Nations update nature plan, funding lags

LEVEL B2


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I. WARM-UP

1. What nature areas in your country most need protection?
2. Who should pay more for conservation and why?
3. What examples of wildlife recovery do you know?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

delegate
a person chosen to represent a country or group at a meeting

framework
an agreed plan that organises goals and actions

target
a specific goal to be achieved by a set time

extinction
the state when a type of animal or plant disappears forever

pledge
to promise to give money or support

subsidy
money a government gives to support a business or activity

philanthropist
a person who gives large amounts of money to help others

voluntary
done by choice, not required by law

III. READING

In Yerevan, Armenia, delegates from nearly 200 countries met for almost two weeks and, early on Saturday, approved key parts of a plan to get the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework back on track. Meeting president Hambardzum Matevosyan closed the session after the deal.

The framework set 24 targets, including protecting 30% of land and seas by 2030, but UN assessments say the world is on track for only one. Scientists warn of a sixth mass extinction driven by human activity.

Yet some species — elephants, green sea turtles and tigers — are recovering as 623 million acres (252m hectares) of degraded land move into protection. Countries had pledged $30bn in public finance and aimed to mobilise $170bn from private sources by the end of the decade, but funding has lagged as aid is redirected.

In Yerevan, more than $1bn was pledged; philanthropists, including Leonardo DiCaprio's Re:wild, offered about half. Delegates discussed cutting harmful subsidies, such as those that support trawling.

Little progress was made on the voluntary Cali Fund for genetic resources: it was expected to raise up to $3.6bn a year, yet only $10,000 had been pledged at the meeting's start. Approval of scientific reports was delayed after objections from Saudi Arabia and Russia.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News***: "Global nature talks reach deal but money...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the nature talks take place?
2. What 2022 agreement were delegates trying to revive?
3. How many of the 24 targets is the world on track to meet?
4. How much money was pledged in Yerevan, and who gave about half?
5. What issue delayed approval of scientific reports?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should harmful subsidies, such as those for trawling, be removed faster?
2. How can private donors help without replacing public duty?
3. Which target would you prioritise before 2030? Why?
4. What would persuade companies to fund the Cali Fund?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Wish / if only

Use wish/if only to express regrets or desired changes. Forms: wish/if only + past simple (now); wish/if only + had + past participle (past regrets); wish + would + base verb (a change you want from others).

"I **wish I had saved** *more money earlier."*

"Residents **wish the city would reduce** *night-time noise."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with the correct form after wish/if only.

1. Scientists wish they (have) ___ more funding now. _____
2. If only countries (pledge) ___ more back in 2022. _____
3. Campaigners wish governments (end) ___ harmful subsidies soon. _____
4. Experts wish the world (protect) ___ more land years ago. _____
5. If only the funding (be) ___ available now. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 12–15 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach numbers and currencies ($bn), and check pronunciation of Yerevan, biodiversity, philanthropist and trawling. Clarify acres and hectares with quick board conversions if helpful.
- Run the reading twice: first for gist (what was agreed), then for detail (figures, places, names). The story includes political disagreement; keep discussion fact-focused and allow students to comment on policy rather than on any country's motives.
- Differentiation: stronger students summarise a paragraph in one sentence; others highlight and paraphrase key numbers (30%, 24 targets, $30bn/$170bn, $1bn, $3.6bn, $10,000).

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Start with a show of hands, then pair opponents to list pros and cons of fast removal.
2. Elicit examples of good philanthropy, then ask how governments can set clear rules.
3. Give each group one target; they justify it with one benefit and one risk of delay.
4. Brainstorm incentives and barriers first; prompt taxes, licensing or public recognition.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 90-word press note announcing the new pledges from Yerevan.

Debate: Split the class: companies vs taxpayers. Prepare 3 arguments each on who should fund biodiversity.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Wish / if only

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the nature talks take place?
   Yerevan, Armenia.
2. What 2022 agreement were delegates trying to revive?
   The Global Biodiversity Framework.
3. How many of the 24 targets is the world on track to meet?
   Only one target.
4. How much money was pledged in Yerevan, and who gave about half?
   More than $1bn; philanthropists, including Re:wild, gave about half.
5. What issue delayed approval of scientific reports?
   Objections from Saudi Arabia and Russia.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use wish/if only to express regrets or desired changes. Forms: wish/if only + past simple (now); wish/if only + had + past participle (past regrets); wish + would + base verb (a change you want from others). (Examples constructed.)

> *"I* **wish I had saved** *more money earlier."*
>
> *"Residents* **wish the city would reduce** *night-time noise."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with the correct form after wish/if only.

1. Scientists wish they ___ more funding now. **had**
2. If only countries ___ more back in 2022. **had pledged**
3. Campaigners wish governments ___ harmful subsidies soon. **would end**
4. Experts wish the world ___ more land years ago. **had protected**
5. If only the funding ___ available now. **were / was**