



# INTERACT-Bio

Integrated action on biodiversity

Project implemented by



Supported by



Federal Ministry for the  
Environment, Nature Conservation,  
Building and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision by the German Bundestag

# Project overview

INTERACT-Bio is a four-year project designed to improve the utilization and management of nature within fast-growing cities and the regions surrounding them. It aims to provide expanding urban communities in the Global South with nature-based solutions and associated long-term benefits.

The project will enable governments at all levels – from local to national – to integrate their efforts for mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into core subnational government functions such as spatial planning, land-use management, local economic development and infrastructure design.

The project will support city-regions to understand and unlock, within their specific local context, the potential of nature to provide essential services and new or enhanced economic opportunities, while simultaneously protecting and enhancing the biodiversity and ecosystems on which these services and opportunities depend. In doing so, these actions will place the participating city-regions on a more resilient and sustainable development path.

**INTERACT-Bio is being implemented in Brazil, India and Tanzania.**

## Meeting the challenge

Nature provides us with wide ranging benefits and essential services. Unfortunately our current activities and development patterns are straining natural systems across the world, often to such an extent that nature cannot fully recover, further weakening the very ecosystems upon which our welfare and livelihoods depend. This trend is intensified in cities with rapid urban expansion patterns. These are often the same cities where the remaining biodiversity is of high value, not only for the cities themselves, but also for their surrounding regions.

Such a highly urbanized world will draw heavily on natural resources upon which we will increasingly depend for essential services like water purification, flood control, climate regulation, food security and clean air.

“ **Biodiversity is being lost and will continue to be negatively impacted if we continue on our current development path.**

This, in turn, will affect human health and well-being, and limit opportunities for economic growth and social development.

To overcome the challenges faced, particularly at the local and subnational government level, we need action from all levels of government and innovative methods to mainstream biodiversity across city-region planning systems. This approach facilitates opportunities for nature-based solutions with gains for both biodiversity and our urban communities. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability launched the INTERACT-Bio project to meet this challenge.

“ It is expected that more than 70% of the global population will live in urban areas by 2050.



### **Biodiversity (CBD definition)**

Biological diversity refers to the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

### **Nature-based solutions (IUCN definition)**

Nature-based solutions are defined by IUCN as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”.

## Aiming for integrated action

INTERACT-Bio aims to:

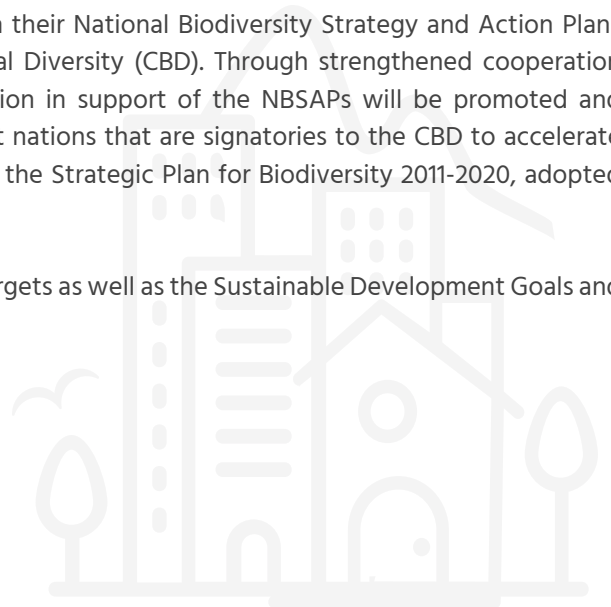
- **Connect** national and subnational government decision-makers to work together towards integrating biodiversity considerations into city-region planning and decisions.
- **Strengthen** the capacity of city-regions to integrate biodiversity and nature-based solutions into land use, infrastructure and development planning, and to develop supporting policy instruments.
- **Mainstream** biodiversity considerations across sectors at the subnational and national level.

In doing so, INTERACT-Bio will:

- **Promote** nature-based solutions as economically sound and sustainable investment options.
- **Demonstrate** the effectiveness of nature-based city-region development through pilot projects.
- **Multiply** nature-based approaches by connecting city-regions with one another, and by building capacity and raising awareness that nature offers significant value in an urban context.

Through the project, city-regions will align their planning with their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), which are required by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Through strengthened cooperation between the different levels of government, subnational action in support of the NBSAPs will be promoted and enabled. Such collaborative approaches will ultimately support nations that are signatories to the CBD to accelerate attainment of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which are part of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, adopted by all CBD Parties.

The INTERACT-Bio project supports several Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and various other international agreements and associated targets.





## Brazil

Campinas, São Paulo, project city-region  
The other two project city-regions are Belo Horizonte and Londrina



## Tanzania

Dar es Salaam, project city-region  
The other two project city-regions are



## Where we are engaging

Brazil, India and Tanzania each have globally unique biodiversity, but complex development challenges are widely manifested in their fast-growing cities and surrounding regions. These three countries are all signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and are considered frontrunners in implementing the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The project presents these three countries with a unique opportunity to enable deeper engagement of, and contribution by, their subnational governments in implementing their current, and shaping their future NBSAPs.



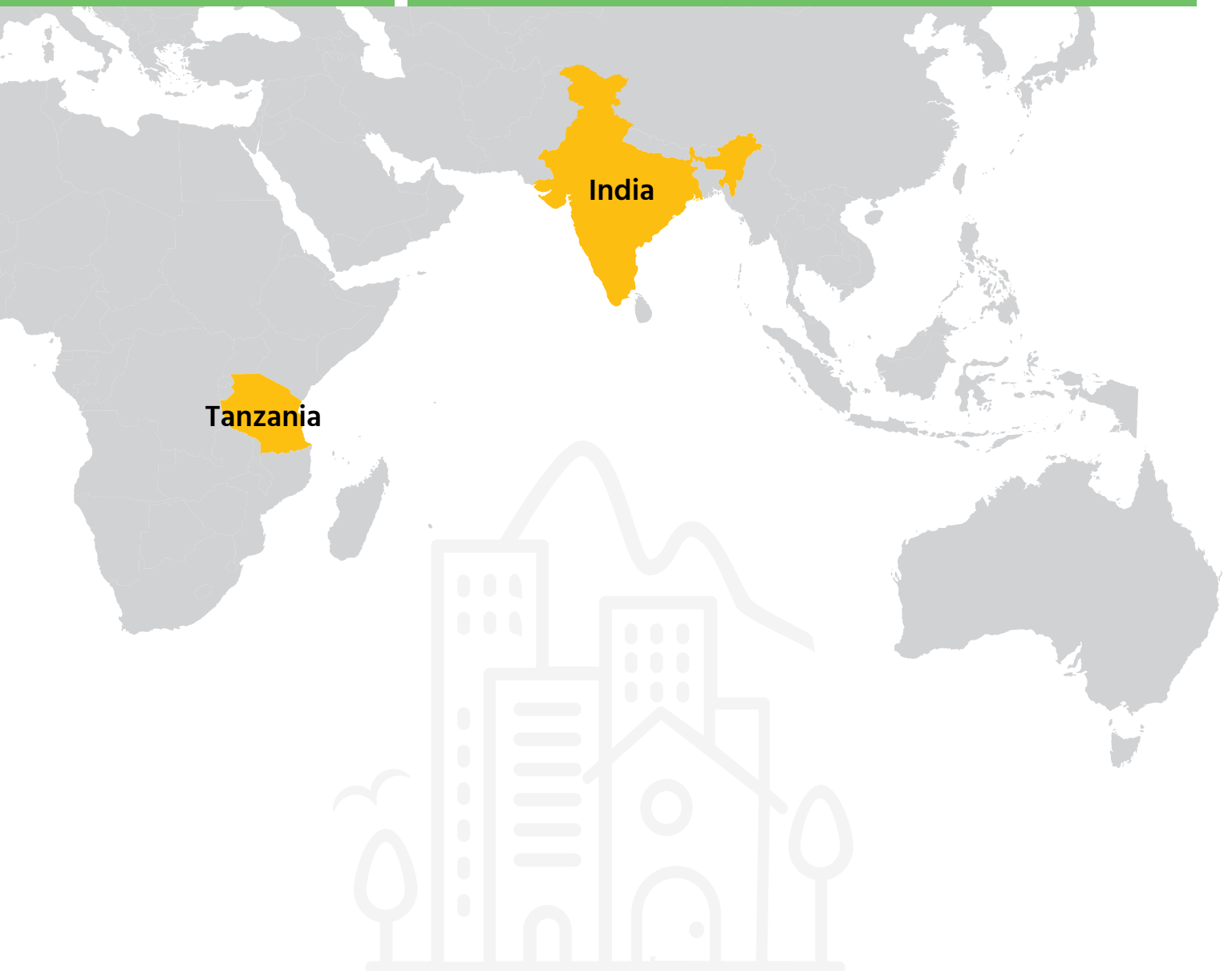
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## India

Kochi, Kerala, project city-region

The other two project city-regions are Mangaluru and Panaji



## Delivering on our aims

The project will be delivered at three levels, as illustrated below:





Belo Horizonte, Brazil

**In the context of the INTERACT-Bio project, city-regions are defined as follows:**

**City-regions** are made up of combinations of several cities, towns, informal settlements, smaller urban settlements, semi-urban and rural surroundings that are linked by functional ties. They can be demarcated by an administrative boundary, such as a metropolitan development area, or topographical features, such as watersheds, and depend on the same ecosystem services and natural assets, like water catchments and biodiversity corridors. A city-region includes the entire functional area under the city government administration, with at least one higher level of subnational government.

## Providing benefits

**The INTERACT-Bio project will provide a range of sustainable benefits to the project city-regions and their respective countries. These include the following:**

Capacity building across all levels of government, and specifically within participating city-regions, will build lasting institutional knowledge and skills on how to mainstream biodiversity and integrate nature-based solutions. This will include providing the city-regions with access to a suite of resources and tools.

City-regions will be in a position to reassess their internal planning processes and budgets in support of nature-based solutions, green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity actions.

By mainstreaming biodiversity considerations and nature-based solutions into local socio-economic development strategies and land use planning, city-regions will be capacitated and positioned to leverage economically sound and sustainable investment options.

New multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral forums will strengthen alignment and integration required for effective management of natural resources and ecosystems.

Project progress and lessons learnt will be shared globally through ICLEI networks, the media and international forums.

## At a glance

**Project name:** INTERACT-Bio

**Full title:** Integrated subnational action for biodiversity: Supporting implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans through the mainstreaming of biodiversity objectives across city-regions

**Funded by:** German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI)

**Project duration:** Four years - January 2017 to December 2020

**Project countries:** Brazil, India and Tanzania

## Project partners

INTERACT-Bio is implemented by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. The ICLEI World Secretariat is responsible for project management and coordination in close collaboration with the ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center (CBC) which provides technical leadership to the project. The CBC is located in the ICLEI Africa office, one of three offices in ICLEI responsible for the regional implementation of INTERACT-Bio. ICLEI South Asia and ICLEI South America are the other two implementing partners.

Technical support for the ecosystem assessment components of the project is provided by Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung – UFZ. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is an endorsing partner.

The project is supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

### Image credits:

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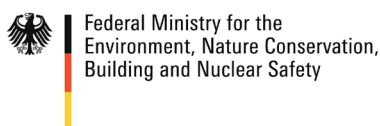
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### Supported by

### Technical lead

### Technical support



based on a decision by the German Bundestag

