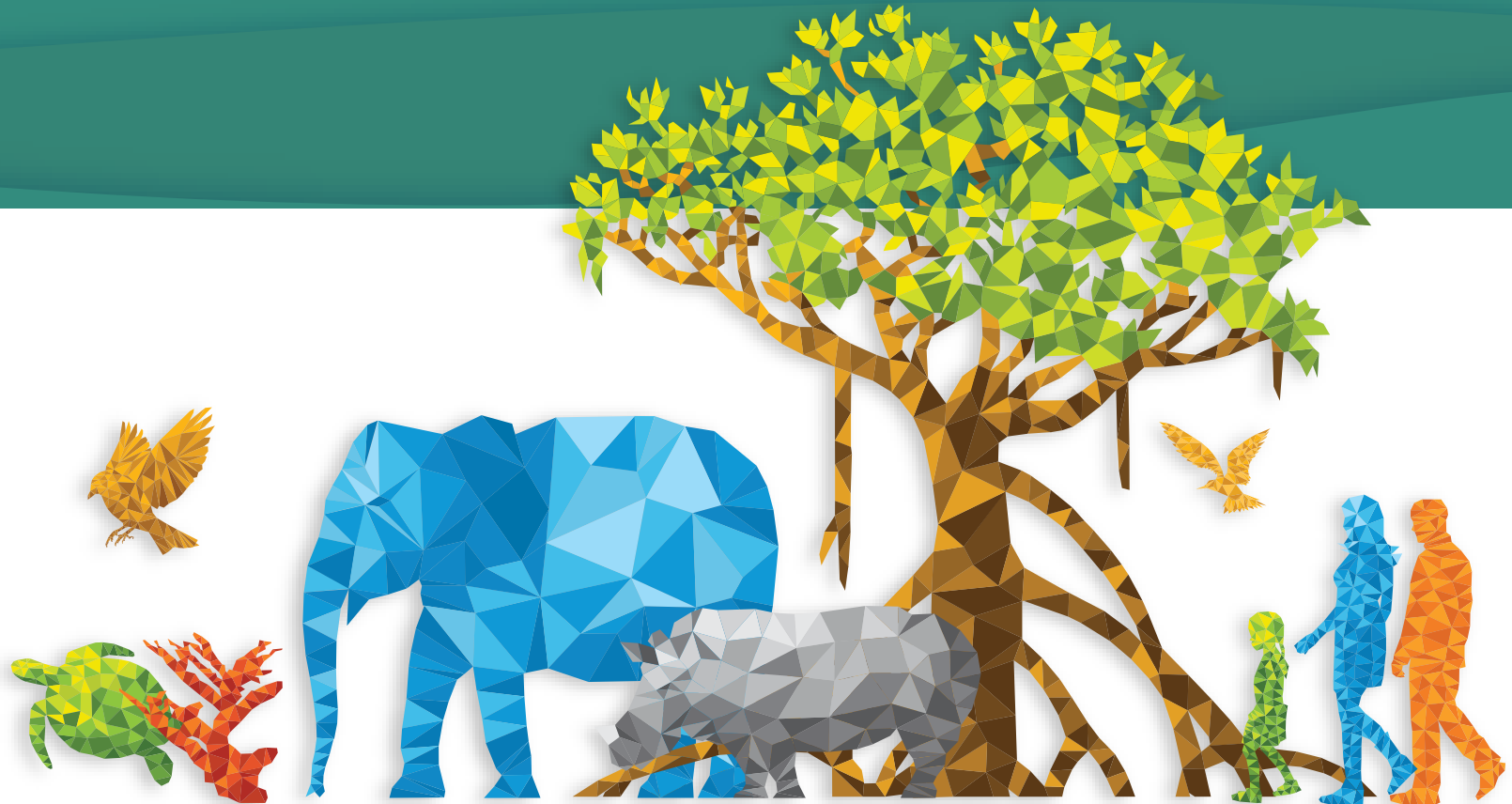


Opportunities for Accelerating Nature Finance and Wildlife Connectivity

Bayarmaa Amarjargal (Bama)

Environment Specialist,
Nature and Environment Division,
Asian Development Bank

11 October 2026, Vasto, Italy



Overview

- Context: Why investing in nature finance?

- ADB's operations: what we do and how?

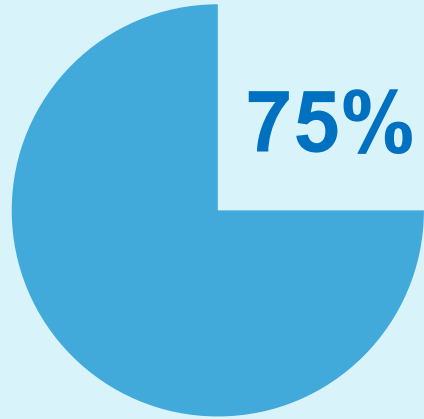
- Key Guiding Documents

- Global/Regional Funds for Biodiversity

- Project case studies

- Useful references

Why Scaling Nature Finance Is Urgent



of Asia and the Pacific's GDP comes from sectors moderately or highly dependent on nature

Nature is undervalued and underfinanced

In 2023, **US\$7.3 trillion** flowed into activities that directly harm nature, while just **US\$220 billion** was invested in nature. That is a **30:1** ratio—thirty dollars financing ecosystem degradation for every dollar directed towards protection, restoration, and sustainable use.

Commitments are outpacing capital

- Globally, financing needs for nature and climate exceed **\$1.5 trillion** annually.
- Infrastructure development and expansion threatens almost half (46%) of known threatened species with documented threats.
- Over 80% of the world's terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) contain multiple types of infrastructure (including roads by far the most common at 75% and powerlines).

Massive Long-Term Value: Shifting to nature-based infrastructure can unlock up to **\$10.1 trillion** in new global business opportunities and create nearly **400 million jobs** by 2030 (WEF. 2020. [The Future of Nature and Business](#)).



ADB's operations

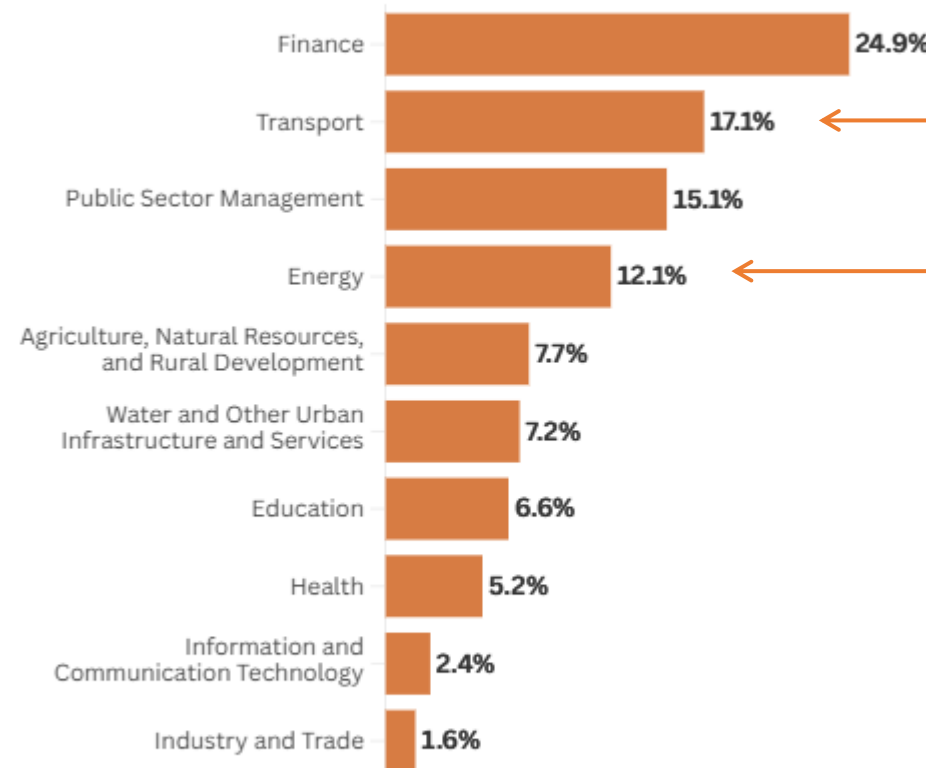
ADB's Corporate Results Framework (2025 – 2030) set a target of increasing *committed operations supporting **nature and environment to 20% by 2030*** (2025 baseline: 15%)

2025 Total ADB Commitments



Approved **158** new projects, programs, and financing facilities in 2025

2025 Commitments by Sector



Source: Asian Development Bank. 2026. *ADB Annual Report 2025: Solving Complex Challenges Together—Scaling Up for Impact*



Nature and Environment Investments

Environment and Nature Investments

For Environment and Nature Investments, please click on one or more of the appropriate boxes if your project is considered to qualify. If not considered to qualify, please click Not Applicable. For more information on what project activities would qualify for each program, please refer to this [link](#) which also provides contact details for Environment Group focal points who can provide more information.

- ☒ Ocean and Coastal Management
- ☒ Terrestrial Ecosystems
- ☐ Air Quality
- ☐ Circular Economy
- ☒ Nature-based Solutions (including green infrastructure)
- ☒ Environment Finance/Governance
- ☐ Not Applicable

*Nature Finance (\$):

*Enter value (hectares) for terrestrial, aquatic, and atmospheric areas affected.

Tip: Where hectares are included, it is highly encouraged to include this in the DMF.

Development Result 9:

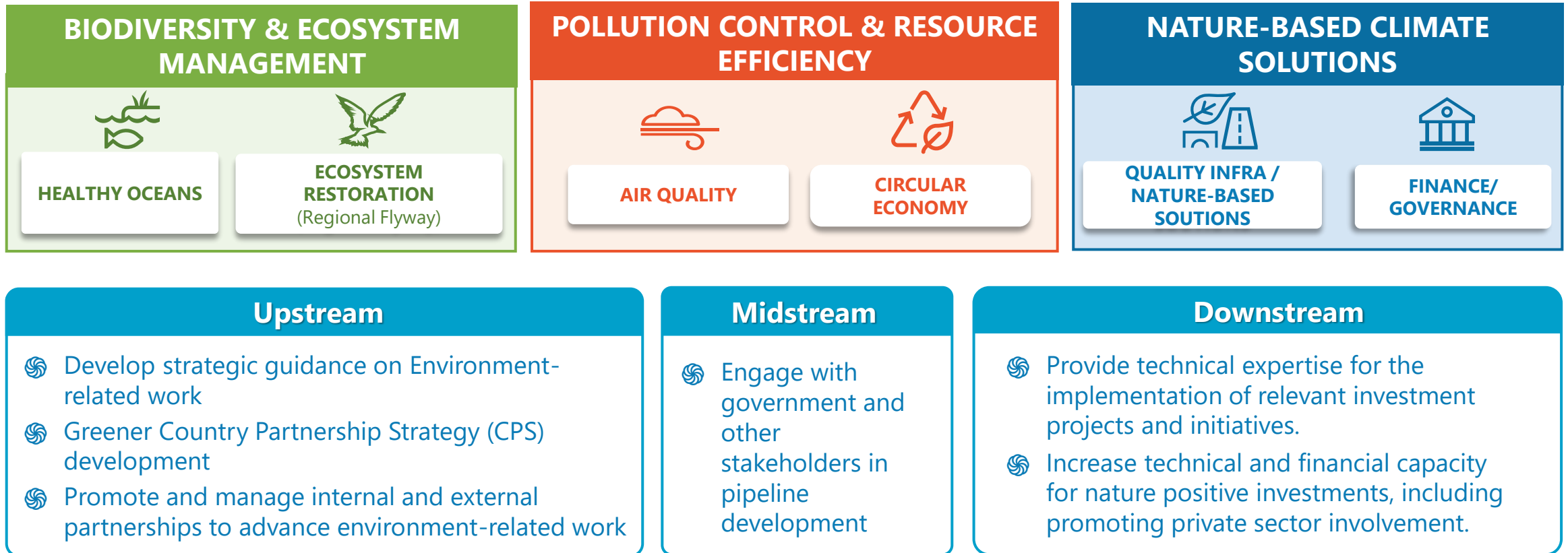
Terrestrial, aquatic and atmospheric areas conserved, restored, enhanced and/or under sustainable management (hectares, achievement rate)



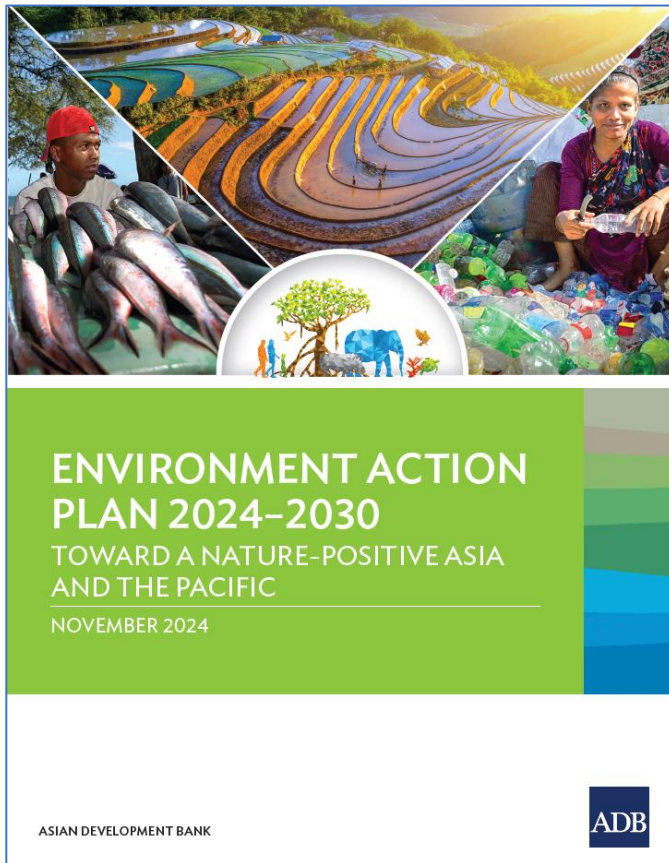
ADB's Work on Nature and Environment

ADB supports clients in improving environmental management, investing in natural capital conservation and restoration, and ensuring that ADB projects contribute to water, energy, and food security.

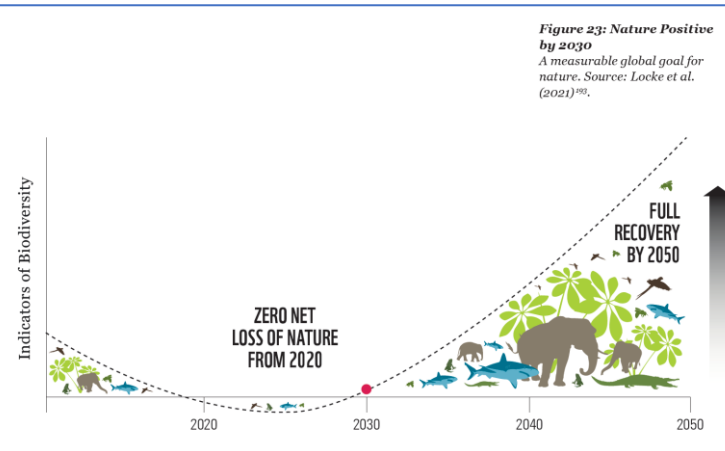
Areas of support



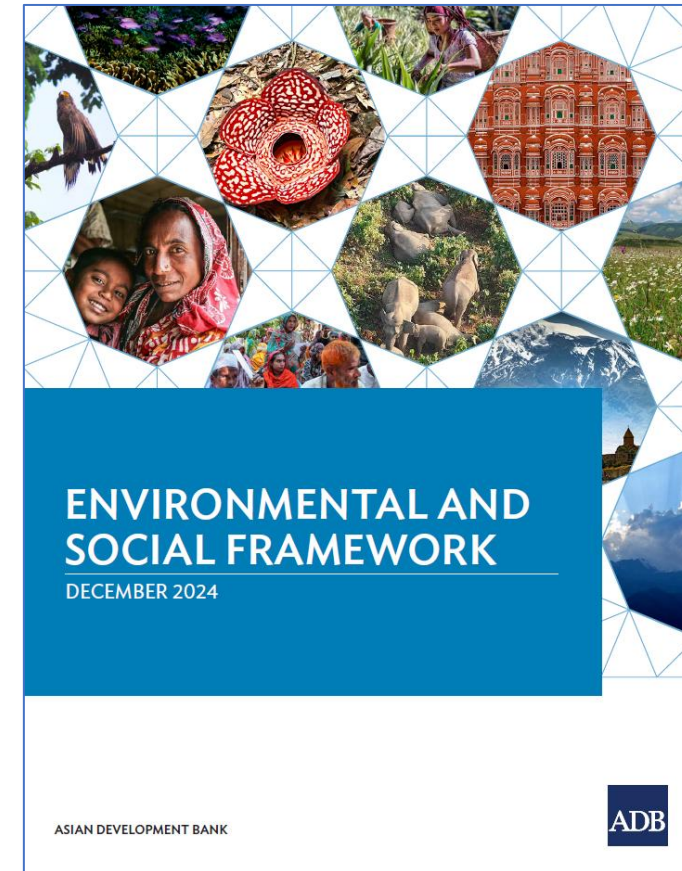
Key guiding documents



Increasing the
Positives



Removing the
Negatives



Promoting wildlife friendly practices beyond safeguards

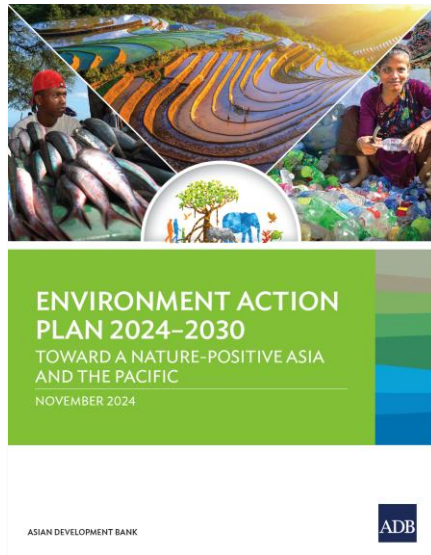
ADB Safeguard Policy



Assessing and Managing Wildlife Risks and Impacts of Linear Transport Infrastructure

- Screening and categorization
- Impact Assessment (IEE/EIA in SPS; ESIA in ESF)
- Project design
- Monitoring

Resources for all the above steps is allocated in accordance with risk level



ADB Environment Action Plan (2024-2030)

3 key pillars

BIODIVERSITY & ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

POLLUTION CONTROL & RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

NATURE-BASED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Scaling up nature finance by:

- 1) **Mainstreaming nature and environment in sector investments** including the transport sector
- 2) Promoting nature positive investments with **nature restoration or protection or sustainable management** as the key objective
- 3) Mobilizing additional funds for nature investments through **innovative financing** such as **biodiversity bonds, nature credits** etc.

Global / Regional Funds for Biodiversity

1. Global Environment Facility (GEF)



1) **GEF** Replenishment Cycles – GEF 8 (\$5.3 billion), GEF 9

2) Trust Funds

- i) Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)
- ii) Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)
- iii) Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF):
 - First tranche \$201.6M;
 - Second tranche \$161.8M

Financial products for investing in Nature

- 1. Blue bonds
 - 2. Biodiversity and nature bond
- More financial products being explored – biodiversity credits

2. Bi-lateral Donors



3. ADB



Nature Solutions Finance Hub (NSFH)

- \$5.5 million (aim to catalyze \$5B in NbS)
- Innovative financing for nature conservation

Regional Flyways Initiative (RFI)

- \$1 million
- Financing for flyways and wetland conservation

Ocean Resilience and Coastal Adaptation (ORCA)

- \$13 million
- Ocean positive project

Technical Assistance Special Funds (TASF)

Wide range of topics including biodiversity protection

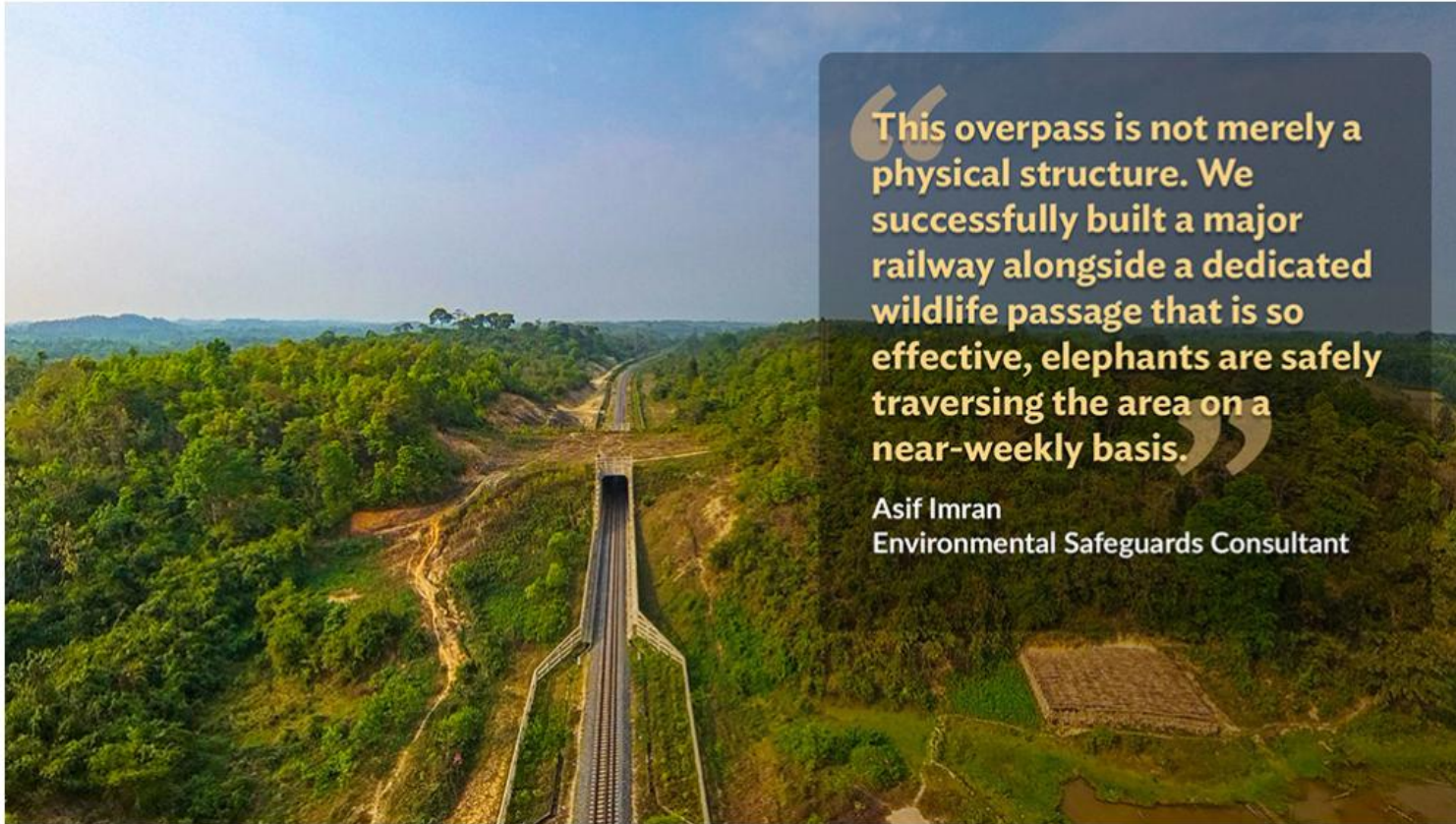
Asian Development Fund (ADF)

Trust Funds

- Urban Resilience Trust Fund
- High Level Technology Fund

Case Study: Bangladesh Railway Project

Building with nature in mind



“This overpass is not merely a physical structure. We successfully built a major railway alongside a dedicated wildlife passage that is so effective, elephants are safely traversing the area on a near-weekly basis.”

Asif Imran
Environmental Safeguards Consultant

In 2016, ADB approved multitranche financing facility up to \$1.5 billion to construct 102 km of new dual-gauge railway linking Dohazari and Cox's Bazar.



3 protected wildlife areas safeguarded

Including a world-first elephant overpass and 2 wildlife underpasses

Wildlife friendly measures:
about 5% of total project cost

Wildlife friendly measures :

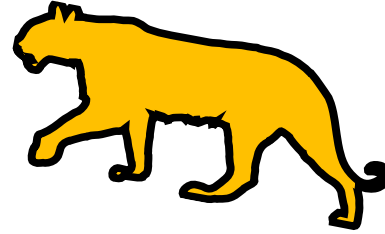
- **World's first elephant overpass (\$3M)**
- **Several wildlife underpasses**
- Funnel fencing
- **Habitat enhancement plan (HEP)**
- **Sensor technology** to alert train driver when elephants are nearby (\$750,000 for pilot testing)

Beyond safeguards compliance:

- 240,000 **trees** replaced with 720,000 trees
- 287ha of **critical habitat improved** in lieu of 62 ha of critical habitat and 139ha of natural habitat removed
- Extensive efforts, time and resources spent on sensor technology

For more: [Investing in Bangladesh's Missing Railway Link](#) (16 Sep 2026)

Nepal's First Flyover for Wildlife at Barandabar Corridor



ADB Approved \$305.75 Million Financing to Upgrade Strategic Highways, Strengthen Wildlife Conservation in Nepal (Oct 2026).

The financing package consists of a \$285 million loan, a \$20 million grant from the [Asian Development Fund's \(ADF\)](#), and \$750,000 in technical assistance. The elevated section alone costs about \$50M.

The [SASEC Highway Improvement and Ecosystem Restoration Project](#) will:

- rehabilitate around 70 km of the East–West Highway, expanding it from 2 to 4 lanes.
- **construct an elevated highway section** across the Barandabhar wildlife corridor, which will **restore critical wildlife movement routes** between protected ecosystems in the Terai Arc Landscape and **reduce vehicle-wildlife collisions.**



Scope of GEF Grant: \$3.5M* (Greening Transportation Infrastructure Development Integrated Program – GRID IP)

1. Upstream systems to enable greening of transport infrastructure
2. **Innovative financing and de-risking**
3. Communications and local community engagement

For more: [ADB news release](#) (9 Oct 2026)

Nepal : South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Highway Improvement and Ecosystem Restoration Project

Sovereign Project | 59156-001

Status: Proposed

Overview Project Data Sheet Documents Stories Tenders

Safeguard Documents

See also: Safeguards →

Safeguard documents provided at the time of project/facility approval may also be found in the list of linked documents provided with the Report and Recommendation of the President.

Title	Document Type	Document Date
South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Highway Improvement and Ecosystem Restoration Project: Mugling-Abukhaireni Road Indigenous Peoples Plan	Indigenous Peoples Plans/Indigenous Peoples Development Plans	Jun 2026
South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Highway Improvement and Ecosystem Restoration Project: Hetauda-Narayanghat Road and Mugling-Abukhaireni Road Resettlement Plans	Resettlement Plans	Jun 2026
South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Highway Improvement and Ecosystem Restoration Project: Pathalaiya-Hetauda-Narayanghat and Muglin-Abhuikhaireni Road Environmental Impact Assessment	Environmental Impact Assessments	May 2026

Working Groups in ADB

- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management
- Environment and Climate Finance
- Forest
- Nature-based Solutions

Green Infrastructure Investment Opportunities

Philippines – 2020 Report



Thailand – 2021 Report



Indonesia – Green Recovery 2022 Report



ADB Continuing Knowledge Support and Generation

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY EVENT SERIES

The Modern Road Ecologist's Toolbox

EMERGING TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES
FOR BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENTS
ON LINEAR TRANSPORT PROJECTS

ADB

Green Road to Kunming Workshops Series

SESSION 1

Greening the Transport Sector

28 April 2022 (Thursday)
12:30 p.m., Philippines (GMT+8)

This session will highlight the multiple benefits of adopting nature-based measures in wildlife-friendly linear transport projects.

Moderator: Karma Yangzom, Principal Environment Specialist, Safeguards Review and Environment Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank

- Introduction: Greening the Transport Sector
 - James Leather, Chief, Transport Sector Group
- Embedding Nature-based Solutions in Transport Corridors
 - Tony Wong, Professor of Sustainable Development, Monash Sustainable Development Institute
- Avoidance of Ecological Damage: Cost/Benefit Analysis of Road Projects
 - Kim Bonine, Training Director and Senior Analyst, Conservation Strategy Fund
- Mitigations to Minimize Transport Infrastructure Impacts on Biodiversity
 - Norris Dodd, Senior Natural Resource Specialist; AZTEC Engineering and International Wildlife Consultant, ADB
- Modelling Biodiversity Impacts of Development Infrastructures and Identification of Potential Project Alternatives and Offset Areas
 - Rebecca Pirzl, Group Leader, CSIRO Land and Water
- Open Discussion

SESSION 3

Greening Coastal Developments

23 June 2022 (Thursday)
10:30 a.m., Philippines (GMT+8)

Moderator: Yueyu Zou, Environment Specialist, Environment Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank

- Opening Remarks
- Tools and Techniques to Wildlife

Greening the Energy Sector

19 May 2022 (Thursday)
12:30 p.m., Philippines (GMT+8)

This session will showcase the multiple benefits of adopting green solutions in energy project development.

Moderator: Francesco Ricciardi, Senior Environment Specialist, Safeguards Division and Environment Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank

- Introduction: Greening the Energy Sector
 - Priyantha Wijayatunga, Chief, Energy Sector Group, ADB
- The Energy Transition and Renewables: the 1.5°C Challenge
 - Ute Collier, Deputy Director of the Knowledge, Policy and Finance Centre, International Renewable Agency (IRENA)
- Promoting Nature-sensitive Renewable Energy while Protecting Migratory Species
 - Ivan Ramirez, Energy Task Force, United Nations Convention on Migratory Species
- Sensitivity Mapping: Avoiding Conflict Between Birds and Renewable Energy
 - Duncan Lang, Senior Environment Specialist, ADB
- Tris Allinson, Senior Conservation Scientist, Birdlife International
- River Links – The Benefits of Functionally-based River Basin Assessments for Ensuring Sustainable Hydropower
 - Alison Joubert, Director and Senior Consultant, Southern Waters Ecological Research and Consulting
- Cate Brown, Director and Senior Consultant, Southern Waters Ecological Research and Consulting
- Open Discussion

Roundtable of Champions

26 October 2022 (Wednesday)
1:00 p.m., Philippines (GMT+8)

Discussion will focus on principal takeaways from the three earlier workshop sessions, with speakers relating these to the situation in their respective countries, and how environmentally sustainable infrastructure planning could link to each country's contribution to the post-2020 Global Diversity Framework.

- Introduction: Key Messages from Workshop Series and Introduction to Participants
- Roundtable Discussion with Government Representatives
- Message to CBD delegates on green infrastructure and suggestions for programs/ activities contributing to the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework

SESSION 4

Green Road to Cali Series (Part 1): Playbook for Nature-Positive Infrastructure Development

Development Asia

Climate change - Climate change refers to long-term shifts in ...

ADB

Playbook for Nature Positive Infrastructure Development

28 June 2024 • Online via Zoom



SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER

GREEN ROAD TO CALI

WEBINAR SERIES JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2024
Watch on YouTube

Nature-based Solutions: Scaling Sustainable Fisheries and Coastal Management

Climate change - Climate change refers to long-term shifts in ...

PART 2

Nature-based Solutions: Scaling Sustainable Fisheries and Coastal Management

26 July 2024 • 3:00-4:00 p.m. (GMT+8) • K-Hub

GREEN ROAD TO CALI

WEBINAR SERIES JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2024
ORGANIZED BY THE ADB ENVIRONMENT GROUP

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