Brazil Mangrove Strategy 2026-2036

Wetlands INTERNATIONAL

Credit: Clemente Coelho Junio

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Cover Photo:
A woman harvests mangrove oysters on the Caratingui River, in Cairu.
[Nacho Doce/Reuters]

Executive Summary

Brazil holds approximately 7% of the world's mangroves—1.4 million hectares of globally significant coastal ecosystems that sustain biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience, and support the livelihoods of more than 500,000 coastal families. Although Brazil has a strong legal and policy framework, and most mangroves fall within protected areas, important implementation gaps persist, while pressures from expanding economic activities and climate change continue to grow.

These gaps are driven by a set of interconnected barriers: uneven management capacity within the protected area system; limited and fragile participation of Indigenous, traditional and fishing communities; fragmented sectoral planning and weak integration of mangroves into territorial and licensing processes; inconsistent application of science-based restoration practices; and insufficient, poorly aligned long-term finance. Addressing these systemic barriers is essential to halt degradation and unlock large-scale, durable impact.

Wetlands International's 2026 – 2036 Mangrove Strategy for Brazil responds to this moment. Our overall goal is to unlock transformative mangrove actions across Brazil through a landscape and inclusive approach that bridges knowledge, policy, and practice to deliver lasting gains for people, biodiversity, and climate.

The strategy focuses on closing the implementation gap through six mutually reinforcing enablers: **coordinated collective action, effective governance, policy coherence, enhanced capacity, sustainable finance, and actionable knowledge**. In parallel with these enabling conditions, our strategy will be anchored through an **on-the-ground action framework,** which combines conservation mechanisms, ecosystem-based restoration, biodiversity protection, sustainable mangrove-based economies, and engagement with economic drivers.

As a founding member of the Global Mangrove Alliance and co-architect of the Mangrove Breakthrough, Wetlands International connects Brazil's mangrove agenda to global climate and biodiversity commitments, helping mobilise technical expertise, partnerships, and investment.

Targeted donor support at this stage can be catalytic—leveraging national momentum, scaling community-led and science-based solutions, and positioning Brazil as a global leader in transformative mangrove conservation.

Jaguar in mangroves - Bernard Dupont

1. Introduction

Brazil hosts one of the largest and most diverse mangrove systems on Earth, covering approximately 1.4 million hectares[1] along nearly its entire coastline and representing around 7% of the world's mangroves. These ecosystems are globally significant for biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, and coastal resilience, while sustaining fisheries, food security, and livelihoods for hundreds of thousands of coastal families.

Yet despite their importance, Brazil's mangroves remain under increasing pressure and are being lost at rates that risk accelerating under climate change.

In 2025, **Wetlands International Brazil/Mupan - Mulheres em Ação no Pantanal, together with Instituto BiomaBrasil**, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the state of mangroves in Brazil.

Drawing on stakeholder consultations, scientific literature, field-based analysis, and spatial data from our Global Mangrove Watch[2], the assessment identified critical gaps between strong policy ambition and effective implementation on the ground[3].

Manguezal do Rio Mamucuba, Apa Costa dos Corais - Thiago Hara

Wetlands International's Mangrove Strategy for Brazil, co-created with our partner Instituto Bioma Brasil, sets out our institutional approach for our ambition in Brazil over the next ten years, providing a coherent framework to guide programmatic engagement, partnerships, and investment.

The overall goal of our strategy is to unlock transformative mangrove actions across Brazil through a landscape and inclusive approach that bridges knowledge, policy, and practice to deliver lasting gains for people, biodiversity and climate.

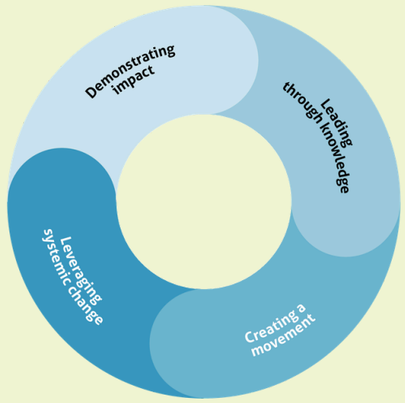

Figure 1. Wetlands International impact pathways

This approach and action plan for Brazilian mangroves is closely aligned with our organizational strategy Wetlands for Life (2026-2035)[4], focused on triggering transformative change for wetlands in support of people, biodiversity and climate. We will achieve this through four interconnected impact pathways: **Demonstrating Impact, Leading through Knowledge, Creating a Movement and Leveraging Systemic Change** (Figure1).

The Strategy will rely on strong collaborations with local communities, academics, different levels of government and with members of the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA), a global partnership co-founded by Wetlands International in 2018.

It also directly contributes to the ambition of the Mangrove Breakthrough, which seeks to maintain the world's remaining mangroves, expand protection, and restore at least half of recent losses by 2030. Through our multi-stakeholder approach, our objective is to enable stakeholders in Brazil to reach this common goal.

In our strategy, **we outline why mangroves in Brazil are important** and **why urgent action is needed** to halt the loss and degradation of these precious coastal forests. **We map barriers to effective mangrove management and identify approaches to turn these into enablers** that drive large-scale conservation, restoration and sustainable mangrove-based economic activities on the ground.

Our strategy is not exclusive to mangroves and takes a landscape approach, working on associated and ecologically connected ecosystems for an integral management of coastal ecosystems.

Targeted donor investment at this moment can be catalytic. By supporting this strategy, partners can help prevent, stop, and reverse mangrove degradation — supporting Brazil to close the implementation gap, scale community-led and science-based conservation and restoration, and secure lasting benefits for climate, biodiversity, and coastal livelihoods with national impact and global relevance.

Mangrove Breakthrough

The Mangrove Breakthrough (MB) is a strategic call to action for systemic change, aiming to redefine how mangroves are valued and financed across all sectors and geographies, and enabling state and non-state actors to work together towards a common objective.

Its four objectives are to halt anthropogenic mangrove loss, double the global area of mangroves under protection, restore half of the mangroves that have been lost, and mobilize $4 billion to secure the future of 15 million hectares of mangroves by 2030. By shifting from short-term fixes to systemic, long-term investment, we ensure mangroves are financed, protected, further studied, and fully integrated into global economic and climate frameworks.

For Brazil this target translates as:

- **Restoration goal: 22,715 ha**
- **Conservation goal: 1,027,323 ha**

Wetlands International is one of five founding members of the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) which, together with the UN Climate Champions, launched the Mangrove Breakthrough in 2024.

As of January 2026, 29 countries and 19 sub-regional governments have endorsed the Breakthrough, which together host over 60% of the world mangrove forests. In Brazil, the federal government endorsed the Breakthrough at UNOC in Nice and 7 coastal states (Amapá, Pará, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, Maranhão and Sergipe) have endorsed the MB.

1 MMA, 2024
2 Global Mangrove Alliance: https://www.globalmangrovewatch.org/ :
3 Coelho Junior et al., 2025
4 https://www.wetlands.org/blog/wetlands-for-life-our-new-strategy/

2. Mangroves in Brazil: the need for action

2.1 Why mangroves matter in Brazil

Brazilian mangroves are critical for biodiversity, providing nursery, feeding, and refuge habitats for a wide range of fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and other wildlife including manatees, river dolphins, scarlet ibises, and numerous migratory shorebirds. They sustain ecological connectivity between rivers, estuaries, and coastal waters that underpin fisheries and coastal food webs[4].

These ecosystems provide food security and livelihoods for over 500,000 coastal families, supporting artisanal fisheries, crab harvesting, and community-based tourism[5]. Indigenous peoples, Quilombola, Traditional Communities as well as artisanal fishing communities, and shellfish collectors are key stewards of mangrove ecosystems and depend directly on their health for their livelihood, identities and sustenance, as recognized by the National Decree 143/2002. Under Brazilian law, based on the ratification of ILO Convention 169, Free, Prior and Informed Consultation (FPIC) is mandatory before adopting legislative or administrative measures that may directly affect Indigenous Peoples or traditional communities.

Brazilian mangroves are also powerful natural climate allies, storing and capturing large amounts of carbon in their biomass and soils. Estimates indicate that Brazilian mangroves accumulate 12 tonnes of CO_{2eq} per hectare annually[6].

Although covering a small fraction of Brazil's territory, their soils store 2–3 times more carbon per unit area than Amazonian forests and contribute annually to 13.6 % of the carbon buried in the world's mangroves[7].

Mangroves also reduce coastal erosion, buffer storm surges, and protect infrastructure, benefits increasingly vital under climate change.

2.2 Ecological Characterization

Brazilian mangroves can be found along almost the entire coastline of Brazil, covering approximately 1.4 million hectares — this represents 7% of mangroves worldwide. Along this living green belt, mangroves change in form, density, and function as climate, rivers, tides, and coastal landscapes change. These forests are occupied by diverse species including *Avicennia germinans*, *Avicennia schaueriana*, *Laguncularia racemosa*, *Rhizophora harrisonii*, *Rhizophora mangle*, and *Rhizophora racemosa*[8].

In the humid, river-dominated north, forests are tall, continuous, and highly productive; further south, mangroves become more fragmented, growing in sheltered estuaries and lagoons where freshwater and saltwater meet.

These changes can be grouped into eight segments represented in three Lage Marine Ecosystems: **North Brazil Shelf, the Tropical Southwestern Atlantic and the Warm Temperate Southwestern Atlantic**[9]. (Figure 2)

4 ICMBio, 2018; 2023
5 Owuor et al., 2024
6 SIMACLIM. 2025
7 Rovai et al. 2016
8 Cintrón-Molero & Schaeffer-Novelli,1981; Schaeffer-Novelli, et al.1990; Soares et al., 2012

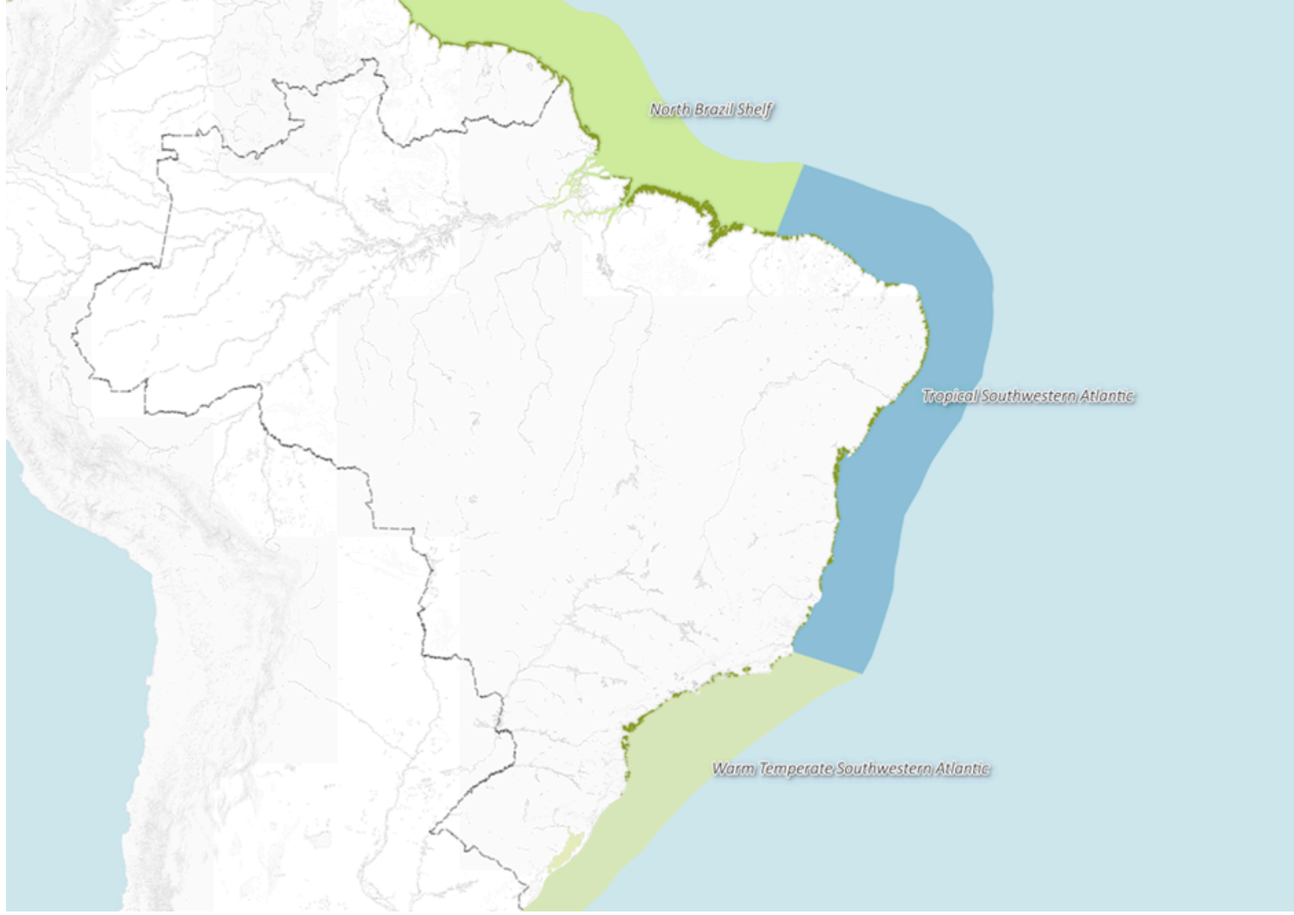

Figure 2. Ecological zones of the Brazilian coastline

2.3 Pressure & Threats to Mangroves

Since the early 20th century, Brazil has lost 25-40% of its original mangrove area — approximately 100,000 hectares — mainly in the Southeast and South Coasts. Drivers of loss vary according to the region[10].

In the **North Brazil Shelf**, mangroves remain extensive and less fragmented, but pressures are growing. Road expansion is opening remote areas, enabling land conversion for agriculture and aquaculture.

Overfishing is increasing, and extractive activities such as salt and clay mining replaced mangroves and are a source of waste. The region is also facing emerging risks from oil and gas exploration and potential spills along the Equatorial Margin.

In the **Tropical Southwestern Atlantic**, mangroves are more densely populated and heavily used. Shrimp farming, urban expansion, and infrastructure development have transformed many estuaries. Pollution from cities, industry and agriculture is a major issue.

This region has also experienced major environmental disasters, including the Fundão dam collapse in 2015 and the large offshore oil spill in 2019, which affected extensive coastal ecosystems.

9 Schaeffer-Novelli et al, 2000
10 Coelho Junior et al., 2025

In the **Southwestern Atlantic** (warm-temperate region), mangroves occur mainly in sheltered bays and lagoons on a highly urbanized coastline. Here, real estate development, tourism infrastructure, industrial activities, and port expansion are key drivers of habitat loss and degradation. Pollution and overexploitation of resources further stress these systems, often leading to conflicts with traditional communities.

Across all regions, climate change is emerging as an increasingly significant pressure on mangroves, exacerbating existing threats through sea-level rise, changes in rainfall and river discharge, rising temperatures, and more frequent extreme events. In many areas, mangroves' natural ability to adapt—by migrating inland and adjusting sediment dynamics—is constrained by coastal infrastructure, land conversion, and altered hydrology, increasing their vulnerability over time and undermining their capacity to continue delivering critical climate regulation and adaptation functions.

2.4 What is already happening, and what is not?

Mangroves in Brazil are embedded in national climate and biodiversity strategies, and the Government of Brazil endorsed the Mangrove Breakthrough in 2025. NGOs partners are uniting in a national chapter of the Global Mangrove Alliance, a global collective of NGOs, co-founded by Wetlands International a few years back. Innovative finance mechanisms and national programs such as the National Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Mangroves in Brazil (ProManguezal) are generating more momentum.

Brazil benefits from one of the strongest legal frameworks for mangrove protection globally. Mangroves are classified as **Permanent Preservation Areas** under the Protection of Native Vegetation Law.

In addition, **90% of mangroves are located within Conservation Units (CUs)** (MMA, 2024) as defined through national law. Conservation Units can be created and administered by federal, state, and municipal governments. They are managed by the Ministry of Environment, through the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBIO).

CUs are divided into two groups: Strict Protection Units (*Unidades de Proteção Integral*), focused on environmental conservation, where only the indirect use of their natural resources is legally permitted; and Sustainable Use Units (*Unidades de Uso Sustentável*), aimed at reconciling environmental conservation with the sustainable use of their goods and services. These two main categories are further divided into 12 subcategories that further define what sort of use is and isn't permitted in these areas.

Management of the CUs does not automatically include the wider, interconnected wetscape that directly interacts with the mangroves and can have negative impact if not managed sustainably.

Besides conservation units, a significant portion of the mangrove and coastal area of Brazil is inhabited by traditional groups and indigenous communities, even with areas officially recognized as **Protected by indigenous people**. Management of the wider area can fall under different sectoral ministries (infrastructure, agriculture, finance and others).

While Brazil's strong legal framework is an important cornerstone for mangrove conservation, **ecosystem integrity is undermined by socio-economic pressures across the connected landscape, competing interests, and incompatible policies that threaten conservation and restoration**.

Management on the ground remains uneven due to fragmented governance and weakened participation, while current funding is insufficient to address systemic issues and support protected areas and livelihoods.

Call to Action

As Brazil holds 7% of the world's mangroves, its efforts towards the conservation of these key coastal ecosystems are critical for local communities and coastal populations that depend on their wide-ranging ecosystem services, the nation's biodiversity and its significant contribution to global commitments. Historical loss of mangroves in Brazil since the beginning of the 20th century was estimated at 25-40% of original mangrove extent[11]. While the country's efforts have been positive to decrease the rate of loss in the last decade[12], emerging pressures, including regulatory changes, climate-related impacts, and competing economic interests, pose risks to the integrity and resilience of these ecosystems.

For instance, in February 2026, a new environmental licensing law came into effect in Brazil. It defines new modalities, such as self-licensing for low-impact activities, simplification of environmental studies, and faster procedures for agriculture producers.

Most of these processes point towards a weaker licensing system with less public participation and greater risks for environmental degradation[13] . In addition, as climate change intensifies across the country, sea-level rise, altered hydrological regimes, and coastal infrastructure limit the ability of mangroves to migrate inland and adjust to changing conditions[14].

By addressing systemic barriers from national to local scales and by facilitating integrated local action on the ground, it is possible to prevent, stop, and reverse the degradation of mangrove ecosystems. Actions must be inclusive and focus on Indigenous Populations, Quilombolas, and Traditional Communities; and, simultaneously, develop collaborative and reciprocal learning strategies for socio-biodiversity conservation.

Targeted investment at this moment can close the implementation gap, strengthen governance, and scale community-led, science-based conservation and restoration efforts, delivering lasting climate, biodiversity, and livelihood benefits.

11 ICMBio, 2018; 2023
12 Owuor et al., 2024
13 SIMACLIM, 2025
14 Rovai et al. 2016

Mangrove Ecotourism in Costa dos Corais Conservation Unit - Clemente Coelho Junior

3. Barriers to effective mangrove management

As mentioned previously, mangroves in Brazil benefit from strong legal protection by being classified as Permanent Preservation Areas and by their inclusion in Conservation Units and Indigenous Protected Areas. Yet, despite this foundation, mangrove ecosystems continue to be degraded by pressures originating beyond mangrove boundaries, competing economic interests, and uneven implementation of conservation measures. The analysis underpinning this strategy identifies **five interrelated challenges** that explain why threats to mangroves persist and where targeted action can make a decisive difference.

1. Uneven and overstretched management of mangroves within protected areas

While Conservation Units are central to mangrove protection, their effectiveness varies widely across regions and governance levels. Not all CUs have management plans, and some do not have Management Councils, tasked with overseeing the management of the protected area. Management Councils and responsible authorities are often overstretched, overseeing large and complex territories with limited technical, financial, and institutional support.

In many cases, the threats to mangrove and coastal ecosystems originate from outside the limits of the conservation unit, within the sub-basin or basin level, therefore they have been outside of the scope and mandate of the Councils. Mangroves are frequently managed in isolation from their wider coastal and watershed context, with insufficient attention to hydrological connectivity and landscape-scale pressures.

The formal allocation of management responsibilities across different levels of government — federal, state and municipal — is not matched by adequate local capacity, particularly at the municipal level resulting in gaps between legal protection and effective on-the-ground management.

Key Barriers

- Limited operational capacity and support for Management Councils.
- Weak integration of landscape perspectives into CU management, limiting responses to cumulative pressures.
- Gaps between legal mandates and local implementation capacity.

Brazil's Cassurubá Extractive Reserve , ecostoursim - Hanna Wallis

2. Insufficient engagement of traditional and indigenous communities, managers and other local stakeholders

The participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in planning, decision-making, and monitoring remains fragile. Weak organizational capacity, limited recognition of local and gender-differentiated knowledge, and uneven participatory governance reduce the legitimacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of mangrove management.

Local conservation managers and subnational government authorities — who hold formal decision-making power over mangrove planning and use — also face significant capacity constraints. Many federal, state, and municipal managers operate with limited staffing, insufficient technical training in ecosystem-based and participatory management, and weak inter-institutional coordination. These limitations undermine the effective implementation of governance mechanisms, restrict transparency and early stakeholder engagement, and weaken adaptive and collaborative management of mangrove ecosystems.

Key Barriers

- Limited institutional, technical and coordination capacity among both community actors and public authorities.
- Insufficient integration of local and gender-differentiated knowledge into policy and planning.
- Difficulty in sustaining multi-level co-management that engage government, communities, and the private sector.
- Weak transparency mechanisms and late disclosure of relevant public and private information, limiting the ability of communities and research institutions to influence decision-making.

Brazil's Cassurubá Extractive Reserve - Hanna Wallis

3. Sectoral policies and planning frameworks remain misaligned with integrated mangrove conservation

Decisions and policies affecting mangroves are distributed across multiple levels of governance and sectoral authorities — including environmental, fisheries, economic and infrastructure bodies with weak interaction, often operating in silos. Mangroves are commonly treated as isolated habitats rather than as part of interconnected coastal–estuarine–riverine systems. This disconnect limits the ability to address cumulative pressures, weakens ecosystem integrity, and constrains the translation of conservation objectives into territorial planning and environmental licensing.

Key Barriers

- Fragmented sectoral planning and weak intersectoral coordination.
- Policy incoherence between environmental conservation objectives and economic development agendas.
- Limited integration of mangroves into territorial and licensing processes.
- Lack of shared operational indicators to align implementation.
- Limited structured dialogue between environmental authorities and productive sectors.

4. Restoration efforts are increasing but lack consistency and effectiveness

Mangrove restoration efforts are expanding along Brazil's coastline, yet results remain uneven in quality and long-term ecological effectiveness. In the absence of binding national standards and clear environmental licensing guidance for restoration activities, many initiatives continue to rely on ad hoc planting rather than hydrology- and ecosystem-based approaches. Limited technical capacity, weak coordination among actors, short-term project and funding cycles, and insufficient use of monitoring data reduces learning, comparability, and long-term restoration success.

Key Barriers

- Absence of clear, operational and regionally adapted ecological restoration and regeneration standards that reflect the ecological and geomorphological diversity of Brazil's mangrove ecosystems.
- Limited technical capacity for ecosystem-based restoration.
- Weak coordination, knowledge exchange, and long-term monitoring across restoration initiatives, limits learning and adaptive management.

5. Financial resources are inadequate and poorly aligned with long-term needs

Effective mangrove conservation requires sustained investment in governance, management, monitoring, restoration, and community engagement. Current financing remains fragmented and short-term, with limited mechanisms to support prevention, enforcement, and stewardship at scale — particularly at state and municipal levels.

In addition, funding modalities often fail to reflect ecological timelines and operational realities in remote coastal territories. The absence of shared operational indicators across national strategies further constrains coordination and alignment of public and donor investments.

Key Barriers

- Fragmented and short-term funding structures.
- Limited alignment between finance and long-term management needs.
- Weak coordination of investments across scales and actors.
- Absence of inclusive and locally accessible financing mechanisms aligned with community-led conservation and resilience-building efforts.

Together, these challenges highlight that mangrove degradation in Brazil is not driven by a lack of legal recognition, but by **systemic constraints related to governance, capacity, policy alignment, coordination/network, and financing**.

These challenges point to the need for targeted, strategic interventions that strengthen the conditions under which effective mangrove conservation can occur. Addressing them requires enabling environments that connect policies to practice, align sectoral decisions with ecosystem realities, and empower institutions and communities to act over the long term.

Manatee (Trichechus mantus) Tatumunha River, Conservation Unit Costa dos Corais - Clemente Coelho Junior

4. Our strategy:

Mobilising and enabling large-scale mangrove conservation

Within this context, the strategy is built on the recognition that mangrove degradation in Brazil is driven by interconnected institutional, social, ecological, and financial barriers that operate across scales.

The overall goal of our strategy is to **unlock transformative mangrove actions across Brazil through a landscape and inclusive approach that bridges knowledge, policy, and practice to deliver lasting gains for people, biodiversity and climate.**

Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach, (1) establishing the **enabling conditions** necessary for effective mangrove governance at national, state, and local levels; and (2) implementing an **integrated Action Framework** to drive practical conservation, restoration, biodiversity protection, and sustainable development on the ground.

Through partnership development, we will enable and inspire a mix of interventions working across systems and landscapes to turn ambition into durable impact. To operationalise this ambition, we aim to mobilise sustained investment over the next 10 years, securing contributions from a diverse range of funders and financing mechanisms.

The Enabling Wheel

The barriers identified in Brazil show that mangrove degradation persists not because of weak legal status, but because Conservation Units and other management arrangements are often asked to deliver results without the enabling conditions needed to function effectively.

The "**Enabling Wheel**" (Figure 3) brings together six mutually reinforcing enablers — **Coordinated Collective Action, Effective Governance, Policy Coherence, Enhanced Capacity, Sustainable Finance, and Actionable Knowledge —** that together ensure Conservation Units, and thus mangroves and associated ecosystems, are well managed in practice, not just on paper.

- **Coordinated Collective Action** connects the many actors and sectors shaping mangrove outcomes, so decisions are coordinated across scales and landscapes.
- **Effective governance** strengthens Management Councils, co-management processes, transparency, and accountability, while mainstreaming gender equity and social inclusion to address structural barriers to participation and equitable representation in decision-making processes – rules translate into legitimate, accountable action.

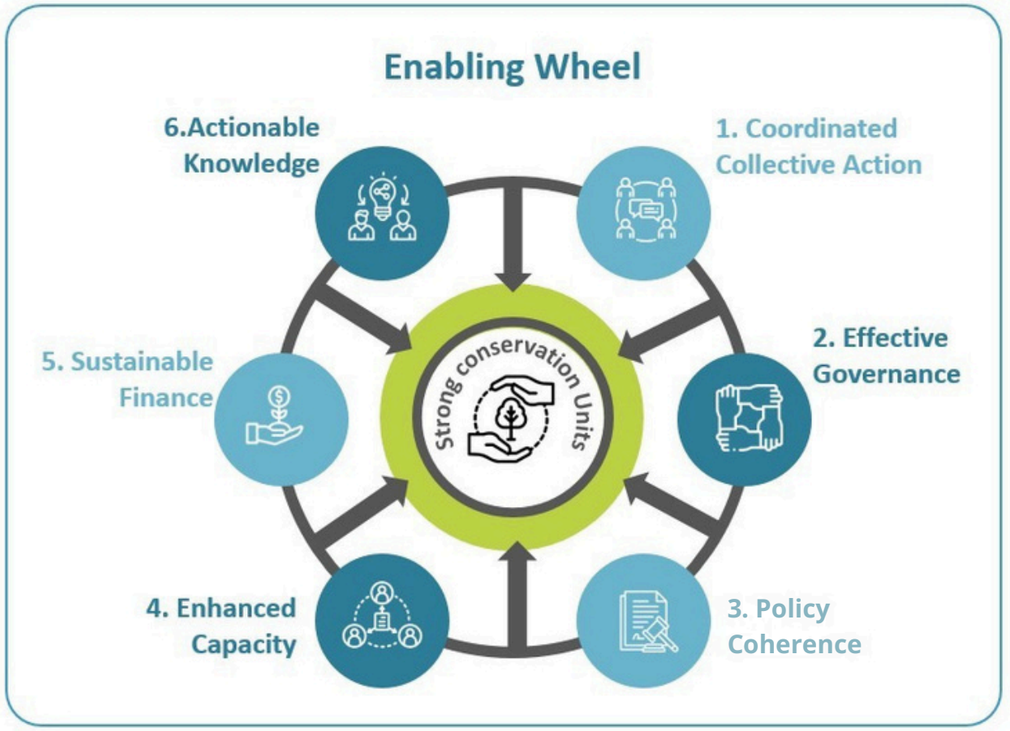

Figure 3. The Enabling Wheel

- **Policy coherence** integrates conservation objectives into territorial planning, licensing, and sectoral agendas, embedding a landscape approach that reflects ecological connectivity and reducing the siloed decisions that drive pressures from outside protected area boundaries.
- **Enhanced capacity** equips councils, managers, practitioners and communities with the skills, tools and coordination mechanisms needed for ecosystem-based management, restoration, and engagement in planning and oversight processes.
- **Sustainable finance** provides the long-term, aligned resources required for enforcement, stewardship, monitoring and restoration, beyond short project cycles.
- **Actionable knowledge** ensures management is evidence-based and adaptive by integrating scientific, spatial and local knowledge into priorities, monitoring, learning, and course-correction over time.

Together, these six enablers create the **operational foundation for effective Conservation Unit management**: aligning actors, strengthening institutions, connecting policy to practice, building capabilities, securing durable financing, and grounding decisions in actionable knowledge, so mangrove protection and restoration can succeed at scale.

In ***Annex 1*** we provide an overview for each enabler of possible **Strategic Actions at different levels** of implementation from national, subnational to landscape level.

5. From enablers to action on the ground

An Action Framework to direct actions in priority mangrove landscapes

While the enablers outlined above focus on creating the conditions for effective mangrove conservation and restoration at different levels, tangible impact will ultimately be delivered through **integrated actions on the ground in selected mangrove landscapes**.

This **Action Framework** will combine conservation, restoration, and sustainable economic development, tailored to the ecological, social, and institutional context of each landscape. Our approach is to **anchor enablers through place-based interventions,** where we can deliver measurable outcomes for mangrove ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

It brings together a coordinated package of on-the-ground activities that:

(i) **strengthen conservation** through direct interventions to improve management and enforcement in and around Conservation Units, reduction of key external pressures, and safeguarding of hydrological connectivity across coastal–estuarine–riverine systems;

(ii) **scale effective restoration and natural regeneration** using hydrology- and process-based approaches, aligned with local social and ecological conditions and supported by long-term monitoring and maintenance;

(iii) secure **biodiversity outcomes** by protecting critical habitats, improving ecological integrity and connectivity, and establishing participatory biodiversity and ecosystem monitoring to guide adaptive management;

(iv) **support livelihoods** by strengthening community stewardship and rights-based co-management promoting mangrove-positive, resilient economies, linked to responsible blue/green finance and safeguard-aligned value chains; and

(v) **influence economic drivers** by engaging productive sectors to reduce impacts, improve practices, and pilot incentive mechanisms that reward conservation and restoration outcomes.

In combination, these actions are designed to deliver measurable climate, nature, and social benefits while generating evidence and replicable models for scaling. ***Annex 2*** gives an overview of possible place-interventions which together build a portfolio of progressive actions at a landscape level (this is not an exhaustive list; other actions can be included).

Theory of Change

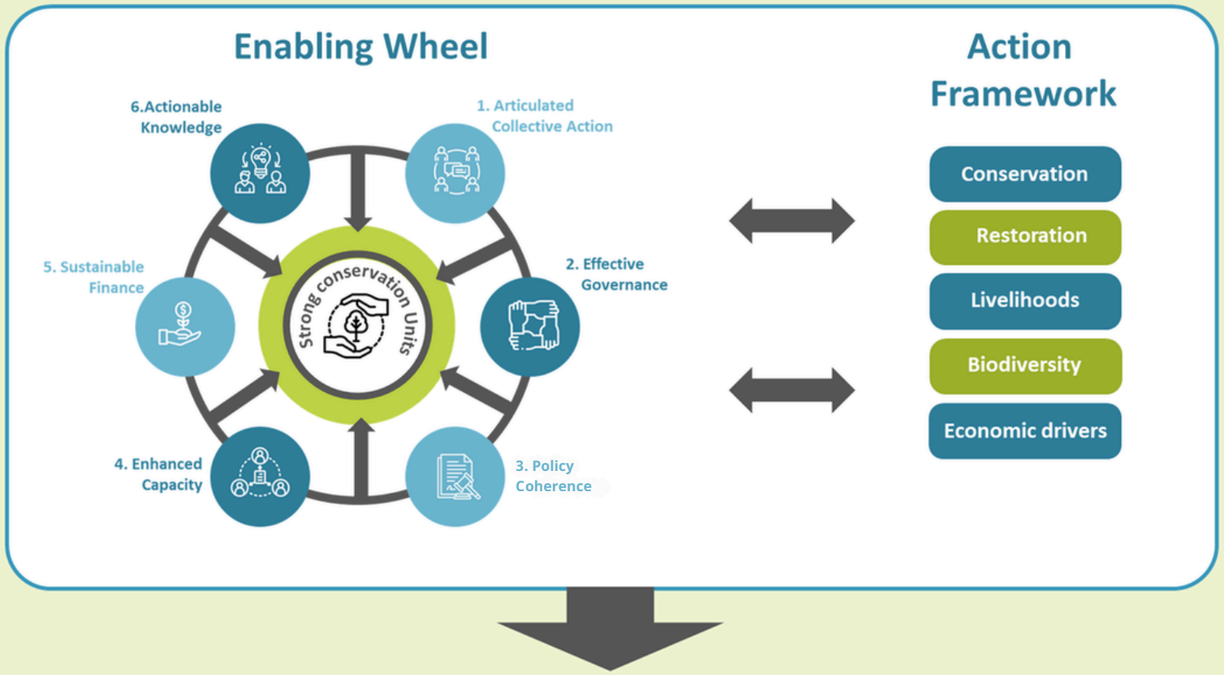

Figure 4. Unlocking transformative action for Brazil through the combined Enabling Wheel and Action Framework

The Enabling Wheel and Action Framework operate as a single delivery system. **The Enabling Wheel builds the institutional, financial, policy, coordination, and knowledge foundations that remove persistent barriers,** so Conservation Units, Management Councils, public agencies, communities, and partners can plan, decide, and invest effectively over the long term.

The Action Framework then converts these strengthened conditions into tangible outcomes in priority landscapes: avoided loss, improved management effectiveness, higher-quality restoration, stronger biodiversity indicators, and more secure and sustainable livelihoods and local economies.

Together, they create a feedback loop, where implementation generates learning and results, and the enabling system turns that evidence into better policy coherence, stronger capacity, and more targeted finance. Through this strategy, we can support the delivery of the transformative ambitions Brazil has set as part of the Mangrove Breakthrough.

Rio Tatumanha's mangrove Conservation Unit Costa dos Corais - Celemente Coelho Junior

6. Delivering our strategy

Partnership

Delivering this strategy requires collective action across scales and sectors. Wetlands International positions itself not only as an implementing partner, but as a convener and mobiliser, bringing together institutions, communities, researchers, civil society, and selected private actors to align efforts around shared mangrove outcomes.

As part of a global network, Wetlands International Brazil will deliver this strategy in close articulation with Wetlands International Global Office and other country offices, leveraging international technical expertise, policy influence, and resource mobilisation capacities. This networked approach enables the alignment of place-based action in Brazil with global advocacy, knowledge exchange, and strategic partnerships.

As an instigator and key long-term partner of the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) and the Mangrove Breakthrough, we will situate Brazil's mangrove agenda within a global movement for systemic change. We will continue to strengthen these platforms to connect national action with international commitments, mobilise technical expertise and finance, and ensure that Brazil both contributes to and benefits from global ambition on climate and biodiversity.

This strategy provides our roadmap to work closely with key actors, including federal, state, and municipal environmental authorities; Conservation Unit managers and Management Councils; Indigenous Peoples, Quilombola and traditional communities; artisanal fishing cooperatives; research institutions; civil society organisations; and selected private-sector stakeholders whose activities influence coastal landscapes.

Identification of priority regions

Priority mangrove regions for action will be identified through a transparent and evidence-based process, considering:

- Ecological importance and degree of threat.
- Opportunities for conservation, restoration, or avoided loss.
- Presence of active partners and community organisations.
- Alignment with national priorities and Conservation Unit networks.
- Potential to demonstrate scalable and replicable approaches.

This phased approach allows the strategy to remain adaptive, ensuring that investments respond to emerging opportunities, lessons learned, and evolving national and local contexts.

Our Track Record

Wetlands International brings over a decade of global leadership in mangrove conservation and restoration. As a founding member of the Global Mangrove Alliance and co-architect of the Mangrove Breakthrough, we help mobilise and shape the global agenda for mangrove protection, restoration, and finance. From co-developing Global Mangrove Watch and the State of the World's Mangroves reports to supporting countries in embedding mangroves within their UNFCCC commitments, we translate science into policy, partnerships, and action at scale.

Across our global network, we turn ambition into practical, science-based solutions and create the enabling environment for effective mangrove conservation and restoration. Our To Plant or Not to Plant initiatives in Guinea-Bissau, Tanzania, Indonesia, and the Philippines, alongside the 10-year Mangrove Capital Africa programme spanning eight key landscapes, build the enabling conditions for effective mangrove restoration. We promote community-led Ecological Mangrove Restoration grounded in hydrology and ecosystem processes and translate lessons into accessible guidance, including the Best Practice Guidelines for Mangrove Restoration and Technical Guidelines for Associated Mangrove Aquaculture, as well as training and practical tools that strengthen implementation worldwide.

Figure 5. Wetlands International's unique role in driving transformative change

Beyond restoration, we work with governments, practitioners, and the private sector to better integrate nature into infrastructure and spatial planning—demonstrating how mangrove and wetland systems can reduce flood risk and enhance resilience through approaches such as Living with Water in Panama and Building with Nature Indonesia. Together, these efforts harness the full ecological and socio-economic value of mangroves for people and nature.

In Brazil, Wetlands International advances integrated wetland governance and participatory conservation across large-scale wetland landscapes. We support the development and revision of protected area management plans and strengthen collaboration among wetland managers and practitioners, promoting improved sustainable production practices, monitoring systems and accessible tools to address wetland-related risks, particularly through the Corredor Azul Program. Through this work, we have progressively consolidated our contribution to restoration efforts in the Pantanal, developing methodologies and practical tools with potential for adaptation and replication across other wetland ecosystems. A central pillar of our work is long-term engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional and local communities and associations to foster inclusive conservation processes and sustainable livelihoods.

Our strength also lies in our strong partnerships, notably with Instituto BiomaBrasil, a recognised expert in mangrove conservation and restoration in Brazil. Instituto BiomaBrasil contributes with rigorous ecological and socio-environmental analysis and evidence-based planning tools, reinforcing the scientific foundation and effectiveness of joint action in Brazil.

Credit: Clemente Coelho Junior

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Annex 1. Strategic actions associated to enablers

Enabler 1: Articulated Collective Action	• **National / Global** – Mobilise and align national engagement under the Mangrove Breakthrough and the Global Mangrove Alliance, strengthening coherence between national priorities and global commitments. • **Sub-national** – Facilitate structured exchange and peer learning across regions and Conservation Units to improve mangrove management and restoration practices. • **Landscape** – Strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration within priority landscapes to promote shared vision and coordinated action. • **Landscape** – Implement integrated demonstration initiatives in priority areas to test coordinated packages of governance, capacity-building, and sustainable finance mechanisms, generating evidence to inform scaling and policy development. • **Knowledge integration (multi-level)** – Bridge academic, technical-scientific, and traditional knowledge systems to support locally grounded and scalable mangrove solutions.
Enabler 2: Effective Governance	• **National / Landscape** – Promote integrated landscape planning frameworks to strengthen multi-level coordination, reinforce co-management and build capacities for long-term, cross-levels decision-making aligned with ecological integrity, cultural values, and sustainable use. • **Landscape** – Support Management Councils and protected area authorities. Strengthen the functioning of Management Councils by improving transparency, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and ensuring regular and effective deliberative processes that integrate mangrove priorities into operational planning. • **Landscape** – Provide technical support to develop and operationalize management plans with clear, implementable actions for mangrove conservation, restoration, and sustainable use, explicitly linked to broader landscape dynamics. • **Landscape** – Strengthen co-management arrangements with artisanal fishing communities, indigenous, Quilombola and traditional communities by supporting formal recognition of participatory roles, capacity-building for effective representation and structured mechanisms for integrating traditional and gender-differentiated knowledge into planning, management, monitoring, and restoration processes within and beyond Conservation Units. • **Landscape / National** – Promote gender-responsive and intergenerational governance in mangrove management by creating enabling conditions for equitable participation. Strengthening capacities, ensuring meaningful and equitable representation of women, youth and traditional knowledge holders in Management Councils and decision-making processes — including provisions for gender-equitable participation within council statutes — and supporting leadership development and inclusive deliberative mechanisms.

Enabler 3: Policy Coherence	• **National** – Support the revision and strengthening of mangrove policy frameworks to ensure they incorporate biodiversity and ecological connectivity with interconnected ecosystems and embed social, cultural, and economic dimensions into safeguards, guidelines, and development planning processes. • **National** – Support the development and use of shared indicators and planning guidance to improve coherence between national strategies (e.g. ProManguezal, NDCs and NBSAPs) and implementation at state and local levels. • **National / Landscape** – Increase the network of mangroves under protected area system by supporting the creation of new protected areas in priority regions. • **Sub-national** – Provide technical support to integrate mangroves into territorial and sectoral planning instruments, including municipal land-use plans, coastal zoning, sanitation plans, and watershed management frameworks, using a landscape approach. • **Sub-national** – Provide technical support for the development and implementation of Municipal Policies, Programs, and Plans for Environmental Education and Climate Adaptation, ensuring the inclusion of mangrove and coastal ecosystem priorities.
Enabler 4: Enhanced capacity	• **Multiple** – Build technical capacity for ecosystem-based mangrove management and restoration, including hydrology- and process-based approaches, among practitioners, public agencies, and community actors, ensuring their effective participation into planning, implementation and adaptive management processes. • **Landscape** – Build the technical and procedural capacity of Conservation Units management Councils to analyze, respond to, and engage with external pressures, including infrastructure projects and land-use change affecting mangrove ecosystem beyond protected area boundaries. • **Landscape** – Develop targeted public awareness initiatives on coastal ecosystem conservation, engaging schools, local leaders, managers, and decision-makers to strengthen societal support for mangrove protection and climate adaptation. • **Landscape** – Strengthen the capacity of local communities (including artisanal fishing, Indigenous and Quilombola communities) to effectively engage in environmental licensing, territorial planning, and policy-making processes, enhancing their structured participation and influence in decisions affecting mangrove ecosystems • **Landscape** – Build organizational and technical capacity of community actors, with particular attention to indigenous, traditional and Quilombola communities as well as women's roles in mangrove-dependent livelihoods and resource management.

Enabler 5: Articulated Collective Action	• **National** – Facilitate coordination among funders, implementing partners, and public institutions, helping structure coherent investment portfolios in priority mangrove regions rather than fragmented, isolated projects • **National / Sub-national** – Develop finance plans and business plans for CUs and other management units for long-term mangrove management needs, helping to shape investment frameworks that move beyond short-term or activity-based funding toward sustained ecosystem stewardship. • **Landscape** – Support mangrove-positive and blue economy initiatives — such as sustainable fisheries and community-based tourism — and facilitate responsible engagement with credible, safeguard-aligned green and blue finance mechanisms to strengthen long-term stewardship and local resilience.
Enabler 6: Effective Governance	• **National** – Promote the strategic use of national and global mangrove data platforms, including MapBiomas and the Global Mangrove Watch, to inform climate-resilient prioritisation, planning and monitoring of conservation and restoration efforts. • **National / Sub-national** – Build capacity and knowledge for climate-resilient mangrove management, helping integrate sea-level rise, extreme events, and hydrological change into planning and restoration design. • **Landscape** – Support the development of comprehensive monitoring schemes for biodiversity, ecosystem and livelihoods including through participatory monitoring to support adaptive management capacities of managers • **Landscape** – Support learning and adaptive management frameworks that use monitoring results and local knowledge to improve decision-making and restoration outcomes over time.

Annex 2. Landscape level actions

1. Integrated conservation in priority protected areas	• Provide training and equipment towards effective management of Conservation Units. • Develop baselines studies on key ecological and biodiversity indicators. • Deliver targeted training and leadership development programmes. targeting women and youth in Management Councils of Conservation Unit.
2. Ecosystem-based restoration at scale	• Restore degraded mangrove areas, including abandoned shrimp farms, applying Community-based Ecological Mangrove Restoration (EMR) principles. • Strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of practitioners, managers and implementing agencies in Ecological Mangrove Restoration (EMR), participatory processes, conflict management, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and other adaptive management tools, ensuring context-responsive and integrated mangrove governance and restoration. • Develop and implement restoration monitoring frameworks. • Implement interventions upstream to reduce impacts to coastal wetlands – e.g. watershed restoration.
3. Sustainable livelihoods and mangrove-dependent economies	• Support to artisanal fisheries management and value chains linked to healthy mangrove ecosystems, recognising gender-differentiated roles in harvesting, processing and commercialization. • Support the wise development of sustainable community-based tourism and other sustainable economic activities aligned with conservation objectives. • Provide inclusive training to community organisations to participate in co-management and benefit-sharing mechanisms. • Promote participatory and long-term capacity development processes with local communities to reinforce territorial stewardship, collective governance and locally led mangrove conservation and restoration.
4. Enhance and protect biodiversity	• Implement species-specific intervention strategies. • Enhance biodiversity and ecosystem monitoring systems through community and institutional partnerships. • Design and implement biodiversity monitoring systems integrating scientific, community-based and intergenerational knowledge, including citizen-science approaches and youth engagement.
5. Influencing economic drivers	• Engagement with productive sectors to reduce impacts and promote more sustainable practices. • Piloting innovative finance and incentive mechanisms that reward conservation and restoration outcomes (e.g. Payment for Ecosystem Services, Biorights etc).

Our vision is a world where wetlands are treasured and nurtured for their beauty, the life they support and the resources they provide. Our mission is to inspire and mobilise society to safeguard and restore wetlands for people and nature.

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