

Business guidance for deeper regeneration

→ Biodiversity chapter



Regenerative Agriculture Metrics – *guidance for business*

To accelerate regenerative agriculture and transition agricultural models that work within planetary boundaries, it is essential to drive widespread value chain convergence on an integrated measurement architecture. This includes addressing and overcoming the key challenges to alignment – a lack of cohesion on definition and outcomes, fragmented and siloed data collection and reporting, a need to translate global frameworks into local action plans and a lack of inclusivity of farmers and Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) in the process.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) has prioritized strengthening corporate performance accountability systems for carbon, nature and equity. To this end, WBCSD has launched the Regenerative Agriculture Metrics (RAM) joint working group with the One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B) coalition. This collaborative effort involves more than 52 members and 33 business-focused partners, representing more than 1,100 businesses. The group's goal is to drive widespread value chain convergence and align farm-, landscape- and global-level metrics with corporate reporting.

RAM members and partners recognize the need to measure environmental, social and economic outcomes for a holistic approach to regenerative agriculture. It is critical for industry to align at a metric level to measure these holistic outcomes for a consistent approach to regenerative agriculture.

Biodiversity-related metrics for regenerative agriculture

Consistent with the growing consensus across current and emerging regenerative agriculture tools and frameworks, environmental outcomes should have an impact on five areas: [soil](#), [biodiversity](#), [water](#), [climate](#) and socioeconomics. RAM members and partners have aligned on three biodiversity outcomes for regenerative agriculture and the key indicators and metrics to support implementation shown in Table 1. This includes core metrics which are recommended for adoption and complementary optional metrics.¹

These outcomes align with the objective of reducing agriculture-driven pressures on biodiversity as reflected in the leading frameworks and standards.²

OP2B's working definition of regenerative agriculture

Related to agroecological evidence and principles, regenerative agriculture is a holistic, outcome-based farming approach that generates agricultural products while measurably having net-positive impacts on soil health, biodiversity, climate, water resources and farming livelihoods at the farm and landscape levels. It aims to simultaneously promote above- and below-ground carbon sequestration, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, protect and enhance biodiversity in and around farms, improve water retention in soil, reduce pesticide risk, improve nutrient-use efficiency and improve farming livelihoods.

Table 1: Global-level outcomes, indicators and core metrics for biodiversity-related outcomes of regenerative agriculture

Outcome	Indicator	Core Metrics
Improved ecological integrity	Natural/restored habitat in agricultural landscapes	Natural/semi-natural habitat (NSH) in agricultural land (% per km ²)
Increased cultivated biodiversity	Crop diversity	Crop diversity per km ² (modification of the Hill-Shannon Diversity Index) Intermediate metrics: → Crops grown → Spatial extent (ha) → Number of months grown
Reduced pesticide risk	Pesticide	Environmental Impact Quotient field-use ratings (EIQ score ecological component x application rate) Intermediate metrics: → Pesticides used & application rates (kg/ha) → Overall EIQ score

Implementing biodiversity-related metrics

RAM members and partners highlighted key needs to enable the adoption of these biodiversity-related metrics for regenerative agriculture. These include improved farm-level and shared access to data, improved modelling of farm-level pressures and evidence base for impacts of regenerative practices, key guardrails and context-specific considerations for implementation, interoperability of standards and frameworks and more. Our guidance provides further detail on these needs and suggestions for how to address them collectively.

How to bridge the data disconnect from farm level to supply shed to global level

We are working to align farm-, landscape- and global-level metrics with corporate reporting to streamline how data travels across the value chain. We are doing this by establishing global-level metrics built on alignment with leading and emerging farm and landscape level tools and frameworks. In this way, the metrics developed through this group incorporate key farm- and landscape-level assessment while connecting to accounting, reporting and disclosure bodies to develop specific guidance for regenerative agriculture.

¹ Corresponding metrics can be found in the [full report](#).

² This includes corporate sustainability frameworks (ie, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), Science Based Targets Network (SBTN), CDP, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), amongst others), and regenerative agriculture frameworks (i.e., OP2B, Regen10, SAI Platform, Field to Market, Cool Farm Tool, Sustainable Markets Initiative, Textile Exchange, and more).

Policy asks

Support the move from practice-based policy to outcome-based approaches

Regenerative agriculture at scale requires agricultural policy to shift from prescriptive, practice-based policy to outcome-based approaches. A holistic, science-driven, outcome-based approach to regenerative agriculture can bridge the gap between stakeholders and empower farmers by being cost-effective, context-specific, transparent and measurable.

For nature-related outcomes, it is especially important that policies 1) are harmonized at the global scale for coordinated impact across diverse regions and landscapes and 2) reflect at the regional and local level the unique considerations for different landscapes. Rigorous and consistent enforcement of regulations for monitoring and controls is critical.

With the landmark CBD COP16 coming in October, we encourage governments to prioritize the development, updating and implementation of robust, science-driven National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), derived from the priorities and targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework. This process should include participatory roles for farmers, corporates and civil society, as well as indigenous peoples and local community (IPLC) stakeholders. We encourage policymakers to strengthen synergies across national climate and biodiversity strategies, including policy frameworks such as NBSAPs, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). This will be an important step towards ensuring the integration of climate and nature in policy and business imperatives.

Support the alignment of data collection and reporting guidelines across the different stakeholders (private and public sector, farmers and IPLCs)

Standardized data collection and reporting related to on-farm activities for nature-related data requires multistakeholder support to accelerate the transition to regenerative agriculture. It's vital to acknowledge that farmers are at the heart of the collection, processing and management of agricultural data.

Governments can play a role by:

1. **Holding businesses accountable** for their commitments by strengthening and harmonizing reporting and disclosure regulations, incorporating on-farm activities into corporate transparency measures and implementing incentives to support improved outcomes for biodiversity.
2. **Empowering farmers**, through an inclusive policies on farm data, to actively collect and report data on biodiversity-related outcomes in their on-farm activities by offering financial incentives, technical support and simplified data collection methods.
3. **Supporting research** that fills the existing gaps around measurement and quantification of biodiversity outcomes – and modelling linking these back to farm-level practices – and aggregating the available data to make it publicly available in a readily usable form for businesses.

Moving forward – Call to action

This working group, representing over 1,100 businesses, is developing the remaining environmental outcomes – biodiversity and soil – before diving into the economic and social dimensions.

This collective effort aims to foster alignment beyond the private sector, with the wider stakeholder space through the **Regen10** initiative. Regen10 is developing a farmer-centric guiding framework that it will finalize in December 2024.

It is time to converge all efforts on how we measure, report and disclose on regenerative agriculture to allow for deeper regeneration. The private sector must align with other stakeholders to safeguard supply chain resilience and transition to agricultural models that operate within planetary boundaries. Join us!

Read the [full report](#) and contact Dana Rakha-Michalon at rakha@wbcsd.org to engage in this work.

DISCLAIMER

This publication has been released in the name of WBCSD. It is the result of collaborative efforts by representatives from member companies and external experts. It does not reflect all viewpoints of each company or partner, nor does their engagement in the process necessarily constitute an endorsement of the work.

Contact Dana Rakha-Michalon at rakha@wbcsd.org to engage in this work.

About One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B)

One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B) is an international, cross-sectoral and action-oriented business coalition on biodiversity with a specific focus on regenerative agriculture. We are determined to drive transformational system change and catalyze action to protect and restore cultivated and natural biodiversity within agricultural value chains. The coalition focuses on scaling up regenerative agriculture, developing transparent outcome-based reporting for regenerative agriculture, advocating for positive policy for de-risking the transition for farmers and promoting crop and food ingredient diversification.

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About WBCSD

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a global community of over 220 of the world's leading businesses, representing a combined revenue of more than USD \$8.5 trillion and 19 million employees. Together, we transform the systems we work in to limit the impact of the climate crisis, restore nature and tackle inequality.

We accelerate value chain transformation across key sectors and reshape the financial system to reward sustainable leadership and action through a lower cost of capital. Through the exchange of best practices, improving performance, accessing education, forming partnerships and shaping the policy agenda, we drive progress in businesses and sharpen the accountability of their performance.

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