

## Case study: SDG 15 Life on land

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### **SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

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15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally

15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world

15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species

15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems

15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

Numbers are used for "outcome targets", letters are used for "means of implementation targets". For a list of all targets of SDG 15, see [globalgoals.org/15-life-on-land](https://globalgoals.org/15-life-on-land)

SDG 15 aims to "protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss". Credit Suisse contributes to at least seven of the twelve targets underpinning this goal (see table on the left).



#### **Why this matters**

The [United Nations Development Program \(UNDP\)](https://www.undp.org/) explains that human life depends on the Earth and its oceans for our sustenance and livelihoods. For example, plant life provides 80% of the human diet. Forests cover 30% of the Earth's surface, providing vital habitats for millions of species and serving as an important source of clean air and water, as well as playing a crucial role in combating climate change. However, biodiversity is under threat due to the overexploitation of resources, the destruction of habitats, climate change and the impacts of invasive species.

#### **How we contribute**

Credit Suisse recognizes the vital need to protect the broad range of species on our planet and to safeguard natural ecological processes. We therefore view the protection of biodiversity as an integral part of our sustainability commitments.

Acknowledging the need for capital to conserve ecosystems, we are continuing our activities in the area of conservation finance, which focuses on the creation of long-term and diversified sources of revenue that can play a major role in ensuring biodiversity conservation and the health of natural ecosystems. For example, we focus on sustainable agriculture and forest protection by investing capital in a fund that finances projects for sustainable land use and agricultural produce in emerging countries and strives to protect nature by preventing deforestation. We also invest in a portfolio of selected green and sustainable bonds, generating additional positive environmental impacts. Further, we have hosted the Credit Suisse Conservation Finance Investor Conference for a number of years, providing a forum where specialists can discuss solutions to further develop the conservation finance sector.

At the same time, our approach to sustainability risk management can help us to reduce potential negative impacts that certain business activities might have on the realization of SDG 15. Biodiversity-related issues are considered in our risk management processes, and we have incorporated related aspects into our sector-specific policies and guidelines. For example, our policy requirements for the forestry and agribusiness sectors are aligned with relevant sustainability initiatives such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) – of which we are a member – and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). To promote good forestry and agribusiness practices and to discourage net forest conversion, our policies also include restrictions on financing activities related to High Conservation Value Forests as well as provisions for the particular scrutiny of peatland operations and the prohibition of financial services for operations in protected areas such as UNESCO World Heritage sites.



We also engage with stakeholders to develop tools and ways for the financial industry to help preserve biodiversity and the world's natural habitats. For example, we have acted as a technical advisor to the Zoological Society of London's

Sustainability Policy Transparency Toolkit (SPOTT) for a number of years, and we are part of the Technical Advisory Group for the palm oil and the timber and pulp sectors. SPOTT assesses over 200 commodity producers and traders on the public disclosure of their policies, operations and commitments to environmental, social and governance best practices. We also supported the expansion of the SPOTT platform to the natural rubber sector. Moreover, we provided support to the High Conservation Value Resource Network (HCVRN) secretariat for the development of a training strategy to improve the quality of High Conservation Value and High Carbon Stock Assessments in the palm oil sector.

Examples of our contribution to protecting biodiversity through our own operations include our Uetlihof office building as well as our Bocken conference center near Zurich, which have both been certified by the Swiss foundation for nature and economy ("Stiftung für Natur und Wirtschaft") in recognition of their eco-friendly natural surroundings.

### Our impact

By mobilizing private investments for the conservation of nature and ecosystem services, Credit Suisse is helping to close the significant capital shortfall in the area of nature conservation while contributing to the protection of biodiversity. We seek to reduce potential negative impacts through our risk management processes and have incorporated biodiversity-related aspects into our sector-specific policies and guidelines. Finally, we engage with stakeholders to define ways for the financial industry to contribute to the preservation and protection of biodiversity through our own operations.

### Further information

[credit-suisse.com/biodiversity](https://credit-suisse.com/biodiversity)  
[credit-suisse.com/responsibility/banking](https://credit-suisse.com/responsibility/banking)  
[credit-suisse.com/riskmanagement](https://credit-suisse.com/riskmanagement)

## Our contribution to SDG 15

Topic	Investing in nature conservation	Collaboration with partners	Managing biodiversity aspects in our business operations
<b>Objective</b>	Raising capital for sustainable agriculture and forest protection	Contribution to preserving biodiversity	Reducing potential negative impacts through our own business activities
<b>Impact</b>	<p>By 2019, the activities of a sustainability-focused fund that Credit Suisse invests in resulted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 101,300 ha of deforestation avoided</li> <li>▪ 41,866,278 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided</li> <li>▪ 115 threatened populations of species protected</li> <li>▪ 1,975,213 ha of critical habitat protected</li> </ul> <p>Credit Suisse clients hold 13% of the fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technical advisor for the Zoological Society of London's Sustainability Policy Transparency Toolkit (SPOTT), assessing over 200 commodity producers and traders on environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors</li> <li>▪ Support for the High Conservation Value Resource Network (HCVRN) secretariat for the development of a training strategy to improve the quality of High Conservation Value and High Carbon Stock Assessments in the palm oil sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Using developed toolkits in our own risk management processes. On average, since 2015, between 500 and 950 transactions have been assessed every year for potential environmental and social risks, including impacts on biodiversity.</li> <li>▪ Certification by the Swiss foundation for nature and economy of our Uetlihof office building and Bocken conference center near Zurich in view of their contribution to the preservation of biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Our office building Uetlihof is home to up to 30,000 honeybees</li> </ul>