

## POLICY BRIEF

### Connecting science, policy and practice for biodiversity and ecosystem services in Ethiopia

#### The Role of the National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia in Supporting Evidence-Based Decision-Making and the Uptake and Use of IPBES Assessments

#### Purpose of this brief

This policy brief explains how the National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia supports evidence-based decision-making on biodiversity and ecosystem services. It focuses on the platform's role in connecting knowledge, policy and practice; supporting national biodiversity priorities; and strengthening the uptake and use of assessments from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The brief is intended for government officials, policy audiences, platform members, development partners and other organisations that support biodiversity policy and implementation in Ethiopia.

#### About this brief

This brief draws mainly on Ethiopia's official National Biodiversity Platform documents, including the Operational Guide of the Ethiopian Biodiversity Platform and the 2024 National Biodiversity Platform membership document, together with Ethiopia's National Ecosystem Assessment, selected IPBES assessment materials and country input provided in 2026. The brief is designed to support country-owned dialogue on how Ethiopia's National Biodiversity Platform can strengthen the science-policy-practice interface, support national biodiversity priorities and improve the uptake of IPBES assessments.

#### Key messages

- The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia is an operational national science-policy-practice platform. It connects institutions and knowledge holders working on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- The platform is hosted by the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI) and has 131 General Assembly members. Its membership includes government institutions, Parliament, universities, research institutions, civil society organisations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the private sector, media and development partners.
- The platform helps translate biodiversity evidence into policy dialogue, legislation, strategies, planning and implementation. It has supported national priorities such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2025-2030, Payment for Ecosystem Services, wetland policy discussions, national ecosystem assessment work and biodiversity awareness materials.
- The platform provides a practical national mechanism for strengthening uptake and use of IPBES assessments in Ethiopia. This includes convening dialogue, supporting expert engagement, translating assessment findings and producing policy-facing materials.
- Sustained finance, technical support, regular engagement and stronger institutional links are needed to maintain the platform's role and increase its impact over time.

## At a glance

<b>Platform name</b>	National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia (NBP-Ethiopia)
<b>Status</b>	Operational
<b>Year established</b>	May 2022
<b>Lead institution</b>	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
<b>Secretariat</b>	Deputy Director General of the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
<b>Scope</b>	National multi-stakeholder science-policy-practice platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services
<b>Membership</b>	131 General Assembly members
<b>Governance</b>	General Assembly, Executive Committee, thematic sub-committees and task forces
<b>Core role</b>	Strengthen the science-policy-practice interface and support national uptake and use of IPBES assessments

Source: Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (2022a, 2024).

## Why the National Biodiversity Platform matters in Ethiopia

Ethiopia's biodiversity and ecosystem services support food production, water resources, forests, pastoral livelihoods, climate resilience and national development. Policy decisions in agriculture, forestry, water, energy, finance, infrastructure and land management all affect biodiversity. These decisions are stronger when they are informed by evidence and practical experience from the people and institutions closest to implementation (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022b, 2022c; CBD, 2022).

The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia provides a structured space for this work. It brings together institutions that generate evidence, institutions that make policy and organisations that implement biodiversity actions. This helps turn evidence into clearer policy messages, practical options and coordinated action (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024).

The platform also supports Ethiopia's engagement with IPBES. It helps national stakeholders understand global and regional assessment findings, discuss their relevance for Ethiopia and use them in national policy conversations (IPBES, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2024a, 2024b, 2026).

## How the platform was established and how it works

The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia was formally established in May 2022. It is hosted by the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, which also serves as the national focal point for IPBES. The platform was developed through country-led efforts and support from related initiatives, including the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network, the National Ecosystem Assessment Initiative and CABES (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024).

The platform promotes engagement between policymakers, scientists, practitioners and knowledge holders. Its General Assembly and smaller working groups provide spaces to identify priority issues, review evidence, discuss policy options and support follow-up action (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024).

The platform is closely aligned with national biodiversity priorities, especially implementation of the

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2025-2030. It provides technical input, supports dialogue between institutions and helps translate biodiversity priorities into activities (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2025; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

## Membership and governance

The platform has more than 130 General Assembly members. Members come from federal institutions, universities, research centres, regional authorities, non-governmental organisations, community representatives, private sector actors and media. General Assembly members are screened by the platform secretariat through a nomination process and approved by the Executive Committee (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2024).

<b>General Assembly members</b>	131
<b>Participating institutions</b>	21
<b>Government ministries and agencies</b>	29
<b>Research institutions and universities</b>	40
<b>Civil society organisations</b>	5
<b>Indigenous Peoples and local community groups</b>	16
<b>Private sector organisations or companies</b>	6
<b>Non-governmental organisations</b>	14

Source: Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (2024).

Key federal actors include the Office of the Prime Minister, the House of Peoples' Representatives, sector ministries, the Environmental Protection Authority, Ethiopian Forest Development and the Policy Studies Institute. Academic institutions, professional societies, civil society organisations, local community representatives, private sector actors and media organisations also contribute to the platform's work (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2024).

The platform is guided by an Executive Committee and supported by thematic sub-committees that coordinate technical work and stakeholder engagement. The Executive Committee meets quarterly, while the General Assembly meets every six months. Coordination arrangements include Executive Committee meetings, reports from sub-committees and action plan monitoring (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024).

## What the platform has achieved

Since its establishment, the National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia has taken practical steps to strengthen biodiversity governance and the science-policy-practice interface. It has created a national network of biodiversity experts and institutions, organised workshops and consultations, supported national dialogues on biodiversity policy issues and IPBES assessments, strengthened engagement with

Parliament and developed tools to improve biodiversity information sharing (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2024; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026). Specifically, the platform has:

- Supported review and dialogue on the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2025-2030, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in October 2025 (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2025; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026);
- Supported national dialogue and awareness raising on Payment for Ecosystem Services, including engagement with members of the House of Peoples' Representatives (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026);
- Developed a National Biodiversity Platform Strategy for 2025-2030 and an action plan to guide implementation (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026);
- Supported discussion on wetland policy and the need for stronger attention to wetland ecosystems (Mellese Damtie and Woldeamlak Bewket, 2023; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026);
- Contributed to national and international biodiversity cooperation, including work linked to the Global Biodiversity Information Facility and IPBES (GBIF Secretariat, 2025; IPBES, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2024a, 2024b, 2026; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026);
- Supported biodiversity awareness materials, including outreach products on pollinator conservation and land degradation neutrality (IPBES, 2016, 2018; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026); and
- Contributed to national dialogue on community seed banks, biodiversity-related local community knowledge, and aquatic and wetland ecosystems (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022b, 2022c; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

## **Supporting national policy, planning and decision-making**

One of the platform's central roles is to support evidence-based policy and decision-making. Through dialogue between scientists, policymakers, practitioners, and knowledge holders, the platform helps ensure that biodiversity evidence informs national strategies, legislation, development planning and implementation, consistent with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and GBF Target 14 (CBD, 2022).

General Assembly meetings have helped improve awareness of biodiversity and ecosystem services by sharing updates on their status and relevance. The platform has also created opportunities to discuss wetland policy, Payment for Ecosystem Services and cross-sector collaboration in development and investment decisions (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2024; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

The platform is especially useful where a policy question needs evidence from several sectors. For example, wetland governance requires knowledge of biodiversity, water regulation, agriculture, livelihoods, climate resilience and land-use planning. A multi-stakeholder platform can bring these perspectives together and help identify practical policy options (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; Mellese Damtie and Woldeamlak Bewket, 2023).

## **Supporting uptake and use of IPBES assessments**

The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia supports Ethiopia's engagement with IPBES. It helps national stakeholders understand assessment findings and discuss how they can inform policy, planning and implementation in Ethiopia (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024; IPBES, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2024a, 2024b, 2026).

Ethiopian experts who are members of the platform have contributed to IPBES in several roles, including as founding members, expert panel members, African Group representatives, scoping experts, lead authors, review editors and national focal points (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

The platform has also supported national discussion of IPBES assessment findings. Findings from the Nexus Assessment and the Transformative Change Assessment were discussed with stakeholders from the platform and wider biodiversity community to explore national relevance and possible policy use (IPBES, 2024a, 2024b; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

IPBES assessment	Year	Relevance for uptake in Ethiopia
<b>Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production Assessment</b>	2016	Relevant for agriculture, food production, pollinator conservation and awareness materials.
<b>Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment</b>	2018	Relevant for restoration, soil health, land management and land degradation neutrality.
<b>Regional Assessment for Africa</b>	2018	Relevant for regional evidence, policy dialogue and Africa-wide biodiversity priorities.
<b>Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services</b>	2019	Relevant for national awareness, biodiversity trends and policy options.
<b>Sustainable Use of Wild Species Assessment</b>	2022	Relevant for sustainable use, livelihoods, wildlife and natural resource management.
<b>Values Assessment</b>	2022	Relevant for recognising diverse values of nature in decision-making.
<b>Invasive Alien Species Assessment</b>	2023	Relevant for invasive species management and ecosystem resilience.
<b>Nexus Assessment</b>	2024	Relevant for links between biodiversity, water, food, health and climate.
<b>Transformative Change Assessment</b>	2024	Relevant for policy shifts, governance, institutions and implementation.
<b>Business and Biodiversity Assessment</b>	2026	Relevant for private sector engagement, business impacts, dependencies and opportunities for action.

Source note: Adapted from IPBES assessment materials listed in the References.

## Examples of IPBES uptake in Ethiopia

### Wetland ecosystems

The platform has supported policy dialogue on wetland ecosystems. A policy brief on wetlands drew on assessment findings related to ecosystem services and land degradation. It helped raise awareness about the importance of wetlands for biodiversity, water regulation, livelihoods and resilience (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022b, 2022c; IPBES, 2018; Mellese Damtie and Woldeamlak Bewket, 2023; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

### Payment for Ecosystem Services

Targeted awareness raising on Payment for Ecosystem Services increased understanding among stakeholders, including members of the House of Peoples' Representatives. Platform members reviewed draft legal proposals and explored how ecosystem service values could be better reflected in policy and

implementation (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022b, 2022c; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

## Restoration and the Green Legacy Initiative

The platform has created space to discuss how large-scale restoration can better support biodiversity and ecosystem services. Evidence from IPBES assessments can help strengthen attention to native species, ecological suitability, landscape-level benefits, and monitoring of restoration outcomes, including in relation to Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative (IPBES, 2018; UN DESA, n.d.; Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2025; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

## Policy briefs and outreach materials

The platform has produced or supported policy-facing materials on aquatic and wetland ecosystems, biodiversity-related local community knowledge, pollinator conservation and land degradation neutrality. These products help translate technical assessment findings into shorter messages for policymakers and wider audiences (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022b, 2022c; IPBES, 2016, 2018; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2026).

## Strengthening Indigenous and Local Knowledge

IPBES assessments recognise the importance of Indigenous and Local Knowledge alongside scientific knowledge. The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia provides a space where different knowledge systems can contribute to biodiversity dialogue, including local community knowledge on genetic resources, ecosystem management and sustainable use (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; IPBES, 2022, 2024b).

## Emerging priority: business and biodiversity

Business and biodiversity is an emerging priority for the platform. Private sector organisations are already represented, including companies and producer groups. This gives the platform a practical basis for future dialogue on business impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities related to biodiversity and ecosystem services (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2024; IPBES, 2026).

## Challenges and opportunities for support

Area	Challenge	Opportunity and support needed
<b>Platform operations and sustainability</b>	Limited financial resources affect regular platform activities and long-term sustainability. Coordination across sectors remains demanding.	Long-term finance, resource mobilisation and stronger institutional arrangements can improve sustainability.
<b>Technical capacity</b>	Some areas need stronger capacity, including data analysis, modelling and policy translation.	Capacity building in science-policy communication, knowledge translation, data analysis and modelling can strengthen the platform's role.
<b>Awareness and participation</b>	Awareness of the platform's role remains limited among some decision-makers and the wider public. Participation from some sectors, especially private sector and local actors, needs strengthening.	Targeted outreach and engagement can broaden participation and increase policy relevance.
<b>Uptake of IPBES assessments</b>	Assessment reports can be technical and difficult for non-specialists. Global findings are not always translated into national and local	Tailored support can turn assessments into policy briefs, evidence notes, presentations and decision-support products.

Area	Challenge	Opportunity and support needed
Institutional uptake	policy messages. Strengthening the Alignment Between Evidence and Formal Governance Frameworks	Formal links with national planning, reporting, legislation and sector policy processes can help institutionalise evidence use.

Source note: Based on Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute platform documents, selected IPBES assessment materials and CABES Ethiopia country input listed in the References.

## Policy options and opportunities

- 1. Strengthen the platform as Ethiopia's national science-policy-practice mechanism:** Use the platform as a practical national space for connecting biodiversity evidence with policy, planning and implementation.
- 2. Support the platform's role in NBSAP implementation:** Use the platform to identify evidence needs, support monitoring, maintain whole-of-government and whole-of-society engagement, and connect national targets with sector action.
- 3. Translate IPBES assessments into national policy products:** Convert assessment findings into short briefs, evidence notes, presentations, maps and sector-specific messages for policymakers and partners.
- 4. Strengthen policy uptake through Parliament and sector ministries:** Maintain targeted engagement with the House of Peoples' Representatives, sector ministries and regional actors so that evidence informs laws, strategies and implementation decisions.
- 5. Use the wetland policy process as a practical demonstration:** Show the value of the platform by supporting wetland policy development with evidence, stakeholder dialogue and knowledge from science and communities.
- 6. Strengthen Indigenous and Local Knowledge participation:** Support meaningful participation from Indigenous Peoples and local communities and ensure that their knowledge informs assessments, policy dialogue and evidence products.
- 7. Build stronger business and biodiversity dialogue:** Engage private sector actors on biodiversity impacts, dependencies and opportunities, especially in sectors linked to land, water, agriculture, energy, coffee, industry and infrastructure.
- 8. Secure long-term support for platform sustainability:** Provide sustained finance, technical support and institutional commitment so the platform can maintain meetings, produce evidence products and support national policy processes.

## Why stakeholders and partners should engage

The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia gives stakeholders and partners a practical route for supporting evidence-based biodiversity policy. It can help improve coordination, strengthen capacity, support uptake of biodiversity knowledge and contribute to implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and Ethiopia's national biodiversity priorities. Support for the platform can also help strengthen national assessment work, IPBES uptake, NBSAP implementation, biodiversity mainstreaming, Indigenous and Local Knowledge participation, and dialogue between government, science, civil society, communities and the private sector (CBD, 2022; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, 2022a, 2024, 2025; IPBES, 2022, 2024b, 2026).

## Concluding message

The National Biodiversity Platform of Ethiopia is already in place. The priority now is to use it consistently as a working mechanism for evidence, dialogue and implementation. With sustained support, the platform can help Ethiopia translate biodiversity knowledge into clearer policy choices, stronger implementation and better coordination across sectors. The next stage should focus on practical uptake: producing short evidence products, supporting live policy processes, strengthening links with Parliament and sector ministries, widening participation from local communities and the private sector, and securing the finance and technical capacity needed for the platform to continue its work.

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