



SAFEGUARDING NATURE AS THE BASIS OF ALL LIFE

to underpin a just, biodiverse,
climate-resilient future

Photo: Britta Jaschinski/IUCN-NL

Strategy Update 2024-2026





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1 Introduction

The coming three years are crucial to make significant steps towards reaching the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the targets set in international agreements such as the Global Biodiversity Framework, UNFCCC agreements and the global IUCN strategy. IUCN NL recognises this urgency and has updated its strategy accordingly, to focus on the distinctive contribution that we can make between 2024 and 2026 in response to the current challenges.



- With more and more people in need of space, food, water and other resources that nature offers, growing pressure is being put on the natural world.



- Ever-increasing consumption, unsustainable production and use of natural resources are driving climate change and biodiversity loss worldwide.



- Ecosystems, on which we humans and all other species depend, are in danger of collapsing.



- Biodiversity is under threat and this has consequences, not only for the environment, but also for human beings.



- Structural inequalities and power imbalances in and between societies aggravate these impacts, especially on women, indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups

At the same time, society is becoming increasingly aware that we need nature and biodiversity for our survival, and that climate justice needs to be placed high on political agendas.

- **Our vision** is a just world in which nature is valued and protected [1].
- **Our goal** is to safeguard nature as the foundation for all life on Earth.
- **Our mission** is to collaborate with and support organisations and societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

[1] <https://www.iucn.org/nature-2030>

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

In the second half of 2023, we worked on updating our strategy, reprioritising our six strategic pillars in the light of today's intensifying environmental and societal challenges. In the process, we **involved our partners** in the Global South, as well as our **IUCN members** in the Netherlands, to develop a holistic perspective on our impact in the years ahead.

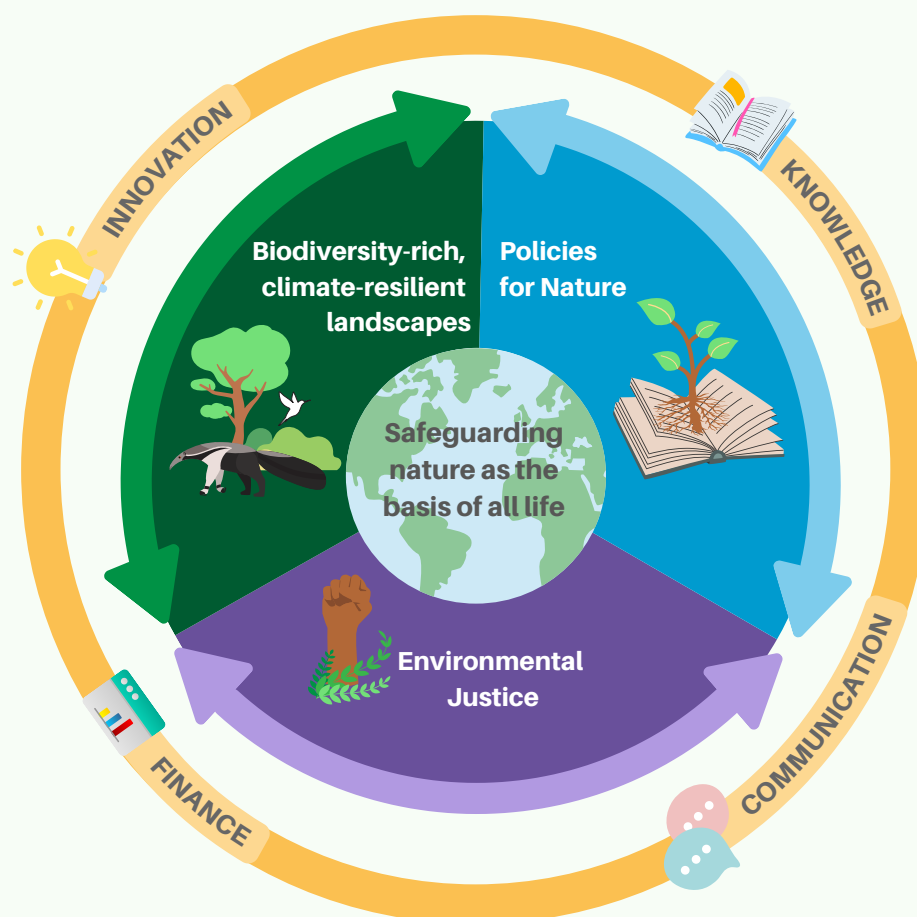
- We work in areas that have a **high biodiversity** and natural value, and that are under pressure.
- We conserve, **connect and restore nature** to secure climate-resilient landscapes.
- We do this for the **people and plant and animal species** who depend on these landscapes.
- We collaborate **with partners** in the Netherlands and across the globe, based on our core values [2].
- We strengthen the position of Indigenous peoples and **local communities (IP&LCs), women and youth** to safeguard nature and work to **protect civic space**.
- We **scout** new partners and innovative opportunities to make impact.
- We **build bridges** between different sectors and work across multiple levels of governance.

To achieve our mission, we will focus the coming years on three pathways

- **A. Biodiversity-rich, climate-resilient landscapes**
- **B. Policies for nature**
- **C. Environmental justice**

and four **Enablers for Change**

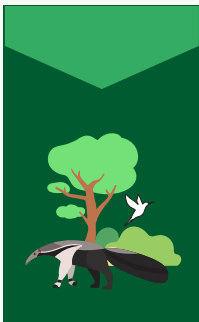
- **Finance**
- **Innovation**
- **Communication**
- **Knowledge**



[2] <https://www.iucn.nl/en/who-we-are/core-values-iucn-nl/>

2 What is our added value?

With our broad systemic view, IUCN NL works across the “local-to-global-to-local” political, societal and landscape spectrum, to support and boost the work of civil society organisations and environmental defenders across the world. We dare to be bold, putting our finger and a spotlight on contentious challenges that need to be addressed. We bring together broad coalitions of key players around these challenges and together we seek solutions, by placing them in the middle of the debate. Then, inclusively and departing from the landscape level, we support our partners across our three pathways with knowledge, networks and funding, to increase our collective impact on the ground. The knowledge and experience generated at landscape level are fed back into the policy arena.



To secure biodiversity-rich, climate-resilient landscapes, IUCN NL can rely on its longstanding collaboration with civil society organisations across the globe. Together, we strengthen locally-led processes towards equitable and inclusive multi-stakeholder governance. We are part of a unique global network of practitioners and nature champions. Also, in the coming years we will work together with our network towards the protection, restoration and sustainable management of nature in at least ten biodiversity-rich landscapes. We draw from our track record in strengthening the work of IP&LCs for inclusive governance of biodiversity-rich areas under various levels of protection around the world and “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs).



To secure consistent and just policies for nature, IUCN NL brings into play its proven role as an advocate for consistent and just policy on all levels that effectively protects biodiversity, livelihoods, human rights and the rights of nature, and that is aligned with climate action. We advocate for policies and (fiscal) instruments that promote the sustainable management, restoration and protection of nature. Our niche is that we collaborate with and support our civil society partners in their advocacy effort. Distinctive to IUCN NL is our “local to global to local” approach, whereby local developments feed and inspire global action and vice-versa. In addition, we promote the reduction of Dutch and EU footprints globally through the promotion of responsible practices, and regulations for high-footprint commodities.



In our striving for environmental justice, IUCN NL employs a longstanding practice of landscape-level intervention that is in line with the environmental justice principles of distribution, participation, recognition and linking[3]. We strive for equitable and inclusive outcome and address power imbalances with special attention for gender justice, the participation of youth and the promotion of southern leadership. In collaboration with a global civil society network, we deploy methodologies that seek to improve environmental human rights, monitor and strengthen civic space for EHRDs and manage environmental conflicts through research, advocacy and training initiatives.

[3] DPRL: Fair distribution of benefits and burdens, inclusive participation, recognition of history and traditional knowledge, and links between people and their natural surroundings.

Furthermore, IUCN NL is a recognised and sought-after partner for the work it does on the four **enablers for change**:

- **Finance**
- **Innovation**
- **Communication**
- **Knowledge**

We draw on the **global IUCN experience, knowledge and network** of over 1400 civil society organisations, knowledge institutes and government institutions and over 15,000 experts - together the worldwide authority on the status of nature and the necessary conservation measures. Our added value here is to support and **boost the work of our partners** - (other) nature and environmental justice organisations in the Netherlands and globally to bundle our strengths in a collective effort.

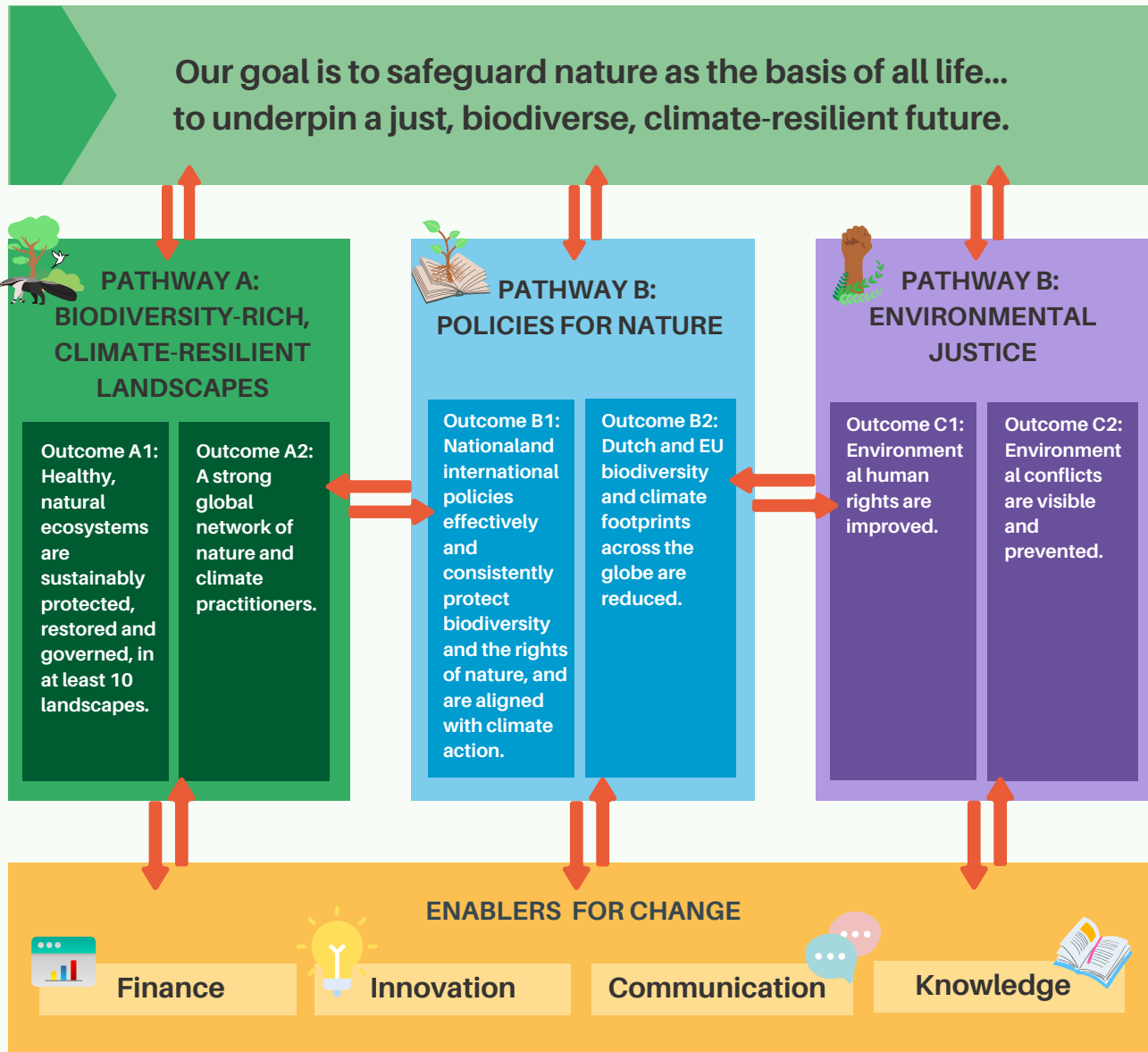
IUCN NL experts are trained in a variety of disciplines, from ecology to human rights and from communications to finance. We have a wide variety of work experience, from field work to scientific research and from NGO and policy to business. All these different backgrounds feed to the different perspectives that we use in our work. We are driven by a deep, intrinsic motivation to make a contribution to a just world that values and conserves nature, creating, together with our partners, inspirational lights across the world that can encourage other actors in the field.



Palawan women doing Reforestation (planting of native trees) in Brookes Point, Palawan. Photo by NTFP-EP Ph. Jonas Vertudez

3 Theory of Change

Our goal is to safeguard nature as the foundation for all life on earth. To achieve our mission, between 2024 and 2026 we will focus three pathways and four enablers for change.



3.1 PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE



A. Biodiversity-rich, climate-resilient landscapes

Outcome A1: Healthy, natural ecosystems are protected, restored and inclusively governed in at least ten landscapes[4].

Approaches:

- Support civil society organisations and IP&LCs to engage with academia, (local) governments, the private and financial sectors and the media, in equitable and inclusive multi-stakeholder governance to protect, restore and sustainably manage landscapes and halt the degradation, loss and fragmentation of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems. Project examples: Forests for a Just Future, Mobilising More for Climate, Bottom Line!.
- Support landscape connectivity in OECMs and other core natural areas for species conservation. Project examples: Forests for a Just Future, Land Acquisition Fund, Conservation Nembu Guasu.
- Strengthen the work of (local) partners to become frontrunners of locally-led nature-based solutions while scaling impact, and access to finance and resources. Project examples: NL2120, Benin Blue carbon credits, Strengthen the Roots, Shoulder to Shoulder, Mobilising More for Climate, Forests for a Just Future.

Outcome A2: A strong global network of nature and climate practitioners

Approaches:

- Support CSOs to strengthen the efforts of IP&LCs to inclusively govern protected areas, OECMs and other biodiversity-rich areas. Project examples: Forests for a Just Future, Amazon Rights in Focus, Strengthen the Roots, Shoulder to Shoulder.
- Collaborate with a global civil society network of practitioners to advocate for equitable biodiversity policies and to promote inclusively, sustainably managed, landscapes where nature is protected and restored. Project examples: Forests for a Just Future, Land Acquisition Fund, CEPF Small grants Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, LIFE BEST, Mobilising More for Climate.



B. Policies for nature

Outcome B1: National and international policies effectively protect biodiversity and the rights of nature and are aligned with climate action.

Approaches:

- Advocate for equitable, rights-based policies that support the protection, restoration and sustainable, climate resilient and inclusive management of nature and biodiversity. Project examples: REStoration of WETlands to minimise emissions and maximise carbon uptake (REWET), National Dashboard Biodiversity, IPBES NL Secretariat, Forests for a Just Future.
- Support CSOs in their local advocacy for consistent policies for the protection of nature, biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods, and with respect for the intrinsic, material and relational values of nature[5]. Project examples: National Committee, Groene 11, Forests for a Just Future, Bottom Line!.
- Advocate for the recognition of the rights of nature in Dutch and EU legislation.
- Monitor the implementation of existing jurisprudence and laws and work on actions to criminalise the destruction of nature. Project example: Bottom Line!.

[4] See Annex 2 for landscapes and countries.

[5] <https://www.iucn.nl/en/blog/values-of-nature-as-support-base-for-conservation/>

Outcome B2: Dutch and EU biodiversity and climate footprints across the globe are reduced.

Approaches:

- Promote and support, nationally and globally, strong due diligence and climate- and biodiversity-friendly policies and regulations for high-footprint commodities including soy, palm oil and minerals. Project examples: Deforestation-free supply chains (IKI), Forests for a Just Future, Bottom Line, Mobilising More for Climate, National Committee, Groene 11.
- Promote and support the development of economic models, policies and instruments that respect the planetary boundaries and encourage, enable and help facilitate reduced consumption, sustainable production and activities that have a positive impact on biodiversity and climate. Project example: Bottom Line.



C. Environmental justice

Outcome C1: Environmental human rights are strengthened.

Approaches:

- Ensure that the principles of environmental justice are integrated in landscape interventions by addressing distribution, participation, recognition and linking. Project examples: Strengthen the Roots, Shoulder to Shoulder.
- Support a global civil society network of practitioners working on environmental justice, and promote eco-feminist movements, with special attention for IP&LCs, women and youth. Project example: Forests for a Just Future.
- Monitor and enhance the development and implementation of legal frameworks and regulations concerning the civic space for civil society and environmental human rights defenders (EHRDs). Project examples: *Protección Inclusiva de Defensores y Defensoras Ambientales en la Amazonía* (PIDDA Derechos), Amazon Rights in Focus, Forests for a Just Future.

Outcome C2: Environmental conflicts are made visible and addressed.

Approaches:

- Support partners to combat and prevent environmental crime (illegal mining, logging, international wildlife trade). Project examples: Amazon Rights in Focus, Virunga Youth.
- Support and contribute to research and analysis for a better understanding of development issues and investments that lead to socio-environmental conflicts. Project example: Amazon Rights in Focus.
- Inform and train decision-makers and key actors on proactive measures to prevent conflict. Project example: Amazon Rights in Focus.
- Advocate for conflict prevention, improved policy coherence, laws and measures to protect EHRDs (e.g. an emergency fund). Project examples: PIDDA Derechos, Forests for a Just Future.



A Rocha Ghana: Atewa Local Protest March To Accra

3.2 ENABLERS FOR CHANGE



1. Finance

Approaches:

- Attract and (re)direct public, private and philanthropic finance towards the protection, restoration and sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources in tandem with climate adaptation and mitigation in climate and nature resilient landscapes.
- Work together with public, private, non-profit and community partners to develop and refine green business case development skills and track record.
- Collaborate with partners and responsible investors to encourage the greening of finance, to make the financing of nature and climate action possible, and to re-direct and align all finance with climate and biodiversity objectives. Influence policymakers and investors to develop, promote and implement green investment policies and design innovative finance instruments for financing green and greening finance.

Project examples: Mobilising More for Climate, Moni Biosphere Reserve Benin, Strengthen the Roots, Shoulder to Shoulder.



2. Innovation

Approaches:

- Collaborate with partners towards increased local skills for innovative methods and tools in nature conservation, restoration and sustainable management.
- Organize exchange among partners for mutual learning and collaboration regarding technical innovations, organisational interventions and monitoring methodologies to strengthen the conservation of biodiversity.
- Scope for financial opportunities to drive technological innovation for conservation and climate action (e.g. digitisation, AI, citizen science, conservation and impact monitoring)

Project examples: Monitoring 'Agenda Natuurinclusief', National Dashboard Biodiversity, Mobilising More for Climate.

Kerngegevens biodiversiteit, op één plek samengebracht

Een effectieve aanpak van
biodiversiteitsherstel begint met heldere
afspraken en meetbare doelen.

[Bekijk de doelen](#)

[Uitleg over het Dashboard](#)





Photo: Fringed leaf frog in Ecuador (c) Khamai Ecuador.



3: Communication

Approaches:

- Develop and promote stories, challenges and lessons learnt from all IUCN NL projects.
- Amplify the voices of conservation practitioners, IP&LCs and environmental defenders.
- Actively participate in and communicate in relevant Dutch and international debates as IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands.

Project examples: Forests for a Just Future, Bottom Line!, Strengthen the Roots.



4: Knowledge

Approaches:

- Collect and exchange among partners knowledge, skills and experiences with conservation, restoration, sustainable management and governance of nature in alignment with climate action and environmental justice and share with policymakers, private sector organisations, development organisations and the broader public.
- Document and promote local wisdom, values and traditional knowledge and techniques that contribute to equitable conservation of nature and sustainable livelihoods.
- Contribute to building synergies between Indigenous and local knowledge systems and science[6].

Knowledge generation and exchange is part across our projects and work.









[6] <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225242>

4 Focus landscapes and countries

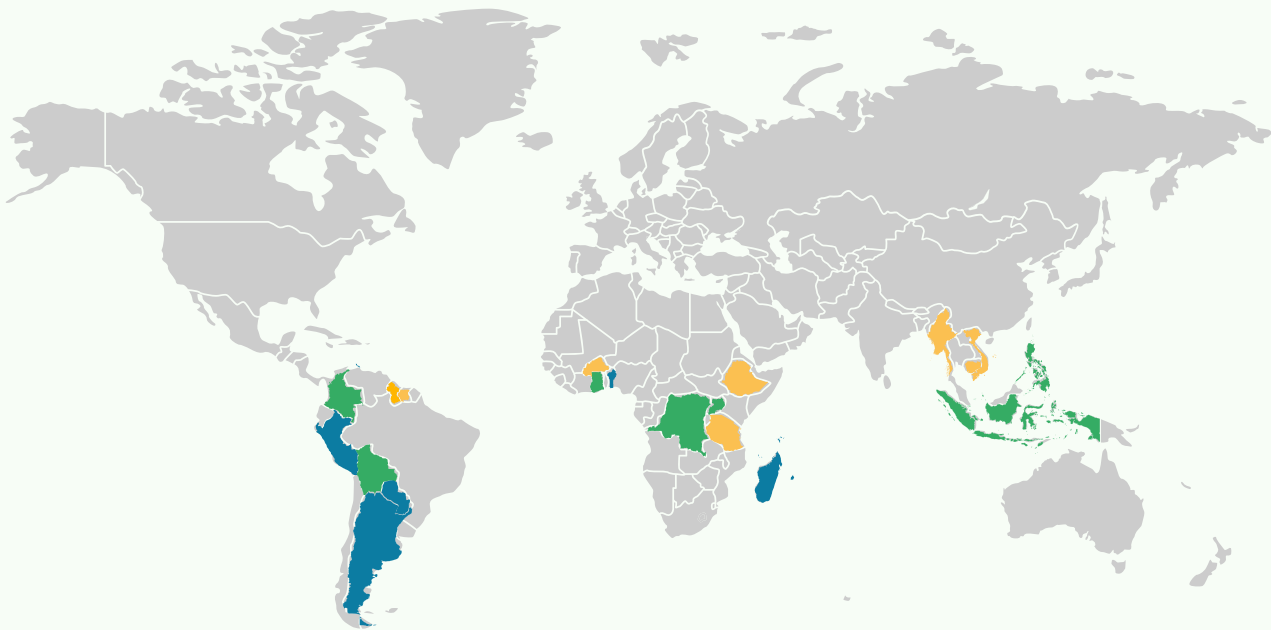
The core of the work of IUCN NL is in landscapes across the globe. From 2024 until 2026 we will strengthen, deepen and expand our work in **at least twelve focus landscapes across seven countries in the Global South, as well as in the Netherlands**. Beyond this, we identify countries in which we have an active engagement, and a further group of countries in which we have been active in the past and therefore remain in our field of interest.



Focus landscapes and countries

In our focus countries, we currently have strong partners and at least two active multi-annual landscape programmes. We are committed until at least 2030 to support (within our means) key CSO partners in these landscapes. Often, we also support or have supported other projects in these countries in other locations.

Countries	Focus Landscapes
 Bolivia	Chaco-Pantanal-Chiquitania Landscape, Amazon Landscape
 Colombia	Northern Amazon (Guaviare, Putumayo, Vaupes, Caqueta)
 Ghana	Mole Savanna Landscape; ATEWA landscape
 Uganda	Murchison-Semliki landscape
 DRC	Virunga NAP
 Indonesia	Mudiak Badio & Sumpur Kudus; Kayan River watershed; Tompotika forest
 Philippines	Indigenous territories in and around Mt. Kitanglad & Mt. Kalatungan;
 Netherlands	Whole of the Netherlands

IUCN NL focus landscapes and countries at Q1 2024



-  Focus landscapes and countries
-  Countries with active engagement
-  Countries of interest

Note: The countries with Land Acquisition Fund (LAF) projects are not indicated in this map, because the LAF does not have a focus on specific countries and is supporting projects in many other countries in the world.