

# Terms of references for the Enlarged Stakeholder Board

Updated in June 2025

## I. Mission statement

The role of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board is to ensure that a broad range of views from academic and non-academic stakeholders in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and Nature-based Solutions research and innovation are carefully accounted for, reinforce the relevance and added-value of the Biodiversa+ activities and promote the uptake of its outputs.

The Enlarged Stakeholder Board is informed about the main activities and outputs of Biodiversa+. It can contribute to the identification and co-building of research and innovation needs to be addressed by Biodiversa+. The members of this Board also bring their own field expertise to contribute to bridging the gaps between research and innovation, and to improve science-policy/science-society interfacing.

When relevant, the ESB members contribute to the dissemination of information on Biodiversa+ and its activities towards scientific bodies, institutes and networks or societies, as well as stakeholders and stakeholder organisations or networks.

## II. Composition and membership

### Composition

The Enlarged Stakeholder Board is organised under 6 different thematic colleges, representing the different broad stakeholder types to engage with, namely:

- Habitat, species and nature conservation (including major initiatives in the field of conservation and protection of biodiversity)
- Economic and industrial activities (including representatives from private companies and industries from the main economic sectors concerned by biodiversity issues)
- Relations with the public (including organisations dealing with citizen science, science, media, popularisation for the general public, etc.)
- Wild and domestic genetic resources
- European policy makers (including European Commission representatives from different DGs (de facto, DG R&I and DG ENV will be included), members of the European Parliament, etc.)
- Boundary organisations (science/policy)

### Membership and chairmanship

Membership is open, upon application of interested organisations, and subject to a shortlisting by the Executive Board and approval of the General Assembly. The Board is renewed every 3.5 years, through a public call for interest to which all relevant organisations are free to apply. Membership of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board is to organisations, which are free to choose their attending representative.

One representative and one alternate will be elected per college, by the members of each college, for a mandate of 3.5 years, renewable up to three times, to be the stakeholder members of the Advisory Board and to attend the General Assembly meeting as observers. The position of the six representatives, and their six alternates, are nominative (personal). The representatives are expected to attend Advisory Board and the Project's General Assembly meetings, and can be replaced by their alternate if needed.

They are elected by the members of their respective colleges according to the voting principles described in section III of the present Annex.

Among the six representatives, one will be elected Chair of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board and will act as Vice-Chair of the Advisory Board. He/she is elected by the members of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board according to the voting principles described in section III of the present Annex.

Significant changes in the nature or sector of activity of a given member organization, including mergers and divisions, requires a new application from the organization, if interested.

### **III. Meetings, working and voting principles**

#### Meetings and working principles

The Enlarged Stakeholder Board meets at least once a year and works preferably by consensus, with the possibility of organising a vote when required (see below). All members are invited to the annual meetings. Intersessional meetings may be organised in plenary or in smaller capacity based on colleges topics or on transversal topics of interest for the Board and/or for Biodiversa+.

Annual meetings of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board are organized as plenary sessions (whole board) and/or parallel college-specific sessions, as appropriate. The meetings and plenary sessions are chaired by the Chair of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board, and sessions in colleges are chaired by their respective representatives.

The Chair is responsible for the organization of the meetings – with support from the Operational Team and in particular the Operational Managers and Stakeholder Engagement Officer . This includes proposing topics and agendas, chairing the meeting and checking the records of the meetings prepared by the Operational Team.

#### Voting principles

As a principle, the colleges and Enlarged Stakeholder Board will work by consensus.

However, a voting procedure applies for the election of representatives of the six colleges and their alternates, attending the Advisory Board as stakeholder members, as well as for the Chair of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board. The voting procedure is as follows:

- Each member organisation present at the meeting has a maximum of one vote (no matter the number of representatives);
- A member of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board can grant a power of attorney to another member to represent him/her.
- The quorum is set to ½ of the Board members present or having given a power of attorney.
- Decisions shall be taken using a two-round system allowing to elect a single winner. The following procedure will be used:
  - In the first round, each Enlarged Stakeholder Board member will have the possibility to vote for his/her favourite candidate. If no candidate has an absolute majority of votes (i.e. more than half) in the first round, then the two candidates with the most votes proceed to a second round.
  - In the second round, each Enlarged Stakeholder Board member will again have the possibility to vote his/her favourite candidate. The candidate obtaining the absolute majority wins the election.

#### IV. Code of conduct and conflicts of interest

A member of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board shall not participate in any decision where a situation or circumstance of personal or professional nature can compromise his/her availability to decide in the interest of best performing his/her objectives and tasks, and must leave the room on this particular agenda point. If the member of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board considers himself/herself to be in a situation of potential conflict of interest he/she should raise the issue with the Chair, who shall inform the other members and decide on whether the member potentially in conflict of interest may participate in the discussion.

Membership in the Enlarged Stakeholder Board does not a priori prevent to be involved as financial beneficiaries of the Project, including but not limited to calls for research proposals, calls for tenders and subcontracting launched by the Project, or as members of evaluation committees.

#### Model code of conduct to be signed by the Members of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board

Biodiversity is the basis of life on Earth. Yet, it is being lost at an unprecedented rate and the future does not look bright. Bringing back biodiversity and the services it provides on a path to recovery is complex and calls for deep systemic changes in policy, society and economy.

In this context, we need actionable knowledge of how nature works, and how its values and benefits can be safeguarded. This is why national research programmers and funders and environmental policy actors across Europe have joined forces with the European Commission to form a European Biodiversity Partnership: Biodiversa+.

Biodiversa+ gathers these partners around 5 objectives:

1. Plan and support research and innovation on biodiversity through a shared strategy, annual joint calls for research projects and capacity building activities;
2. Set up a network of harmonised schemes to improve monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services across Europe;
3. Contribute to high-end knowledge for deploying Nature-based Solutions and valuation of biodiversity in the private sector;
4. Ensure efficient science-based support for policy-making and implementation in Europe;
5. Strengthen European research on biodiversity in the global context.

Close engagement and collaboration with stakeholders will be crucial to address how, and to what extent research and innovation can promote societal transformation, and what societal and transformative changes are needed to reach the Partnership objectives.

#### Engaging in Biodiversa+ and the Enlarged Stakeholder Board

In practice, the Partnership will engage with key collaborators and stakeholders throughout its activities. The central meeting place for following up and engaging in activities of the Partnership will be the Enlarged Stakeholder Board. Its purpose is to ensure that a broad range of views from academic and non-academic stakeholders in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and Nature-Based Solutions research and innovation are carefully accounted for in Partnership activities, to reinforce their relevance and added value and to promote the uptake of Partnership outputs.

The Board membership goes to organisations, which are free to choose their attending representative.

Being part of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board allows you to contribute to the identification and the co-building of research and innovation needs and follow opportunities and developments of European R&I on biodiversity, ecosystem services and Nature-Based Solutions. The members of this Board also bring their own specific fields of expertise to contribute to bridging the gaps between research and innovation, and to improve science-policy/science-society interfacing.

Becoming a member of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board means that your organisation:

- Becomes part of a multi-cultural and multi-sector forum committed to boosting the excellence of biodiversity research in Europe, bringing nature back into our lives, and that contributes to bringing Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery over the next decade;
- Is committed to supporting the implementation of the European Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and all of its objectives, by building the bridge between science, policy and practice;
- Understands the mission of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board, agrees to fulfil the roles and specific responsibilities related to the Enlarged Stakeholder membership, and agrees to the meeting and working principles of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board as listed below (Annex I);
- Understand that your organisation does not have to pay any fee to be part of the Enlarged Stakeholder Board;
- Understand that should any travel be required for attending the ESB meetings, the costs can be covered by the Partnership;
- Understands that the baseline investment as Board member is for at least one representative to prepare for and attend one annual meeting per year;
- Understand that the Board composition and membership can be subject to modifications at the initiative of the General Assembly, including adding new members or terminating ongoing memberships should the conditions for membership not be met by the organisation.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, by adding your signature you hereby accept that \_\_\_\_\_ becomes a member of the Biodiversa+ Enlarged Stakeholder Board until 1 September 2025, and that you have read and agree with the membership implications.

Organisation full name:

List of appointed representatives (name(s), email(s) and position(s)):

Signatory full name and position:

Date:

Signature: