



Strategic Plan for the Biodiversity Credit Alliance

2025-2026

v.2.0

May 2025

A new market in nature credits needs the best possible start

The Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA) exists to provide guidance for the formulation of a credible and scalable biodiversity credit market that stands up to the scrutiny of multiple market participants. Key among them are Indigenous Peoples and local communities who live at the frontline of the nature crisis, and are represented by BCA's sister organization, International Environmental Guardianship (IEG). Together we are working to ensure strong foundations and principles exist and can be applied by all entrants to the market.

How this Strategic Plan was produced

The BCA Strategic Plan v.2.0 is a result of extensive consultations with the BCA Task Force, the International Environmental Guardianship, and other partner organizations working in the biodiversity credits and nature markets space. The Biodiversity Credit Alliance considers this a living document that will be updated and revised as necessary.



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Acronyms

BCA	Biodiversity Credit Alliance
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of Parties (of the CBD)
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
IAPB	International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits
IEG	International Environmental Guardianship
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
TNFD	Taskforce for Nature Related Financial Disclosures
SBTN	Science Based Targets for Nature
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP FI	United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative
WEF	World Economic Forum

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Mission

BCA is a voluntary international alliance that brings together diverse stakeholders to support the realization of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular Targets 19(c) and (d), which “encourage the private sector to invest in biodiversity” utilizing, amongst others “biodiversity credits ... with social safeguards.”

Our mission is twofold:



Help steer the development of a voluntary biodiversity credit market by building a framework of high-level, science-based principles.



Provide guidance and encourage best practice for market participants on the application of these principles, empowering them to achieve and maintain equitable, high-quality transactions that meet strict integrity criteria.

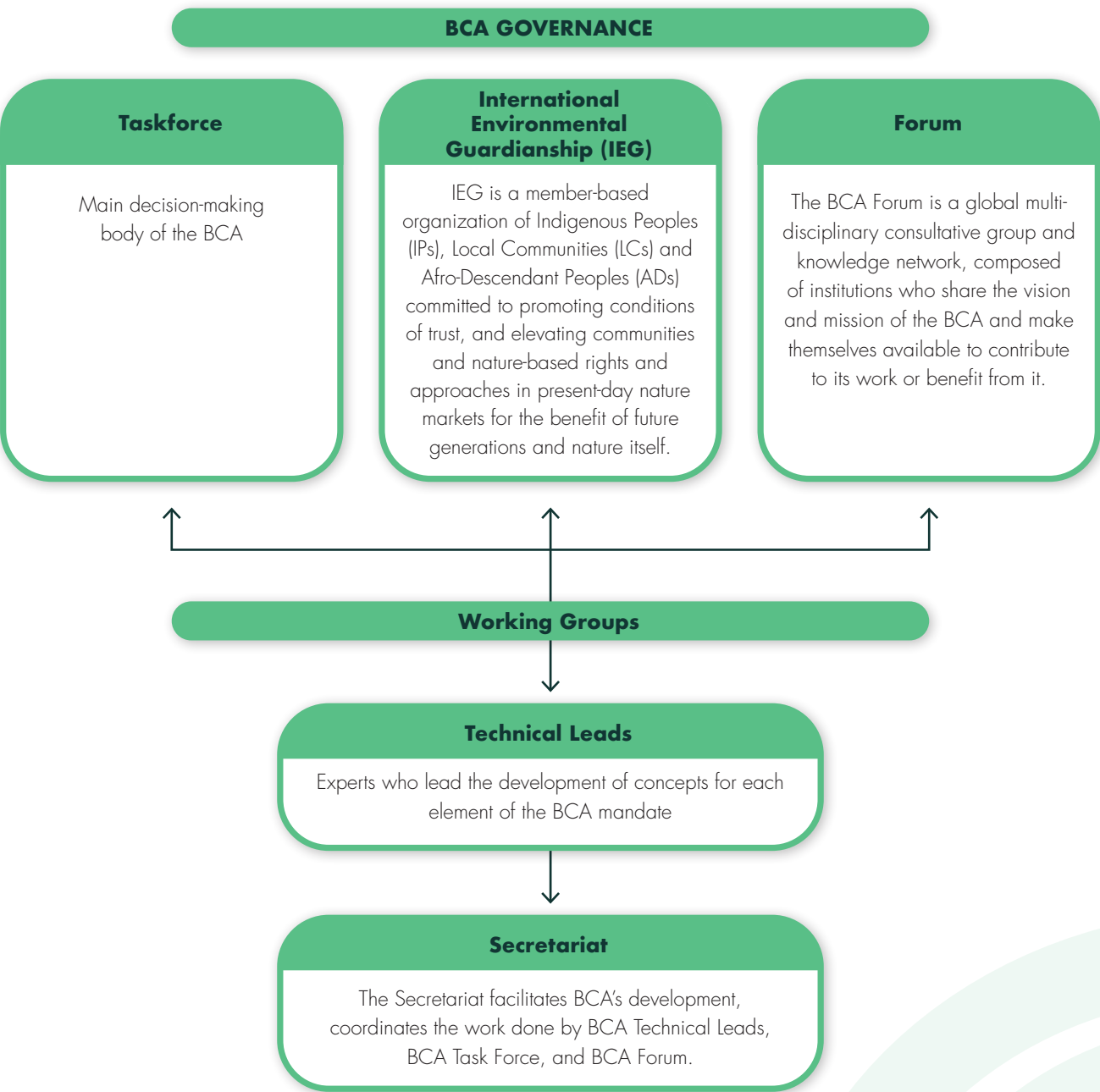
Vision

BCA's vision is a transparent, trustworthy and efficient global market in biodiversity credits founded on just and equitable principles, and underpinned by innovation.



BCA Structure

Facilitated by UNDP, UNEP FI and SIDA, BCA was established in 2022 at CBD COP 15 in Montreal to develop global biodiversity credit principles, and install integrity guardrails critical to the building of confidence and for the establishment of a credible, equitable and scalable market that stands up to the scrutiny of multiple stakeholders. Key among them are Indigenous Peoples and local communities.



Indigenous Peoples and local communities are on the frontlines of protecting and maintaining the world's biodiversity. BCA sister organization, International Environmental Guardianship (IEG), previously Communities Advisory Panel (CAP), aims to promote ethical, equitable, and sustainable stewardship of nature through robust global, regional and participatory governance frameworks.

BCA Roles

Community of Practice

- Convene market participants
- Share best practices
- Help build capacity of market participants

Think Tank

- Provide thought leadership on key areas of market development
- Help clarify key issues
- Catalyze and enable innovation

Market Shaper

- Generate guidance
- Help build market infrastructure
- Amplify voices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities

Knowledge Base

- Identify and disseminate credible information, knowledge and data about biodiversity credits
- Generate knowledge products

Areas of Strategic Engagement

Desired Outcomes		
	Short-term	Long-term
Market Governance	High-level market principles on quality and integrity guide the development and functioning of the biodiversity credit market	All necessary market governance framework elements are in place to support the functioning of the biodiversity credit market based on quality and integrity principles
Demand	High-integrity demand for biodiversity credits continues to increase based on their representation as measured and evidence-based units of positive biodiversity outcome that are durable and additional to what would have otherwise occurred	The level of demand for biodiversity credits is sufficient to make a meaningful additional contribution to addressing the nature finance gap and meeting GBF Targets 19 (c) and (d)
Supply	Biodiversity credit generation activities are tested to ensure approaches and methodologies function in line with high-level principles, including the Recommendations of the Communities Advisory Panel	An adequate supply of high-quality biodiversity credits exists to meet demand, including directly from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and makes a meaningful contribution to positive biodiversity outcomes that, in aggregate, are globally significant for addressing the nature crisis
Rights, Participation and Benefits	Respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the need for their full and effective participation is acknowledged by all biodiversity credit market participants	All aspects of a functioning biodiversity credit market fully acknowledge and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and all relevant actors are fully and effectively participating in a biodiversity credit market that delivers benefits for people and nature
Measurement	The basic challenges of measuring the state of nature for the purposes of a biodiversity credit market are widely recognized and understood, and possible ways to address those challenges are identified, including the use of traditional and local knowledge, ensuring data sovereignty	There are widely accepted and technically sound approaches to measuring the state of nature for the purposes of the biodiversity credit market, that support the delivery of positive, durable, and additional biodiversity outcomes

Market Governance

Desired Outcomes	Short-term	High-level market principles on quality and integrity guide the development and functioning of the biodiversity credit market		
	Long-term	All necessary market governance framework elements are in place to support the functioning of the biodiversity credit market based on quality and integrity principles		
Goal		Outputs required for achieving desired outcomes	Strategic Approach	Timeframe
Promotion of High-level principles (HLPs) by BCA and partners; market players signal their commitment to HLPs; HLPs form the foundation of market governance		Events and knowledge products promoting and disseminating the High-level principles	Produce knowledge products further elaborating individual High-level principles; Ensure strategic integration of High-level principles as seminal foundation for market governance	By COP 17
Support the establishment of independent market oversight and review mechanisms		Scoping paper on independent market oversight and review mechanisms	Convene a consultative process with key partners, as proposed in Review Mechanisms Issue Paper	2025
Assessment framework for credit quality and integrity developed based on HLPs		Assessment framework	Convene a consultative process with key partners, as proposed in Review Mechanisms Issue Paper; contract delivery partner to support online Assessment Framework platform	End 2025
Ensure meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in biodiversity credit market governance		Mechanisms in place for Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ effective engagement in market governance mechanisms	Support engagement of IEG, and other Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ initiatives, in development of market mechanisms	Ongoing
Functioning independent market oversight and review mechanism, including standards to avoid conflicts of interest		Oversight and review mechanism established	Collaborate with partners to develop structure and identify resources for set-up of review mechanism	Post COP 17

Demand

Desired Outcomes	Short-term	High-integrity demand for biodiversity credits continues to increase based on their representation as measured and evidence-based units of positive biodiversity outcome that are durable and additional to what would have otherwise occurred		
	Long-term	The level of demand for biodiversity credits is sufficient to make a meaningful additional contribution to addressing the nature finance gap, and meeting GBF Targets 19 (c) and (d)		
Goal		Outputs required for achieving desired outcomes	Strategic Approach	Timeframe
Increase clarity and understanding on demand side of what constitutes an appropriate purchase of a biodiversity credit		Guidance on demand integrity for appropriate purchases	Demand Integrity Working Group established and developing guidance	End 2025
“Claims Code of Practice” supports the high-integrity use of claims associated with biodiversity credits		“Claims Code of Practice”	Demand Integrity Working Group established and developing “Claims Code of Practice”	End 2025
Market supply is aligned with demand based on a shared understanding and aligned set of claims that meet demand-side needs		Claims “catalog”	Develop and circulate a discussion document	End 2025
Reduce confusion in the market around the issue of offsets		Series of knowledge events and knowledge documents clarifying offsets issue	Demand Integrity Working Group established to bring clarity to this issue, organize knowledge events, and publish a discussion paper	End 2025
Identify and increase demand by publishing knowledge pieces on and raising awareness and understanding of the business case for biodiversity credits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge pieces on the potential use of biodiversity credits in relation to TNFD and SBTN guidance Knowledge pieces on other business cases Events to raise awareness and understanding of the business case for biodiversity credits 	Draw on the BCA network to identify relevant experiences and initiatives to publicize through knowledge pieces and case studies	During 2025 and 2026

Increase market expansion and formalize guardrails at the national level through enabling policies and regulations	Meetings, events, workshops, dialogues and webinars with national government and other national stakeholders (i.e., “roadshow”); guidance documents and knowledge products for governments (e.g., linking to NBSAPs, etc.)	Connect to governments (e.g., ministries of finance, etc.) and stakeholders at national level through existing BIOFIN network; develop knowledge products and guidance pieces for governments	Ongoing
Reduce various types of risk associated with the purchase of biodiversity credits	Discussion paper on insurance and liability mechanisms	Initiate an open participation workstream with online workshop sessions, gathering input and thought leadership on risk mitigation issues and strategies	2026

Supply

Desired Outcomes	Short-term	Biodiversity credit generation activities are tested to ensure approaches and methodologies function in line with high-level principles, including the Recommendations of the Communities Advisory Panel		
	Long-term	An adequate supply of high-quality biodiversity credits exists to meet demand, including directly from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and makes a meaningful contribution to positive biodiversity outcomes that, in aggregate, are globally significant for addressing the nature crisis		
Goal	Outputs required for achieving desired outcomes	Strategic Approach	Timeframe	
Ensure Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ rights are respected	Coalition of suppliers pledged to supporting CAP Recommendations	Communication and coordination with credit suppliers	End 2025	
Increase piloting and testing of different supply models	Piloting and testing through IEG/SGP, and other opportunities	Collaborate with partners and market participants to establish ground rules and help catalyze piloting transactions	2026	
Support development of credit methodologies to meet principles of quality, including for unique aspects of biodiversity	Discussion paper addressing unique issues related to marine / coastal biodiversity credits	Organize a working group on marine biodiversity credits for consultation and development of an issue paper and knowledge events	Q3 2025	

Support market fairness and address information asymmetry through transparent digital frameworks, including ensuring support for Indigenous data sovereignty	Digital platforms for transaction recording and disclosure	Continue work of digital representation working group, based on Issue Paper	2025
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Rights, Participation and Benefits

Note: The summary title of this strategic area of work is only intended to be indicative, and not limiting. This strategic area of work includes rights, participation in decision-making and all aspects of market transactions, benefits, equity, justice and access to information, among any other relevant aspects of the market.

Desired Outcomes	Short-term	Respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the need for their full and effective participation is acknowledged by all biodiversity credit market participants	
	Long-term	All aspects of a functioning biodiversity credit market fully acknowledge and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and all relevant stakeholders are fully and effectively participating in a biodiversity credit market that delivers benefits for people and nature	
Goal	Outputs required for achieving desired outcomes	Strategic Approach	Timeframe
Strategic alignment of IEG and BCA efforts with other relevant international processes (e.g., United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) in relation to Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' engagement in the biodiversity credit market	Alignment of IEG outputs, and other BCA outputs, with ongoing dialogues on Indigenous Peoples and local communities on biodiversity conservation issues, such as in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity; awareness raising events for BCA community on UNPFII and other initiatives	Key ongoing partner communications and consultations	2025
Contribute to increasing capacity of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to engage effectively in the biodiversity credits space	Indigenous Peoples and local communities training workshops or modules on biodiversity credit markets	Support development and implementation of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' capacity development activities	2025

Catalyze Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' direct participation in the biodiversity credit market as rights holders	Operationalization of 8 billion hour pledge	Develop partnerships, capacities, and governance necessary for successful implementation of 8 billion hour pledge	By COP 17 (Q3 2026)
Uptake of CAP Recommendations and engagement of IEG by market participants, including two-way knowledge	Statements of support for / adherence to CAP Recommendations by market participants	Communication and coordination with credit suppliers and Indigenous Peoples and local communities	2025
Ensure Indigenous data sovereignty	High-level Principles, digital representation, CAP Recommendations, and other key BCA outputs recognize and support the need for Indigenous data sovereignty with respect to biodiversity credits	Facilitate strategic inputs from Indigenous Peoples and local communities to key BCA working groups and processes	Ongoing
Ensure there are mechanisms and processes to address grievances	Grievance and redress mechanism and process	IEG-led process to build on and link with existing relevant mechanisms through development of additional guidance, recommendations and processes specific to the biodiversity credit market	2026
Increase understanding around stewardship and maintenance credits	To be decided by IEG WG	Support IEG in setting up a Stewardship and Maintenance WG	To be decided by IEG
Indigenous and Traditional Rights and Knowledge	To be decided by IEG WG	Support IEG in setting up an Indigenous and Traditional Rights and Knowledge WG	To be decided by IEG

Measurement

Desired Outcomes	Short-term	The basic challenges of measuring the state of nature for the purposes of a biodiversity credit market are widely recognized and understood, and possible ways to address those challenges are identified, including the use of traditional and local knowledge, ensuring data sovereignty		
	Long-term	There are widely accepted and technically sound approaches to measuring the state of nature for the purposes of the biodiversity credit market, that support the delivery of positive, durable, and additional biodiversity outcomes		
Goal	Outputs required for achieving desired outcomes	Strategic Approach	Timeframe	
Provide a framework through which different types of biodiversity credits can be compared and different potential uses understood	Comparability framework discussion paper	Undertake consultative process with BCA network, building on the metrics workstream Comparability Framework Discussion Paper	Q3 2025	
Ensure that biodiversity credit methodologies and standards are scientifically robust, utilize market-relevant metrics, units, and data, and ensure Indigenous data sovereignty	Assessment framework	Convene a consultative process with key partners, as proposed in Review Mechanisms Issue Paper, including scientific and technical experts	End 2025	
Support effective engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in aspects of biodiversity credit methodology development and MRV processes	Guidance document on utilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge in biodiversity credit methodologies and MRV processes	Organize a Working Group on Traditional Ecological Knowledge	2025	
Link claims and measurement in robust ways that ensure integrity	Guidance and workshop on claims linked to measurement of actions vs (and/or) outcome	Convene a BCA-led Working Group on Metrics and Measurement supporting the demand-side, including relating to claims and other aspects of demand integrity	2025	

How we work

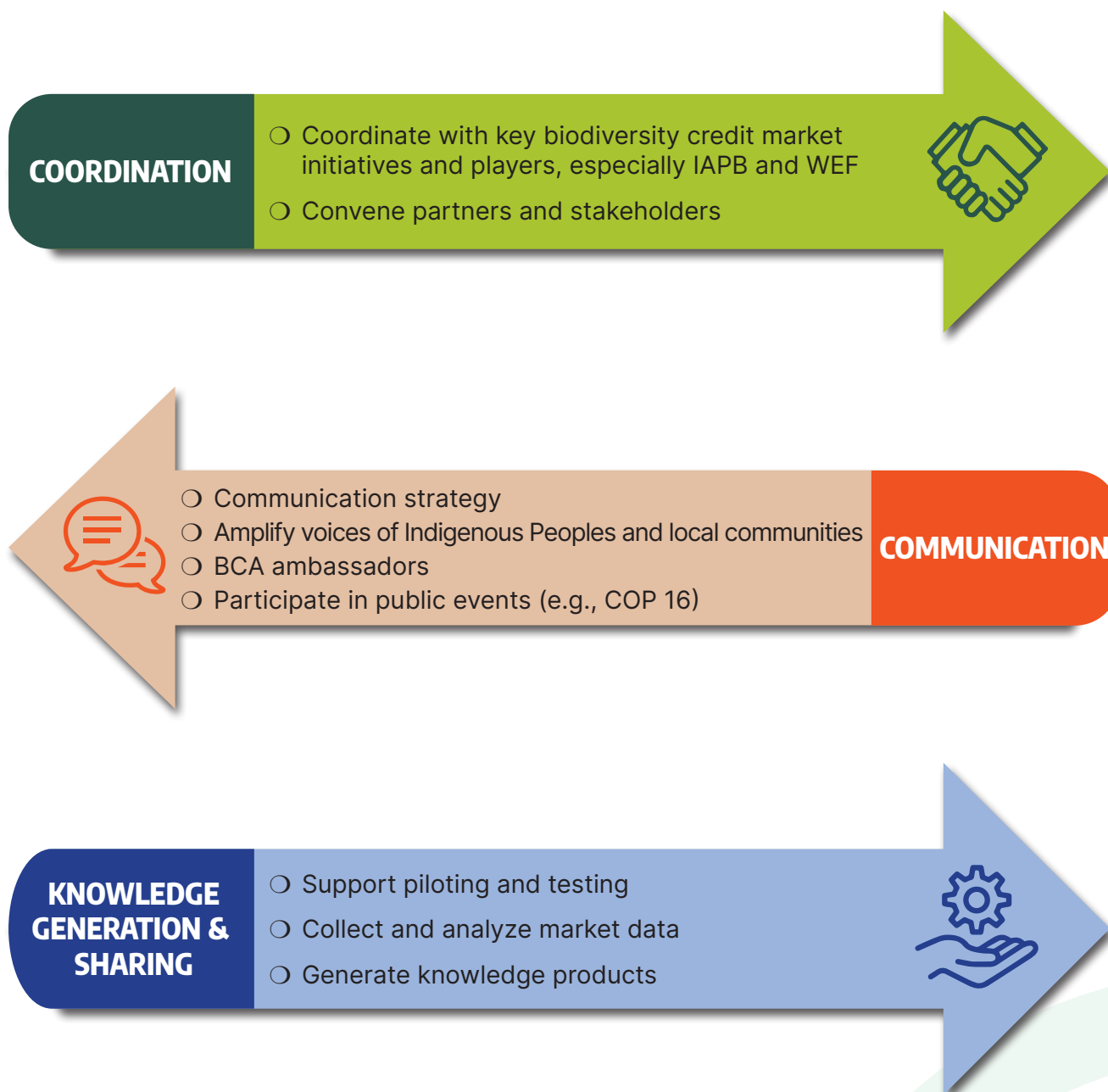


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We invite you to join us in
achieving these ambitions

