The Global Biodiversity Standard

A new benchmark for Nature Positive Solutions

Driving improved outcomes for biodiversity, ecosystems and the communities that rely on them in support of the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework
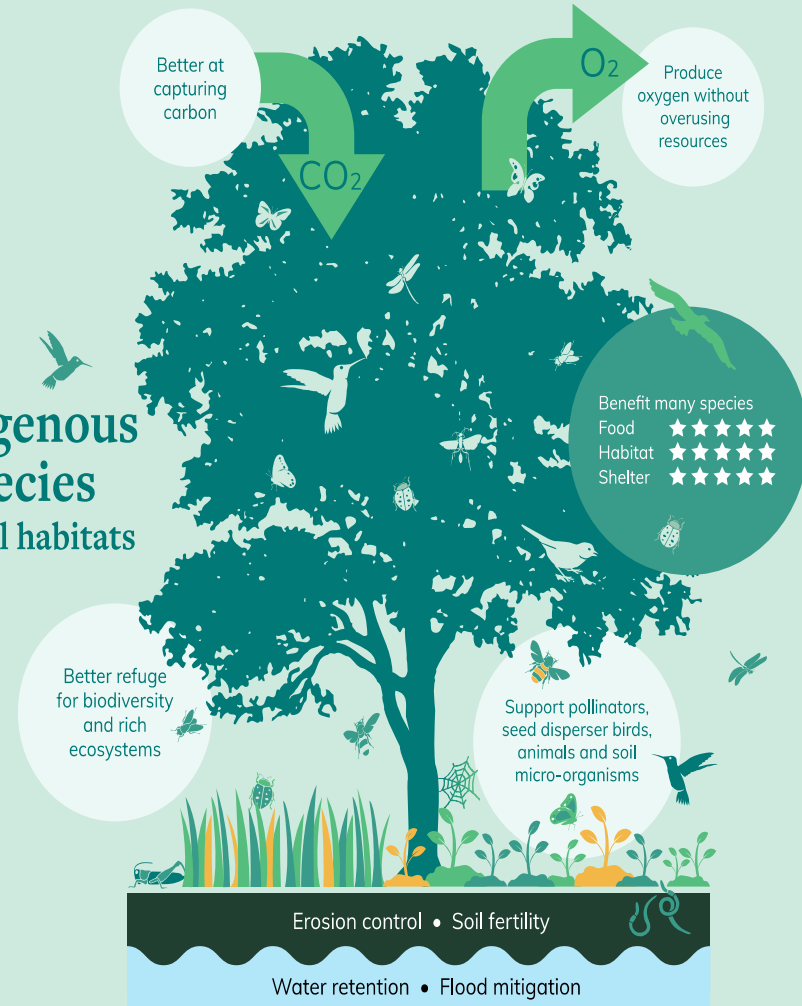
November 2023

A paradigm shift for tree planting & carbon credit projects

From 'any tree at minimal cost' to long-term *Nature Positive Solutions*

The Global Biodiversity Standard supports:

➤ **Improved outcomes** for biodiversity

➤ **Resilience** for land management projects such as tree planting, ecosystem restoration, and agroforestry

➤ **Assurance** & risk reduction for governments, businesses & carbon credit markets

➤ **Measurement** of real biodiversity impacts under frameworks such as **TNFD & SBTN**

Better at capturing carbon

O_2

Produce oxygen without overusing resources

CO_2

Benefit many species
Food ★★★★★
Habitat ★★★★★
Shelter ★★★★★

Indigenous species
natural habitats

Better refuge for biodiversity and rich ecosystems

Support pollinators, seed disperser birds, animals and soil micro-organisms

Erosion control • Soil fertility

Water retention • Flood mitigation

A standardised assessment & certification process using scientific biodiversity criteria & local expertise

RIGOROUS , SITE-BASED , TRANSPARENT

➢ Eight science-based biodiversity **criteria**

➢ **Assessment process** using field survey & remote sensing

➢ **Regional biodiversity hubs** trained by BGCI

➢ **Certification** awarded to projects achieving qualifying assessment score

The Global Biodiversity Standard
Coordinated by BGCI

Technical specifications developed by world-wide coalition of experts in biodiversity, ecosystem restoration & land management

BGCI: the largest & best-qualified plant conservation network to develop an international biodiversity standard

- ➢ 850 member institutions
- ➢ 60,000 experts
- ➢ in >100 countries

IUCN: the global authority on the status of nature

SER: the leader in advancing the science, practice and policy of ecological restoration

CIFOR-ICRAF: the lead centre of forestry and agroforestry research

RBG Kew: leading authority on plant research

TRAFFIC: globally trusted advisor on sustainable supply chains

Sites Assessed by Regional Hub Partners

12 Hubs established across 8 countries to date initially focused on the tropics

Early adopters and supporters

The GBS criteria, assessment & scoring processes have undergone:

➢ a rigorous technical consultation with 43 independent experts

➢ field testing at >100 sites in 6 biodiverse countries on 3 Continents

The Global Biodiversity Standard will drive better biodiversity outcomes by providing:

Recognition:
Recognising projects that have a positive impact on biodiversity

Incentives:
Public recognition of good practice will provide incentives for organisations to incorporate native species and other positive biodiversity practices into tree planting and land management programmes

Assurance:
Providing assurance to governments, financiers of large-scale tree planting, and the public that initiatives are promoting and protecting biodiversity, not contributing to its decline

Knowledge:
Providing knowledge, data, and mentoring for policymakers, financiers, brokers, and tree planting groups to develop land management practices that protect, restore and enhance a biodiverse world
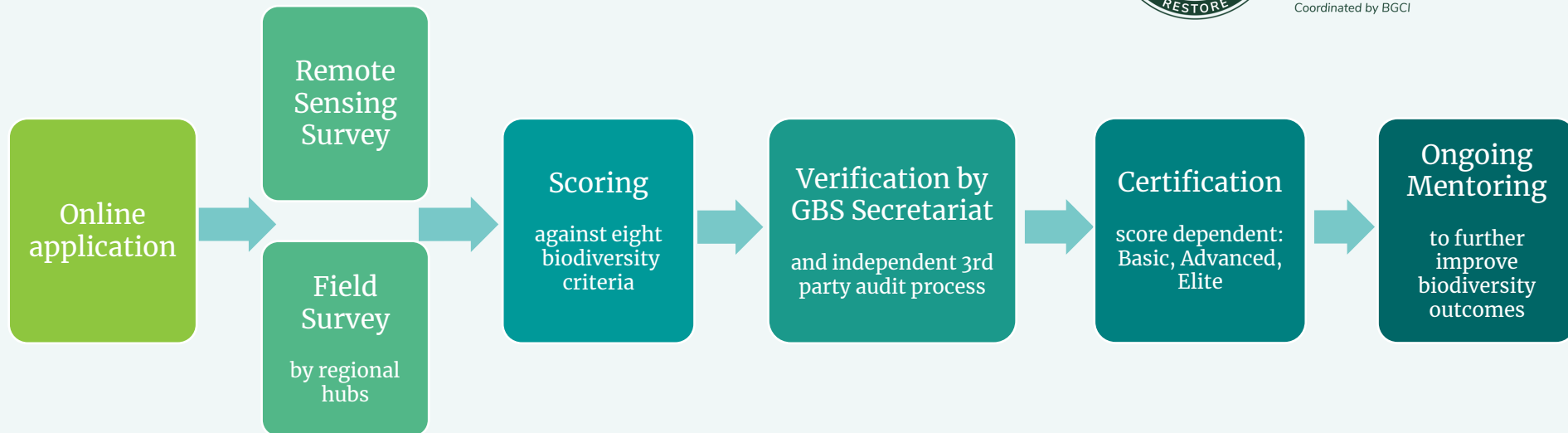
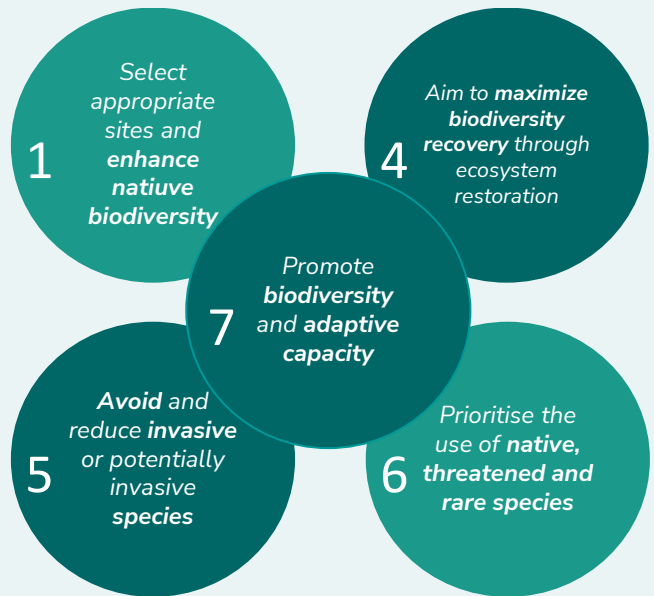# Eight biodiversity criteria, each with a number of attributes and sub-attributes

1 — Select appropriate sites and **enhance natiuve biodiversity**

4 — Aim to **maximize biodiversity recovery** through ecosystem restoration

7 — Promote **biodiversity** and **adaptive capacity**

5 — **Avoid** and reduce **invasive** or potentially invasive **species**

6 — Prioritise the use of **native, threatened and rare species**

2 — **Enhance protection** of existing habitats and biodiversity

3 — Protect, restore and manage biodiversity in consultation and partnership with **local communities** and other stakeholders

8 — Implement robust **monitoring, evaluation**, and **adaptive management** of biodiversity
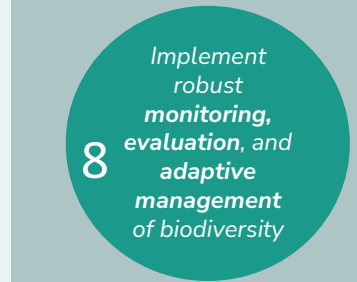
Ecosystem Integrity 5-star system sub-attributes
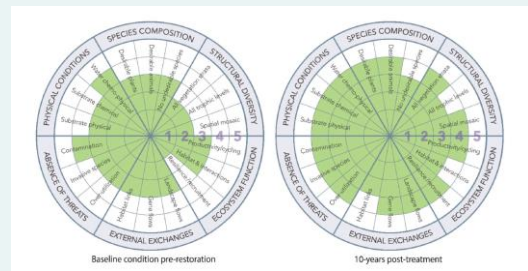
5-star level of Protection Ratings
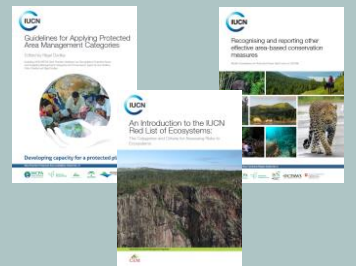
Adapted from the Social Benefits Wheel

Robust Management List

Baseline condition pre-restoration — 10-years post-treatment

Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories
Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures
An Introduction to the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems: Developing capacity for a protected pl...

Restoration Project Information Sharing Framework
A resource for coordinated monitoring and reporting on ecosystem restoration
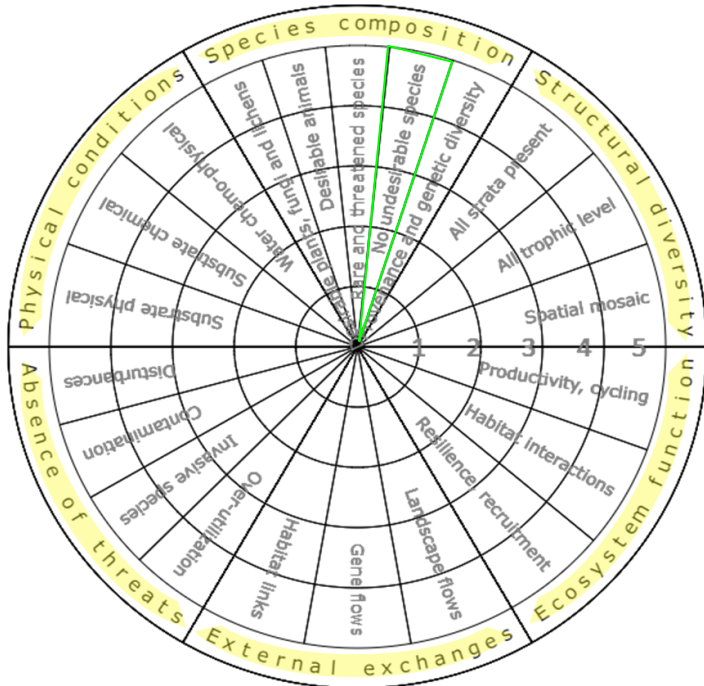
Each sub-attribute is assessed using a five star rating system

e.g. No undesirable species, one of the sub-attributes of 'Species composition' used in Criteria 1 and 5

The Ecological Recovery Wheel
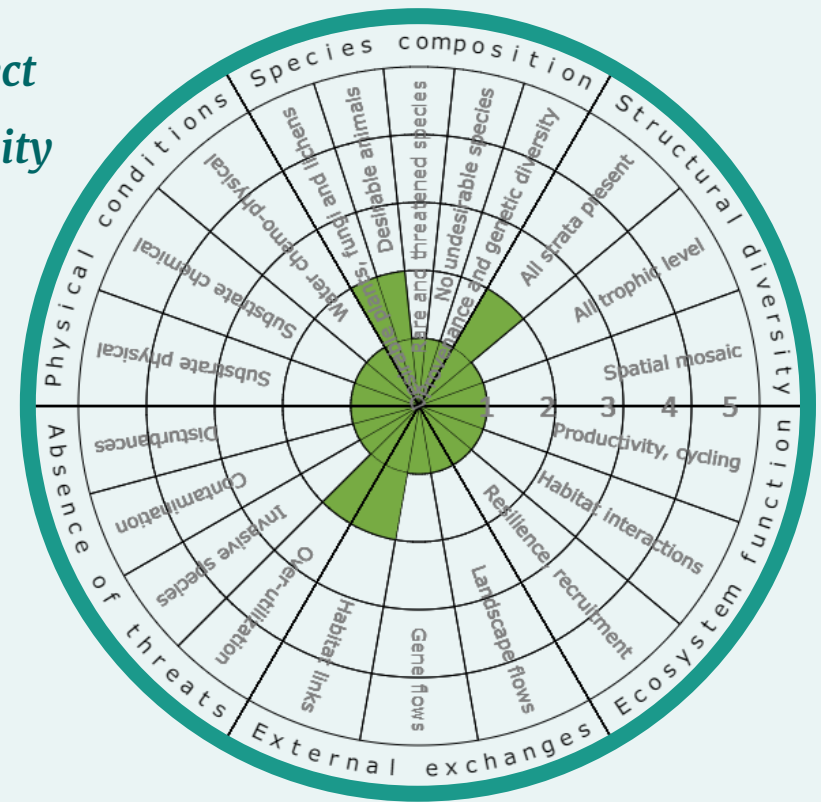Criterion 1: Select appropriate sites and enhance native biodiversity

Five star rating system for 'No undesirable species'

Zero stars	One star (★)	Two stars (★★)	Three stars (★★★)	Four stars (★★★★)	Five stars (★★★★★)
Extremely high levels of nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants (e.g. ≥75% relative species richness), or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).	Very high levels of nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants (e.g. ≥50% relative species richness), or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).	High to moderate levels of nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants (e.g. ≥25% relative species richness), or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).	Moderate to low levels of nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants (e.g. <25% relative species richness), or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).	Low to very low levels of nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants (e.g. <5% relative species richness), or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).	Very low to nil nonnative, invasive or other undesirable plants, or nonnative or undesirable animals (e.g. harmful livestock).

E.g. Assessment process for Criterion 1: *Select appropriate sites and enhance native biodiversity*

➢ six attributes (e.g. Species composition)
➢ twenty-one sub-attributes (e.g. Spatial mosaic)

1) Establish reference model for ecosystem

2) For each sub-attribute use relevant indicators to assess baseline against reference model and award baseline star rating (0-5)

3) Repeat to assess current condition of each sub-attribute and award current star rating (0-5)

4) Note change in star rating (baseline v current)

5) Award points score for sub-attribute based on change in star rating or improving biodiversity trajectory (see next page)

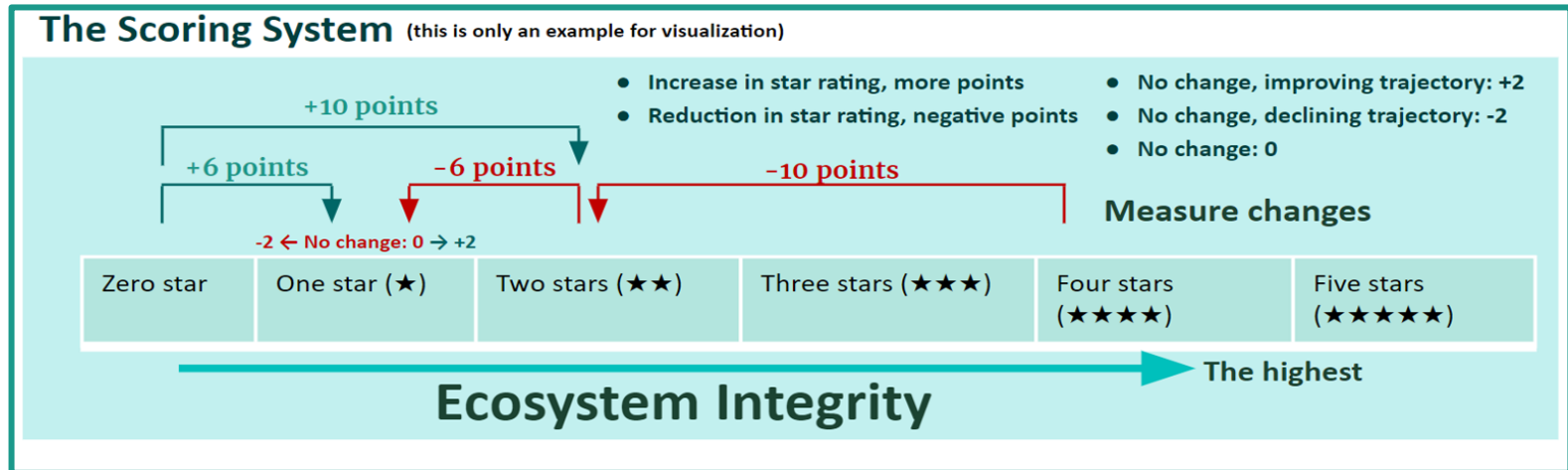6) Take average of points score for all sub-attributes to calculate overall score for Criterion 1

The Ecological Recovery Wheel
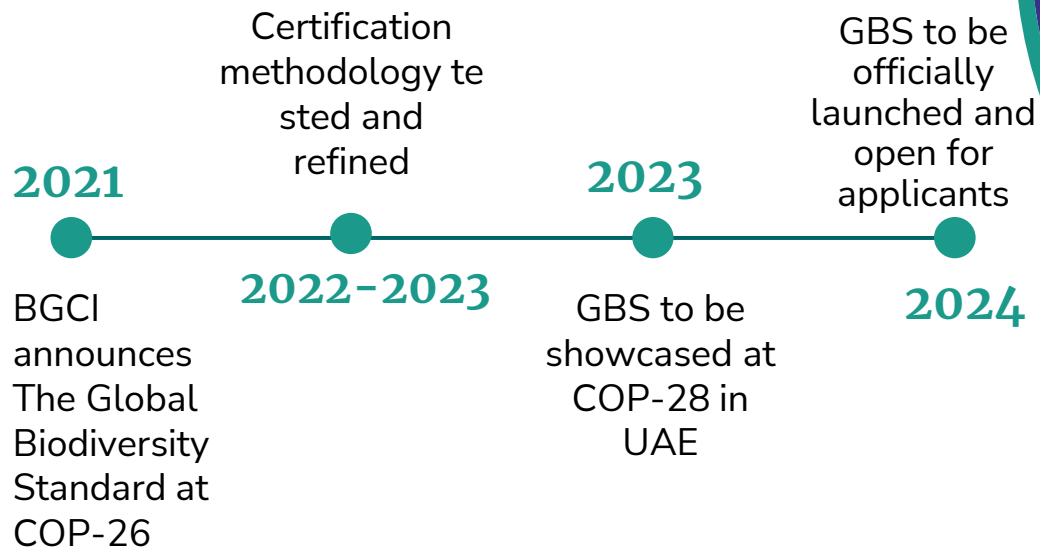Criterion 1: Select appropriate areas and enhance biodiversity

Ecological Recovery Wheel for GBS using template developed by L. Gallet, based on Gann et al. (2019), McDonald et al. (2016), and the online recovery wheel by S. Pedrini, with support from PEPPS research program, Laboratoire Géoarchitecture, Univ. Brest, S. Gallet, Coordinator

Assessment & certification scoring system

Scoring system for each sub-attribute	Increase in rating level of two or more stars = 10 points	Increase in rating level of one star = 6 points	Improving biodiversity outcome (but insufficient to change star rating) = 2 points
Scoring system for each of the criteria	Add scores for each sub-attribute, average per attribute and take average to get score out of 10		
Overall score for site	Add scores for all criteria, take average and multiply by 10 to get percentage score (out of 100%)		
Certification	Basic: 60%, Advanced: 75%, Elite: 90%		

The Scoring System (this is only an example for visualization)

+10 points
+6 points
−6 points
−10 points

- Increase in star rating, more points
- Reduction in star rating, negative points

- No change, improving trajectory: +2
- No change, declining trajectory: −2
- No change: 0

−2 ← No change: 0 → +2

Measure changes

| Zero star | One star (★) | Two stars (★★) | Three stars (★★★) | Four stars (★★★★) | Five stars (★★★★★) |

Ecosystem Integrity → The highest

Timeline for development

2021
BGCI announces The Global Biodiversity Standard at COP-26

Certification methodology tested and refined

2022–2023

2023
GBS to be showcased at COP-28 in UAE

GBS to be officially launched and open for applicants

2024

The Global Biodiversity Standard

Thank you!