

Summary of CO-OP4CBD D3.1 and D4.1

Requirements and capacity needs in relation to the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and for technical and scientific cooperation

Prepared upon the request of the Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity

Preface

This document summarizes the results of two CO-OP4CBD deliverables that address capacity building needs in the context of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Deliverable D3.1, entitled “Requirements and capacity needs report and recommendations in relation to the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework”, assessed capacity needs specifically related to the monitoring framework. Deliverable D4.1, entitled “Report setting out the capacity needs to deliver scientific and technical cooperation”, addressed capacity building needs related to the implementation of the GBF more broadly. Both reports were published in the final quarter of 2024.

This summary, produced for the preparatory work of the European subregional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Center (TSC), aims to provide a concise summary of these two reports. While this can be considered a stand-alone document, readers are encouraged to refer directly to D3.1 and D4.1 (available at <https://coop4cbd.eu/library>) in cases where more in-depth information is desired. The structure of this summary includes a brief introduction to the data sources and methods used in these reports followed by key results and recommendations reported in the two deliverables.

List of abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EU	European Union
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
TSC	Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Center

1 Introduction

The CO-OP4CBD project seeks to enhance coordination and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation to effectively implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Two deliverables produced by CO-OP4CBD address aspects of capacity building needs in the European context:

CO-OP4CBD (2024) Deliverable 3.1

Requirements and capacity needs report and recommendations in relation to the monitoring framework

CO-OP4CBD (2024) Deliverable 4.1

Report setting out the capacity needs to deliver scientific and technical cooperation

Deliverable 3.1

This report aimed to identify current readiness and capacities of EU, its Member States and Associated Countries in implementing the monitoring framework for the GBF and identify capacity and training needs. The primary data source in this report is an online capacity needs assessment survey which focused on the ability of Parties to produce and compile the headline indicators of the monitoring framework. To reduce the reporting burden, only headline indicators with an established methodology were mandatory for participants to fill out; indicators without an established methodology were optional.

As the response rate was low, the resulting analysis of capacity development needs is based on a geographically representative but relatively small sample of countries (n=14). Consequently, the findings should be seen as an indication of the main needs, gaps, and priorities identified by the Parties, rather than a definitive or exhaustive assessment.

Deliverable 4.1

This report aimed to illustrate and identify the components and status of capacity building and development needs essential for the effective implementation of the GBF. The report draws on insights from submitted NBSAPs (n=10), two questionnaires (one targeted, the other more general, but sent to the European Union (EU) Member States by the European Commission (EC)), National Targets submitted to the Online Reporting Tool (ORT), and other results obtained within the CO-OP4CBD project (including D3.1). Similar to D3.1, the limited number of NBSAPs submitted by EU Member States and Associated Countries at the time of analysis means that the findings in this report should be viewed as indicative and not comprehensive.

Both reports are based on limited data, which reflects the reality of Parties' limited capacities to report on the status and capacity needs. In general, Parties are limited by time, personnel, budgets, and administrative constraints. Further, both the monitoring framework and the GBF in general require significant institutional collaboration, and in many cases no one individual has a comprehensive overview of a country's status, progress, plans or capacity needs. From this perspective, the limited responses to the various surveys and interventions conducted by CO-OP4CBD is a result in itself, reflecting the real constraints under which Parties are operating. Simplifying the approach to collecting information on capacity building needs remains a key advice from the project that could both support Parties in their

reporting obligations and provide useful, systematic data for designing interventions to support capacity building. This is discussed more under “Key recommendations”.

Finally, while capacity building needs will naturally evolve as Parties continue to work on monitoring and reporting, these reports represent a snapshot of information from 2024. This work should continue with dynamic, periodic assessments of capacity building needs to enable rapid, effective, and targeted support towards meeting those needs and advancing biodiversity priorities, a task expected to be pursued by the European subregional TSC.

2 Key results

This section provides a high-level overview of the results from the analyses conducted in D3.1 and D4.1. Readers interested in more detail are encouraged to consult these source documents directly.

2.1 Awareness of national institutions responsible for reporting headline indicators

The number of respondents aware of the national institution responsible for reporting on each headline indicator varied considerably (Figure 1).

- Respondents could more readily identify national institutions responsible for reporting on headline indicators with an established methodology relative to those without an established methodology. It should be noted that several nonresponses were received for headline indicators without an established methodology.
- Respondents could more readily identify national institutions responsible for reporting on headline indicators associated with targets on “reducing threats to biodiversity” compared to indicators associated with targets on “meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit sharing” and “tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming”.
- Respondents from the European Union and Parties in Northern and Western Europe identified a greater number of national institutions responsible for producing headline indicators, compared to Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, and Western Asia.

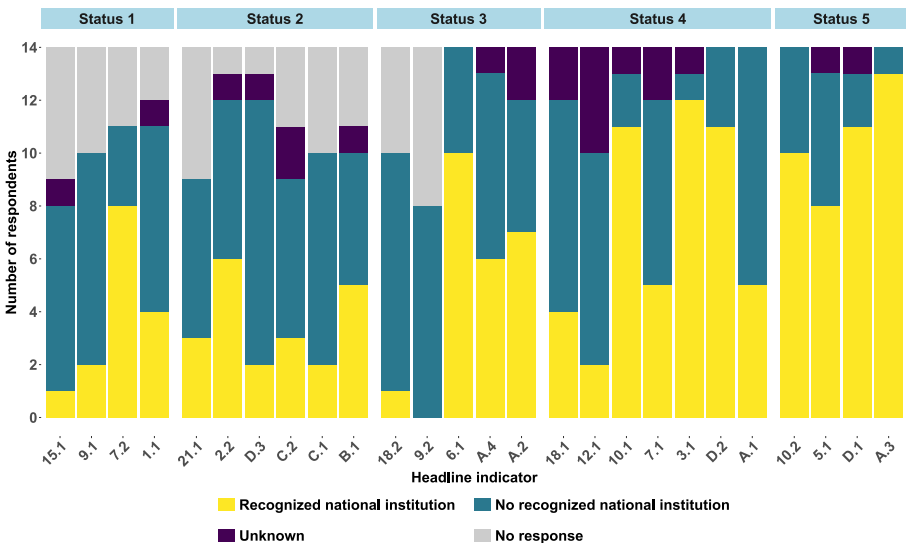


Figure 1: Awareness of the national institution(s) responsible for reporting on each headline indicators at the national level, by status of operationalization (from D3.1, fig. 2.2). Status of operationalization categories are: 1) Methods not yet developed; a process needs to be established to develop them. 2) Methods not yet developed; a process is underway to develop them. 3) Methods developed and tested/piloted, but data not yet widely available. 4) Methods established, but further investment in methods and/or data collection required. 5) Methods established, data being compiled and accessible, and indicator operational.

2.2 Perceived capacity of Parties to produce the headline indicators at the national level

Respondents reported that several of the headline indicators are currently being produced at a national level (Figure 2).

- The headline indicators most frequently produced by Parties, at the national level, tend to have an established methodology.
- Rather encouragingly, for headline indicators not currently being produced, respondents suggested that Parties would have the ability to produce most of these indicators within the next 5 years (aligned with the 8th national report), irrespective of whether the methodology is established.
- At a regional level, the European Union and Parties in Northern and Western Europe are currently producing around half of the headline indicators. Parties in Northern Europe, Eastern Europe and Western Asia are currently producing fewer headline indicators.

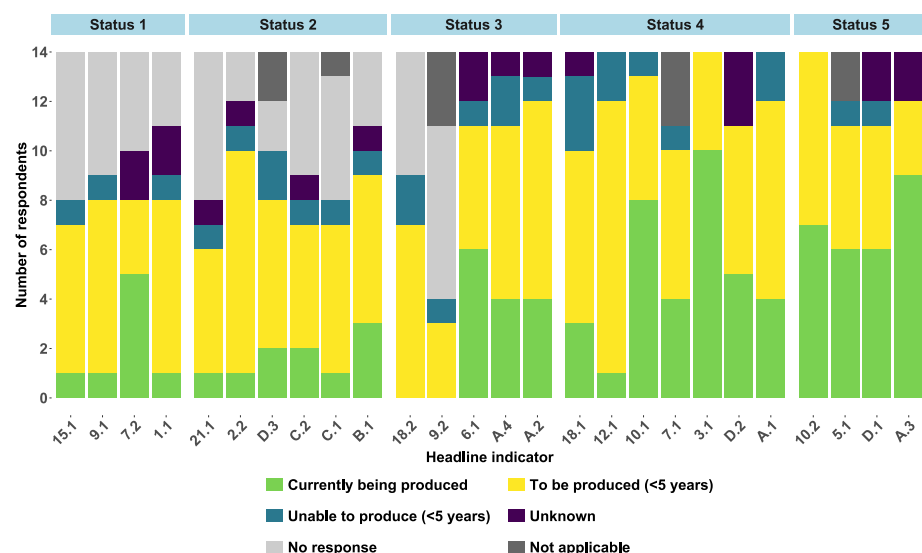


Figure 2: Time horizon to produce the headline indicators at the national level, by status of operationalization (from D3.1, fig 3.1). Status of operationalization categories are: 1) Methods not yet developed; a process needs to be established to develop them. 2) Methods not yet developed; a process is underway to develop them. 3) Methods developed and tested/piloted, but data not yet widely available. 4) Methods established, but further investment in methods and/or data collection required. 5) Methods established, data being compiled and accessible, and indicator operational.

2.3 Capacity support requirements to produce the headline indicators

Parties in Southern Europe and Western Asia, required the greatest assistance with the production and compilation of headline indicators (Figure 3).

- The most frequently reported type of assistance required for producing and compiling the headline indicators was “training on the methodology for compiling the indicator at the national context” and “institutional coordination on data reporting”. This could explain why several respondents suggested Parties required assistance producing several headline indicators that have an established methodology.
- Respondents from the EU, and Parties in Northern and Western Europe indicated there are sufficient financial resources available for the production and compilation of many headline indicators. In contrast, it was reported that Parties in Southern and Eastern Europe, and Western Asia lack sufficient financial resources to produce and compile most of the headline indicators.

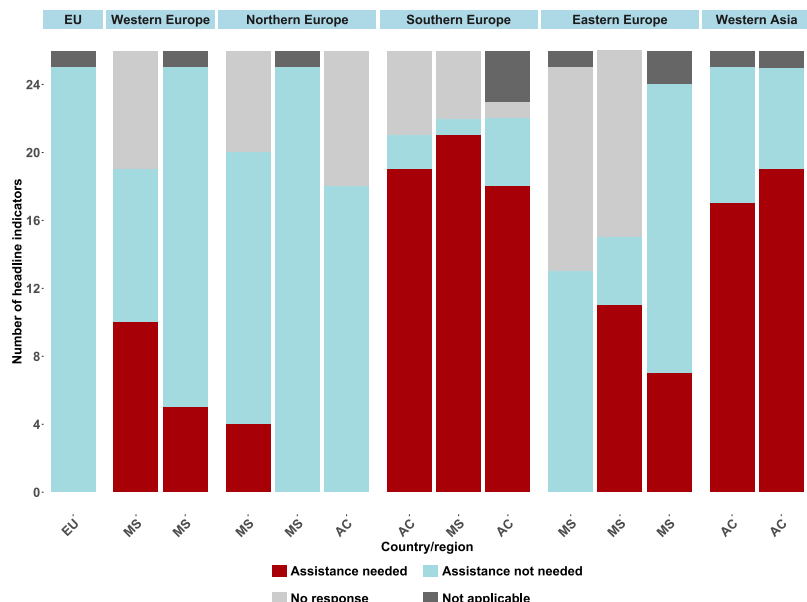


Figure 3: Requests for assistance for producing and compiling headline indicators at the national level, by country and group by region (from D3.1, fig. 4.4). European Union (EU); Member States (MS); associated countries (AC) Financial resources available at the national level for the production and compilation of headline indicators

2.4 Capacity needs for GBF implementation


Most of the Parties have not explicitly included capacity building and development needs in their NBSAPs. The terms “capacity” or “needs” were rarely used, and capacity building needs were more typically expressed as challenges or goals. There may be many different reasons why a Party does not include an assessment of capacity building and development needs in their NBSAP. One reason may be that a Party is planning a separate assessment. Another reason may be that identifying capacity building needs is a task that requires a certain amount of capacity, and there are no templates available within the CBD for the assessment of capacity and development needs. In this case, both a lack of capacity and not knowing where to start can be impediments to assessing needs. In other cases, Parties may not see documenting capacity building and development needs as a valuable or relevant exercise or may view it as redundant with previous, similar exercises. Lastly, some Parties could potentially view documenting capacity building and development needs as an unnecessary effort that would not lead to meaningful change, or as an admission of weakness in a way that goes against cultural or bureaucratic traditions. Gaining a better understanding of the reasons why participation in identifying capacity building and development needs is low, and how to address this, could help develop strategies for future efforts in this area, and is vital to the work of the subregional TSCs.

A total of 148 capacity building needs were extracted from the relevant NBSAPs (see Annex 1 in D4.1 for the complete table). The capacity building and development needs expressed by each Party vary in scope, precision, urgency, wording, and organizational level. This hinders direct comparison of capacity building and development needs from country to country, and analysing and organizing the needs into themes is a necessarily subjective exercise. Despite this challenge we were able to analyse and group the capacity building and development needs to define key themes (figure 4). The primary and secondary themes, with examples from NBSAPs, include:



Knowledge







Knowledge creation, which includes broad needs such as the need to “carry out a regular and exhaustive census of national biodiversity” to needs connected to very specific groups of species such as invasive alien species, freshwater algae, and pollinating insects.

-  **Knowledge management** (including facilitation), which includes general needs related to storing and managing biodiversity data and more targeted needs related to knowledge facilitation to specific groups such as farmers and private forest owners.

Management

-  **Management actions** primarily consist of needs for ecosystem or species management.
-  **Assessments** (including monitoring) include assessing the status to, for example improve skills of biodiversity experts, needs for deploying plans and strategies on marine environments, for pollinator management, farm assessments, economic evaluations, and threatened species.

Policy

-  **Implementation and enforcement** include needs related to training elected officials and administrators as well as needs related to increasing capacity to implement policies and initiatives, including regional biodiversity strategies, wildlife biobanking initiatives, and adopted conservation plans.
-  **Sectoral integration** needs include addressing integration of biodiversity into sectoral policies or across policy levels.
-  **(Legal) frameworks** include developing new policies or strategies for endangered habitats, biodiversity accounting in the private sector, and genetic resources.
-  **Funding** capacity needs may at first appear small (only nine found); however, this category only includes needs that directly name funding and financial needs. Many, if not most, of the needs in other categories are also implicitly dependent on funding. For example, one NBSAP stated that a “functional audit of the biodiversity conservation sector has not yet started, and clear institutional competencies and policies have not yet been created.” This need has been categorized under Assessments, yet likely also indicates a financial capacity need.

Cooperation



-  **National and International Cooperation** needs include aligning biodiversity monitoring strategies to enhance regional cooperation and maintaining cooperation with neighbouring countries.
-  **Outreach** needs include a number of awareness raising needs for targeted groups and the general public as well as several education measures.

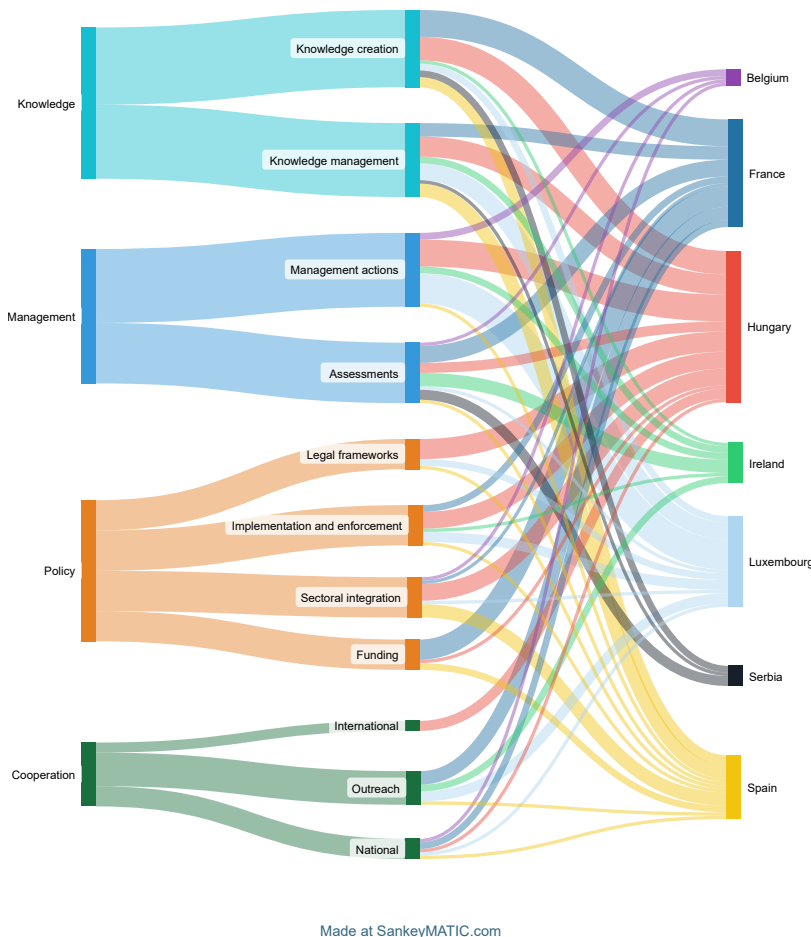


Figure 4: Sankey plot depicting capacity building needs by category, as expressed by Parties in their NBSAPs (from D4.1, fig. 4).

Task 1.1

In 2023 and 2024, CO-OP4CBD conducted surveys and hosted two workshops to identify CBD negotiators' knowledge needs and preferred formats for receiving information.

In the 2024 workshop, two broad categories of needs emerged: needs related to engagement with CBD processes and linked to the negotiations; and needs related to national implementation of the outcomes of CBD meetings. Deliverable 1.1 reports the following:



“For those NFPs [national focal points] who were new or relatively new to the CBD context, the mechanisms, processes, and protocols proved challenging to manage. It was mentioned that a targeted training on the CBD negotiations would alleviate these individual-level capacity needs, and the preferred way to organise such training would be through peer collaboration, so that those NFPs with more experience could share their knowhow with the newer NFPs. In addition to such capacity-building training, also other training needs were expressed. These included ways to apply the Monitoring Framework to national reporting and trainings on specific topics.”

For more detailed information, please see the full report: CO-OP4CBD Deliverable 1.1, Report on knowledge needs in relation to the CBD prioritised by negotiators including possible emergent issues and knowledge gaps.

3 Key recommendations

This section summarizes the key recommendations for supporting Parties and building capacities, based on the results summarized above. Readers interested in more detail are encouraged to consult D3.1 and D4.1 directly.

Align indicators with existing processes

By using the same indicators, data sources and systems as other intergovernmental processes and regulations (e.g. EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030), countries can streamline their monitoring and reporting processes, enhancing transparency and efficiency. This alignment helps to identify where the data gaps for national monitoring are, enabling targeted interventions to address these gaps.

Leverage existing capacity



Peer-to-peer exchange of experiences and knowledge, supported by best practice guidelines and worked examples is an effective practice for supporting countries in implementing the GBF and enhancing national monitoring efforts. Case studies are one way to achieve this: developing case studies on the successful use of headline indicators in the monitoring framework could improve the understanding and implementation of indicator methodologies on a national level.

Tailor capacity building initiatives



Capacity building focused on providing targeted support to countries struggling with specific indicators, in particular those still being developed, such as C.1 & C.2 that deal with benefits arising from access and benefit-sharing, can generate added value.

Capacity-building efforts should be tailored to the specific needs of different regions and countries. Training programs, combining in-person workshops, online sessions and technical assistance, for example by international organizations or expert groups, can enhance standardised data collection and help countries overcome obstacles and enhancing their abilities to monitor and report on the implementation of the GBF effectively.

Coordinate data collection



Efforts need to be better synchronised temporally, spatially, ecologically, and taxonomically. A reliable data infrastructure is needed to support standardized data collection and reporting, as already done by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). Better data sharing practices should be enabled between subnational, national and regional platforms, through encouragement of FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, and re-usable) data. Increased modelling efforts and the use of new technologies can serve as important solutions to address monitoring design, methods and data analysis.

Support institutional coordination




By establishing regional networks and partnerships, countries can work together more efficiently, avoid duplication of efforts, and develop solutions that are tailored to their specific regional challenges.

Given the broad scope of the GBF, communication and coordination within ministries and government agencies in countries must be enhanced particularly as each sectoral ministry (e.g., agriculture, environment, meteorology, education, water and health) may have a monitoring and information systems in place and can collect data that can serve to inform several of the headline indicators.


Compiling and reporting indicators is resource intensive and developing in-country strategies to increase sectoral collaboration and draw on resources and capacities across private, public, and civil spheres will be key to realizing efficient and effective data collection. As in-country strategies develop, they should be showcased as examples that other countries can adapt and build on to meet their specific needs and contexts.



Mobilize financial resources

 Even when countries possess the necessary methodological and data-oriented capacities, the resource-intensive nature of compiling and reporting on these indicators remains a major barrier. Countries with lower capacities in multiple areas are unlikely to be able to build necessary capacities without adequate funding. Examples of coordination and collaboration across sectors and institutions should be promoted and disseminated not only in terms of the knowledge they produce or indicators they compile but also in terms of the economical use of financial resources involved in the arrangement.


Support documentation of capacity building needs

 There is no standardized template within the GBF to assess capacity building and development needs. For countries with already limited capacity, knowing where to start can be an additional hurdle. To address this issue, the authors suggest that a simple form or spreadsheet could be provided to Parties to help support and systematize documentation of capacity building and development needs.

Clear guidelines and categories of capacity building and development needs could streamline the process of identifying, documenting, and reporting on needs for Parties. With consistent categories of needs, it also would be easier to classify common challenges across countries in order to facilitate delivery of support to meet those needs more effectively.

In the context of the subregional TSCs, national capacity needs assessments are an important element in a structured approach to capacity building. As such, assessments allow not only the identification of gaps, but also their prioritisation which would allow for a more organic uptake of capacity building, contrary to ad-hoc requests on perceived needs. Consequently, having a better understanding of national capacity needs would facilitate the work of the TSCs.

Periodically review and update capacity building needs status

 This summary presents a snapshot of Parties' capacity building and development needs as of late 2024. Needs naturally change over time as new capacities are developed, staff changes, policy priorities evolve, and the state-of-the-art advances. The practical work of implementing the GBF and compiling the indicators will both develop new skills and create new capacity building needs. As new NBSAPs are submitted and monitoring methods and efforts continue to evolve, the topic of capacity building and development needs should be periodically revisited and updated. A dynamic, periodic assessment of capacity building needs will enable rapid, effective, and targeted support towards meeting those needs and advancing biodiversity priorities.