapp with the group.

