SESSION AGENDA (Updated as of 11 November)

One Nature, Three COPs: Financing Nature Solutions for Climate, Biodiversity, and Land

A side event organized by the Asian Development Bank through the Nature Solutions Finance Hub

Antalya Expo Center, Antalya, Türkiye • 17 November 2026 • 9:30–10:30 a.m. (GMT+3)

1. Background and Context

Climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation are interconnected challenges addressed through the three Rio Conventions: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Their solutions often converge in the same landscapes and communities. For example, restoring degraded land can store carbon, protect habitats, secure water, and sustain livelihoods at the same time. Yet commitments are made and tracked in separate processes, and finance still tends to arrive project by project. Translating the three sets of commitments into integrated, bankable investments is the defining challenge.

This year marks a special occurrence where the three conventions' conferences happen together in close sequence: UNCCD COP17 on 17–28 August (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia), CBD COP17 on 19–30 October (Yerevan, Armenia), and UNFCCC COP31 on 9–20 November (Antalya, Türkiye). As the last of the three, COP31 is a natural moment to ask what it takes to finance what the first two have set in motion, and to show that the agendas meet in investment.

Nature-based solutions (NbS) are practical bridges. Investment in conservation, restoration, and sustainable land management can deliver climate, biodiversity, food and water security, and livelihood benefits together. Scaling NbS requires strong country priorities, better project preparation, de-risking instruments, and coordinated action among governments, multilateral development banks (MDBs), technical partners, and private sector.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB)-led Nature Solutions Finance Hub (NSFH), launched at UNFCCC COP28 in 2023, was created to close this gap. Its mandate is to catalyze $5 billion in nature-positive investment by 2030 across Asia and the Pacific, using blended finance, project preparation support, and market-building tools to turn NbS into investable assets.

At UNCCD COP17, ADB and partners launched the Financing Investments and Eradicating Land Degradation and Desertification (FIELD) initiative, a land restoration and drought resilience window under the NSFH. FIELD aims to attract at least $2 billion by 2035 and to bring about 1 million hectares under sustainable land management. At CBD COP17, NSFH launched the Nature Bond Incubator and the Capacity Building Platform on Nature Finance for Central Banks and Financial Regulators, both of which advance innovative financing for nature.

This side event brings that experience to COP31, as well as the lessons on prioritizing biodiversity and nature financing from the recent CBD COP17. Together, the session presents the perspectives of governments hosting the first two COPs (Mongolia and Armenia) with those of MDBs and technical partners, to show what a financing partnership around country priorities looks like in practice.

2. Why This Event, Why Now

By the time delegates reach Antalya, the first two COPs of 2026 will have produced commitments, initiatives, and announcements. The question that COP31 can further elaborate is what turns them into capital flowing to programs and projects on the ground. This event is designed to answer working examples.

The storyline the panel builds together is the following: convention commitments become investment when country priorities are turned into investable landscapes, and when institutions organize their capital around a shared pipeline. Each partner brings something distinct:

- **Mongolia** brings country experience as host of UNCCD COP17: land degradation neutrality priorities, the Steppe Plan, and the investment opportunities that follow.
- **Armenia** brings the perspective of the CBD COP17 host on linking biodiversity, land, and climate priorities at country level.
- **ADB's NSFH** is a multi-partner initiative that brings together multiple donors and partners to increase investment in nature across Asia and the Pacific. The Hub supports integrating nature into decision-making and structures financing to crowd in private capital.
- **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** anchors the model in science-based standards and evidence that keep nature investment credible and scalable.
- **European Investment Bank (EIB)** bring MDB lending, blended and guarantee instruments, and experience structuring land and forest programs at scale, including in Mongolia.
- **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)** brings experience designing financing structures that mobilize private and philanthropic capital for nature.
- **OPEC Fund for International Development (OPEC Fund)** brings cofinancing and the partner perspective on what makes platforms like NSFH and FIELD work.
- **GIZ** brings technical cooperation and project preparation experience that makes nature projects bankable.
- **The EU** brings the donor perspective on what makes multi-partner platforms work and how they can be scaled.

Presented together, this is the panel's core argument: the path from convention commitment to investment is not a single transaction but a replicable model that other countries, MDBs, and financiers can plug into.

3. Objectives

- **Connect the three COPs through investment:** demonstrate how NbS can jointly support climate, biodiversity, land restoration, and development goals.
- **Show what works at scale:** elicit concrete examples of NbS investments, financing mechanisms, enabling conditions, and replicable partnership models.
- **Build practical partnerships:** identify opportunities for governments, technical partners, and financial institutions to jointly originate and finance integrated NbS pipelines.
- **Share lessons from the host countries:** bring the experience of the UNCCD COP17 and CBD COP17 hosts into the COP31 conversation, focusing on early results and lessons rather than restating commitments.

4. Key Messages

1. **One nature, one investment agenda.** The same landscapes deliver climate, biodiversity, and land outcomes. Integrated investment in NbS is more efficient than financing each convention's goals separately.
2. **From convention commitments to country action.** Country-led priorities are the starting point. Mongolia's COP17 experience shows how spatial priorities, economic analysis, and project preparation lead to an investable pipeline.
3. **Partnership is the key multiplier for scaling.** Platforms such as the NSFH and FIELD allow governments, MDBs, technical partners, and financiers to originate and finance together. What works can be replicated by others.

5. Target Audience

ADB developing member countries; MDB and DFI representatives; bilateral and multilateral partners; conservation and technical organizations; and private and institutional investors active or interested in nature-positive finance.

6. Agenda

Note: The session recording will be available after the event through the event page.

TIME	SEGMENT AND SPEAKERS
9:30–9:35	Welcome Remarks and Setting the Scene **Yoko Watanabe**, Director, Nature and Environment, ADB
9:35–9:40	Host Country Perspective – Key Takeaways from UNCCD COP17 **Mandakh Namkhairenchin**, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Mongolia
9:40–9:45	Host Country Perspective – Messages from CBD COP17 **Nona Budoyan**, Head of Climate Policy Department, Ministry of Environment, Government Armenia
9:45–10:10	Panel Discussion – Connecting the Three COPs through Capital: Financing Nature Solutions at Scale Panelists: 1. **Stewart Maginnis**, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) 2. **Eva Mayerhofer**, Head of the Sustainability and Climate Policy Implementation Unit, European Investment Bank 3. **Felipe Lesmes-Palacio**, Policy Advisor for Conservation Finance, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) 4. **Gerry Parco**, Director of Sustainability and Climate Change, OPEC Fund for International Development 5. **Nicole Kranz**, Cluster Coordinator, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) Moderator: **Yoko Watanabe**, Director, Nature and Environment, ADB
10:10–10:25	Audience Interaction Discussion will examine practical barriers, partnerships, and replication
10:25–10:30	Closing Remarks **Jessika Roswall**, Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, European Commission

7. Speakers (in order of appearance)

Yoko Watanabe
Director, Nature and Environment, ADB



Yoko Watanabe is the Director of Nature and Environment at the Asian Development Bank. She heads the environment and nature initiatives, including biodiversity, nature-based solutions, nature finance, air quality, and circular economy.

She has over 30 years of experience working on biodiversity, nature, and environment. She has held key positions at the Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, and WWF. She has strategically managed large teams and worked on environment projects and programs in over 130 countries.

Ms. Watanabe is a Japanese national and holds a master's degree in international development with a focus on environment management.

Mandakh Namkhairenchin
Director General, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Mongolia



Dr. Mandakh Namkhairinchen is Director General of the Policy Planning Department at Mongolia's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, where he oversees policy planning and coordination in the environmental and climate sectors. His expertise spans public policy, environmental and climate governance, public finance, and institutional coordination.

As for his academic research and publications, these focused on environmental financing, local budget allocations for environmental protection, and fiscal transfer mechanisms, including financing for Mongolia's specially protected areas. Dr. Namkhairinchen's experience is particularly relevant to advancing integrated approaches to climate action, sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation, with an emphasis on translating policy priorities into effective planning, financing, and implementation.

He holds a PhD in Public Administration from the National Academy of Governance of Mongolia and a Master of Environmental Law from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Nona Budoyan
Head of Climate Policy Department,
Ministry of Environment, Government of Armenia



Nona Budoyan is the Head of the Climate Policy Department at the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Armenia and Secretary of the Intergovernmental Council on Climate Change.

She leads the development and implementation of Armenia's national climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies, action plans, and regulatory frameworks, while overseeing efforts to fulfill the country's international climate commitments.

She holds a Master's degree in Chemistry and Environmental Science from Yerevan State University and has about 20 years of professional experience in the environmental sector.

Stewart Maginnis
Deputy Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



Stewart Maginnis has worked in sustainable development and biodiversity conservation for over 37 years. He has lived for extensive periods in Tanzania, Sudan, Ghana, and Costa Rica, undertaking conservation fieldwork. He led the development and promotion of forest landscape restoration (FLR)—one of the first "purpose-built" nature-based solutions, to which over 60 countries have committed more than 210 million hectares under the Bonn Challenge. He and his team at IUCN have worked over the last 14 years on defining and promoting the concept of nature-based solutions and supporting its application to climate change, food, and water security and disaster risk reduction.

Mr. Maginnis was educated at Oxford University and Queen's University Belfast.

Eva Mayerhofer
Head of the Sustainability and Climate Policy Implementation Unit,
European Investment Bank



Eva Mayerhofer is the Head of the Sustainability and Climate Policy Implementation Unit and Biodiversity Lead of the European Investment Bank (EIB). She manages the team responsible for the EIB's environmental, climate and social safeguards, the green and gender attribution of projects, and the development of the biodiversity and nature agenda, including developing business models and financing instruments to support nature-positive investments and drive natural capital transformation.

Prior to joining the EIB, she was an environment specialist at the Asian Development Bank. She has over 20 years of experience in environmental impact assessment, natural resource management, and biodiversity conservation and has worked extensively across Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa with various development agencies and projects.

Felipe Lesmes-Palacio
Policy Advisor for Conservation Finance,
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)



Felipe Lesmes-Palacio is a Policy Advisor for Conservation Finance at The Nature Conservancy's global team, where he works on climate and biodiversity finance policies with a particular emphasis on domestic resource mobilization. He supports global and regional policy engagement and contributes to TNC's Nature Bonds program, an innovative approach that channels debt refinancing toward conservation and sustainable development outcomes. Originally from Colombia, Mr. Lesmes-Palacio specializes in advancing finance solutions that support the priorities of countries across the Global South.

Gerardo Parco
Director of Sustainability and Climate Change, OPEC Fund for International Development



Gerry Parco is the Director of the Sustainability and Climate Change Unit at the OPEC Fund for International Development, where he leads a team managing the environmental and social safeguards and climate requirements of investment projects for both the sovereign and nonsovereign portfolio of OPEC Fund. His portfolio of projects spans Asia and the Pacific (particularly South Asia and Central Asia), Latin America, and Africa. These projects are mainly high-risk infrastructure projects such as dams, renewable energy (wind and solar), expressways, urban projects, etc. His work with the private sector covers financial intermediaries, trade finance operations, private equity firms, and corporate loans.

Nicole Kranz
Cluster Coordinator, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)



Dr. Nicole Kranz currently heads the Climate Action and Disaster Resilience project cluster at GIZ Philippines and Pacific Island Countries. Prior to this role, she has held various managing and technical positions with GIZ, including as Programme Director for a multi-country climate diplomacy project on behalf of the European Union. She was also the Head of Country Operations in South Africa for the International Water Stewardship Initiative, advising the Southern African Development Community on transboundary water management issues. She also served as the seconded expert to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment during the German 2017 G20 presidency as well as to the United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation. She has ample experience as a consultant on European and international environmental policy issues.

Dr. Kranz received her training as an environmental scientist in Germany and the United States and holds a doctorate in political sciences.

Jessika Roswall
Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, European Commission



Jessika Roswall started her mandate as Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy on December 2024. Prior to her nomination for the post of Commissioner, she was Sweden's Minister for EU Affairs from October 2022 to September 2024, during the time Sweden held the EU presidency. Between 2010 and 2022, she served as a member of the Swedish Parliament, holding the position of second vice-president of its EU affairs committee from 2019 to 2022.

A Swedish national, Ms. Roswall holds a law degree from Uppsala University. After graduating in 2002, she worked as a lawyer from 2002 to 2010.

Note: Event materials (e.g., session recording, flyer, etc.), will be made available through the session's event page here or visit the NSFH Data Room for more knowledge products and updates.