



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



2016

BIOFIN Workbook

**Mobilizing Resources
for Biodiversity and
Sustainable Development**



**The Biodiversity
Finance Initiative**

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Foreword from His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Bhutan

According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, in the last half of the 20th century, humans changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of history, primarily to meet growing needs for food, fresh water, timber, fiber, and fuel. Of the 24 services assessed, it reports, only four have shown improvement over the past 50 years, a startling 15 are in serious decline, and five hang in the balance. The study predicted that, as a result of growth-centric policies triggering overexploitation of biodiversity, pollution, invasive alien species, climate change, habitat deterioration – as well as our inability to recognize and appreciate the reinforcing role of biodiversity in socioeconomic development – the degradation is likely to grow significantly worse in the first half of the 21st century.

Therefore, if our society believes our Earth is borrowed from our children rather than inherited from our ancestors, there is an urgent need for a paradigm shift in how we approach our development. Moving forward, in order to achieve individual and societal wellbeing, it will be necessary to put in place a holistic policy framework which promotes the reinforcing role of biodiversity in the development equation and thereby, provides incentives for individuals, businesses, governments and nations to manage biodiversity on a sustainable basis. The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), launched in 2012 under the auspices of UNDP is a noble initiative that will forge a global partnership to collectively address these challenges.

More aptly, BIOFIN provides a much needed global platform to leverage biodiversity finance challenge in a comprehensive manner – building a sound business case for increased investment in the management of ecosystems and biodiversity, with a particular focus on the needs and transformational opportunities at the national level.

In Bhutan, guided by the wisdom in Gross National Happiness Philosophy, we have done extremely well to enter the 21st century with a fairly positive state of our environment. Today, over 50 per cent of the country's landscape is designated as protected area, with policies, legal instruments, and strategies in place to advance environmental conservation. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan requires maintaining at least 60 per cent of the country's landscape under forest for all times to come. Bhutan is currently a carbon negative country and we pledged to remain carbon neutral in times to come. Nonetheless, maintaining these commitments and realizing the Aichi Targets and SDGs would need concerted efforts at the national, regional and global level. We collectively, with all sustainable development thinkers and practitioners across the globe, must adapt and innovate. This is why we are delighted to partner with UNDP on the global BIOFIN partnership project, joining 29 other nations in a combined effort to ensure the survival and continued vibrancy of our planet's ecosystems, and the livelihoods, traditions and cultures of the people that depend on them.

It is my pleasure and honour to lend my words to the opening of this BIOFIN Workbook. Drawing on experiences from Fiji's Marine Protected Areas, to Botswana's Kalahari Desert, to the Northern Andes of Peru, this BIOFIN Workbook is a culmination of years of hard work by UNDP and BIOFIN nations to assess the policy and institutional drivers of biodiversity losses and ecosystem changes, evaluate current expenditure trends, identify financing gaps, and ultimately develop and implement an innovative resource mobilisation strategy for biodiversity conservation.

Foreword

As in other nations, Bhutan appreciates BIOFIN's transformative process of engaging partners across ministries and sectors as fundamental to advancing our combined efforts to achieve sustainable development. We are also exploring ways to take this partnership further, leveraging the BIOFIN Workbook and experience to develop an integrated financing framework for the sustainable financing of biodiversity and climate change challenges in a way that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable people.

Through BIOFIN, we have an unparalleled global platform to 'work out loud' on our biodiversity journey, sharing ideas and experiences with diverse nations driven by a common objective: to assure the financial sustainability of managing the unique tapestry that is "life on land". I would like to congratulate UNDP, the Global BIOFIN Team, and BIOFIN nations on the road travelled so far, and we look forward to being part of exciting things ahead!

My best wishes to the Global BIOFIN Team and BIOFIN Nations on this important endeavor.

Dasho Tshering Tobgay
Royal Government of Bhutan
Prime Minister



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