



IKI Focus

International Climate Initiative

Pandemic Prevention

The causes of pandemics are the same as those that contribute to the loss of biological diversity - first and foremost, human encroachment into previously intact ecosystems, for example through the global expansion and intensification of agriculture and the unregulated wildlife trade. The continued loss of habitat through changes in land use and non-sustainable practices is leading to the disappearance of refuges and the natural habitat of wildlife. As a result, wildlife is increasingly moving into areas used and populated by humans, leading to more frequent contact between humans and animals, thus increasing the risk of disease transmission.

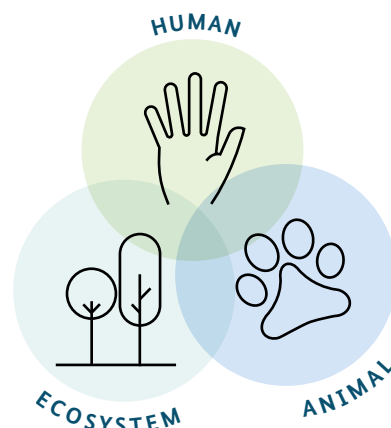
In order to reduce the risk of future pandemics, there must be increased investment in precautionary measures to protect nature. This requires substantial investments in the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of ecosystems. However, compared to the costs of a pandemic, the costs of prevention are significantly lower. The conservation of ecosystems and their services needs to be systematically integrated into land use and development planning in order to reduce the areas of contact between humans and wildlife, and between domestic or farm animals and wildlife.

Linking human and environmental health

The so-called “One Health” approach considers the health of humans, animals and the environment together. This is because human health is directly dependent on functioning ecosystems and the health of the animals that surround us.

Ecosystems and their services - for example absorption of CO₂ and thus climate protection, purification function for air and water - in turn depend on the entirety of their biological diversity. Combating and preventing pandemics requires cooperation at all levels – local to international – with common goals and measures that involve all affected sectors and actors in society.

This integrated approach to promoting healthy ecosystems, healthy animals and healthy people is also gaining importance in the International Climate Initiative (IKI). Through the supported projects, the IKI promotes, for example, the integration of the approach in protected area standards and the raising of awareness through informative biodiversity communication.



The interdisciplinary “One Health” approach takes into account the complex interrelationships between ecosystems, animals and humans and plays an important role in the prevention of future pandemics.

Protected areas for pandemic prevention

Terrestrial protected areas play an important role in pandemic prevention, as they provide wildlife with intact ecosystems and refuges. Therefore, the IKI has integrated pandemic control and prevention measures into the promotion of protected areas. For example, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) works closely with the EcoHealth Alliance and international health experts in an IKI project on protected area management.

With the thematic priority “Pandemic preparedness: natural protective barriers between humans and animals by expanding, linking and improving protected areas” in the thematic selection procedure 2020, the IKI will also strengthen the synergies between the conservation of biological diversity and pandemic prevention in the coming years.

Protected area management for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation

Funding: € 4,368,657.00, Time frame: 11/2015 to 12/2022

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Wetlands management for biodiversity and climate protection

Funding: € 4,350,000.00, Time frame: 09/2018 to 08/2023

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IKI Corona Response Package: Focus on pandemic prevention

As an immediate response to the Corona crisis, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) is supporting developing and emerging countries in coping with the crisis with 68 million euros through the IKI Corona Response Package. Among other things, the package includes emergency aid for protected areas and biodiversity hotspots, the promotion of climate-friendly economic restarts and projects to improve resilience to future pandemics. Projects received additional funds, for example, for the implementation of ecosystem-based measures to sustainably secure the livelihoods of the local population and to provide indigenous and local communities with access to emergency medical aid. In addition, the Corona Response Package supported the transfer of knowledge on nature-compatible economic practices in order to counteract the losses caused by a lack of income from tourism.

In international negotiations, the BMU is also working to ensure that lessons are learned from the pandemic. This includes an ambitious and implementation-oriented global biological diversity framework for the period after 2020 to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Supporting the design and first implementation steps of the new global framework for biological diversity

Funding: € 5,200,000.00, Time frame: 12/2019 to 07/2023

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Inclusive green recovery for a biodiversity-friendly economy

The necessary restart of the economy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic makes it possible to integrate concrete approaches for a biodiversity- and climate-friendly, inclusive and sustainable economy (Inclusive Green Economy) into government economic stimulus programmes. For example, economic development programmes should explicitly contribute to the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for climate action.

This enables an efficient use of the manifold synergies between climate protection, the conservation of biological diversity and the revitalisation of the economy. In the long term, ecologically compatible economic recovery also contributes to a transformation towards a sustainable, more equitable and resilient economy.

The UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) initiative strives to enable the transformation of an economy that is not only internationally competitive but also sustainable. Germany is one of the leading international countries that want to use the transformation potential of the pandemic for the green transformation of the economy and supports partner countries of the initiative with an IKI project in green recovery measures and the development of a resilient green economy.

In addition, IKI projects work with their respective partners to develop green recovery strategies and test them in pilot measures. The IKI promotes so-called economic advisors in 20 countries in cooperation with the NDC Partnership, who support planning and/or finance ministries in designing climate-friendly economic stimulus programmes.

