



Kunming–Montreal

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Analysis of education initiatives in the 7th national reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity



Canadian Centre for
Nature-based
Education



CEC
Commission on Education
and Communication



CANADIAN WILDLIFE
FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE DE LA FAUNE



Global Youth
Biodiversity
Network



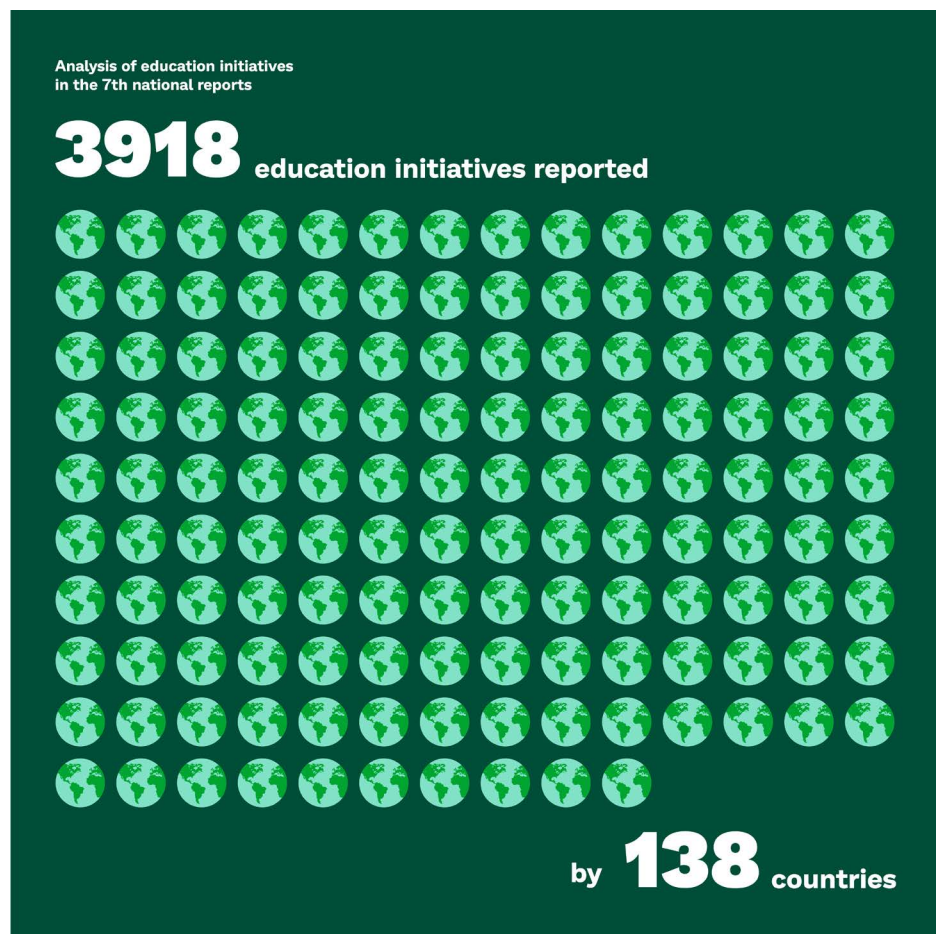
CGE
THE CENTRE FOR
GLOBAL EDUCATION
www.cgeducation.org

Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction and methodology	5
What is delivered: The scale and nature of education described in the 7th national reports	7
Who is involved: Evidence towards a whole of society approach	11
A focus on children and young people	15
Alignment with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity	18
Evaluation and evidence	21
Conclusion	22
Scope and limitations	23
List of abbreviations	24
Acknowledgements	24

Executive summary

This report analyses how education is represented in 138 seventh national reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It examines 3,918 reported education initiatives by education approach, delivery actor, audience, geographic scale, links to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) goals and targets, and strength of evidence. It focuses on what was reported through national reporting, rather than being a full report on all education initiatives that are contributing towards the GBF goals and targets.



Analysis of these reported education initiatives found:

- **Education makes a contribution to every GBF goal and target**, most often Goal D and Targets 20 and 21.
- **Education may be unevenly reported.** Countries reported between 1 and 64 initiatives each, and some education approaches appear underreported when compared to other reporting of education for biodiversity.
- **Reported education delivery is broad but strongly focused on professionals and government agencies.** Professional capacity development was the largest approach (29.1%), and government agencies led 61.2% of reported initiatives.
- **There is a foundation for whole-society education, but ownership in the reports is narrower than reach.** Reports include multiple audiences, yet locally led and non-state activity appears underrepresented, possibly due to factors inherent in the process of national country reporting.
- **National reports showcase children and young people more often as learners than leaders.** Reported activity emphasises environmental, sustainability and formal education more than youth influence, peer exchange or youth-led action.
- **Alignment with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity is developing.** Reported educational activity contains evidence of whole-society learning, nature connection, participation and stewardship, but limited educator development and comparatively little evidence of transformative, lifelong learning.
- **Evaluation evidence is stronger on description of delivery than on outcomes.** Only 4.6% of records reported measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes.

Introduction and methodology

A team of biodiversity education and social science specialists from Chester Zoo, WWF, the Canadian Centre for Nature Based Education, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), Centre for Global Education and the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (IUCN CEC) aimed to find out how education is represented within the official reporting (specifically the 7th national reports) as a mechanism for implementing the GBF goals and targets. Consistent with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity, education was interpreted broadly to include formal, non-formal and informal learning at all life stages.

Analysis of 7th National Reports

Using a consistent prompt, ChatGPT was used to extract education initiatives from the individual 7th national reports to the CBD. National reports are the formal reports that each country (Party) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) submits to the CBD Secretariat to describe its progress in implementing the Convention and its biodiversity targets, including the Global Biodiversity Framework. They are required under Article 26 of the Convention and are typically compiled by national governments, usually through the environment ministry or CBD national focal point, often with input from other agencies and stakeholders.

138 reports were available for analysis when this was conducted during August 2026. The initial data extraction produced 3,918 different education initiatives, ranging from 1 to 64 initiatives per country included. An initial coding framework was developed iteratively based on the expertise of the group. Microsoft Copilot was then used to enable further categorisation of these initiatives. Each education initiative was assigned to one code for each area of the coding framework (Table 1) to allow for quantitative analysis. Two reliability checks were conducted, one using Microsoft Copilot and a further human check on a subset of the initiatives (n = 400), both of which resulted in strong agreement between coders.

Table 1: Created codes and variables

Education approach (9)	Community learning and empowerment Environmental and sustainability education Formal education Indigenous knowledge and traditional knowledge learning Knowledge exchange and learning networks Participatory and experiential learning Professional capacity development Public engagement and awareness Transformative and behaviour change learning Not reported
Audience (6)	Children and young people General public Government and policy actors Local communities Practitioners and professionals Students and trainees Not reported
Delivery actor (7)	Civil society organisations Community and indigenous organisations Educational and research institutions Environmental and conservation institutions Government agencies Media and communication organisations Public sector organisations Not reported
Scale (6)	International or multinational Local or community National Regional or transboundary Site specific, institutional or unclear Subnational
GBF goals (4)	The four 2050 Global Biodiversity Framework Goals
GBF targets (23)	The 23 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework Targets
Evidence strength (5)	Aspiration or policy intent Activities or programmes described Quantified delivery or participation Institutional or practice change reported Measured learning, behaviour or biodiversity outcomes Not reported

Comparison with other Data Sources

To help explore how the education initiatives reported in the 7th national reports sit within the wider context of biodiversity focused education and what might need to change moving forwards, they were qualitatively reviewed alongside:

- The draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity
- IUCN CEC 2025 Global Survey on Education for Biodiversity
- 2026 GYBN led survey How Education Shapes our Power to Act
- 2024 GYBN led survey More than a Checklist: How ASEAN Youth are supporting the Global Biodiversity Framework

What is delivered: The scale and nature of education described in the 7th national reports

Key findings

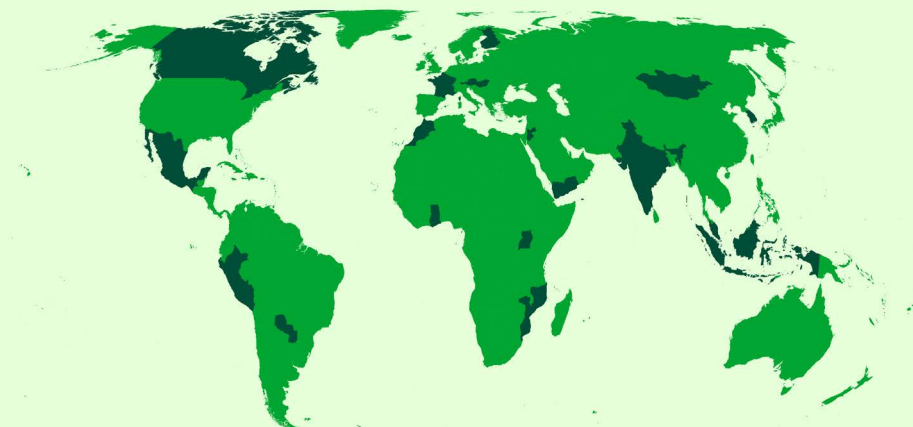
- Reported education initiatives collectively contribute towards all of the GBF targets and goals. Targets 20 and 21 had the highest number of countries reporting education initiatives associated with them (115 and 112 of the 138 countries respectively).
- The number of initiatives reported per country varied from 1 to 64 per country.
- Reported activity is weighted towards national and professional capacity building activity, local and community focused approaches may be underrepresented.

The national reports demonstrate a substantial and diverse body of educational activity. There is some variance between countries. The mean average number of education initiatives reported was 28, with a range from 1 to 64 per country. Countries with the highest number of reported activities are globally distributed and from a range of income backgrounds. We could not identify any specific characteristic that made more plentiful reporting of education initiatives more likely.

Analysis of education initiatives
in the 7th national reports

Top 20 countries

by volume of education initiatives reported



Paraguay
France
Peru
Uganda
Canada

Vanuatu
Yemen
Indonesia
Republic of Korea
Morocco

Malaysia
Mozambique
Finland
Jordan
Austria

Mexico
Ghana
Mongolia
India
Hungary

Educational approaches

The 3,918 records span nine educational approaches.

1. Professional capacity development	29.1%
2. Knowledge exchange and learning networks	17.2%
3. Public engagement and awareness	11.1%
4. Participatory and experiential learning	9.4%
5. Community learning and empowerment	9.0%
6. Environmental and sustainability education	7.8%
7. Formal education	6.6%
8. Transformative and behaviour-change learning	5.1%
9. Indigenous and traditional knowledge learning	4.7%

Table 2: The percentage of reported initiatives for each educational approach

While this represents a broad range of approaches, the distribution reveals a strong institutional and professional orientation – with professional capacity development and knowledge exchange and learning networks being the approaches most commonly reported. The draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity calls on Parties to “report on the extent to which their activities with regard to education on biodiversity reflect transformative approaches”. Against this ambition, the relatively small share of initiatives categorised as transformative and behaviour-change learning suggests room for growth either in reporting or in what is actually happening.



Scale of delivery

National-scale initiatives	68.3%
Local or community-scale initiatives	8.6%
Subnational initiatives	8.8%
International or multinational initiatives	5.5%
Regional or transboundary initiatives	2.8%
Site-specific, institutional or unclear initiatives	5.9%

Table 3: The percentage of reported educational initiatives at each scale of delivery

National-scale initiatives account for 68.3% of reported initiatives. This may partly reflect what national reporting systems are able to capture rather than the true balance of activity on the ground, meaning it is likely that locally based or site specific initiatives are under reported.

Links to Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) goals and targets

Reported education initiatives are linked to all GBF goals and targets. Goal D accounts for 57.8% of initiatives and Goal A for 24.2%. Targets 20 and 21 are especially prominent: 115 of 138 countries report education initiatives associated with Target 20 and 112 report activity associated with Target 21. This demonstrates education's enabling role in implementation, capacity, knowledge and participation, while also suggesting that there is potential to explore the contribution of education to a wider range of targets and goals.



Reported education initiatives are linked to

all KMGBF targets



The prominence of professional capacity development, knowledge exchange and national-scale delivery reinforces education's enabling role across the GBF. At the same time, the pattern may reflect the reporting architecture: government programmes and initiatives explicitly linked to Targets 20 and 21 are easier to identify than diffuse, locally led or cross-target learning.

Recommendations

- Strengthen routes for local, community-led, Indigenous and non-state initiatives to feed into national reporting.
- Encourage Parties, especially those reporting lower numbers of education initiatives, to ensure their reporting comprehensively covers the contribution of education towards achieving the full range of GBF targets.
- Encourage Parties to invest in, and make more visible in national reporting, education approaches that build agency, support behaviour and institutional change, and contribute directly to the transformative change needed to accelerate progress towards the GBF targets.

Who is involved: Evidence towards a whole of society approach

Key findings

- There is strong focus in reporting on education initiatives as a tool to build institutional capacity. Practitioners, professionals, and policymakers collectively represent nearly half of intended audiences.
- National reports focus heavily on government-led activities, representing 2,399/3,918 recorded initiatives (61%). Education initiatives led by non-state actors appear underrepresented in the official country reporting.
- Almost half of countries report initiatives targeting all six of the identified target audiences.

The reports provide meaningful but incomplete evidence of a whole-society approach. In the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity, this means engaging people of all ages across formal, non-formal and informal learning, and enabling actors throughout society to develop the knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours needed for informed decisions and collective action for biodiversity.

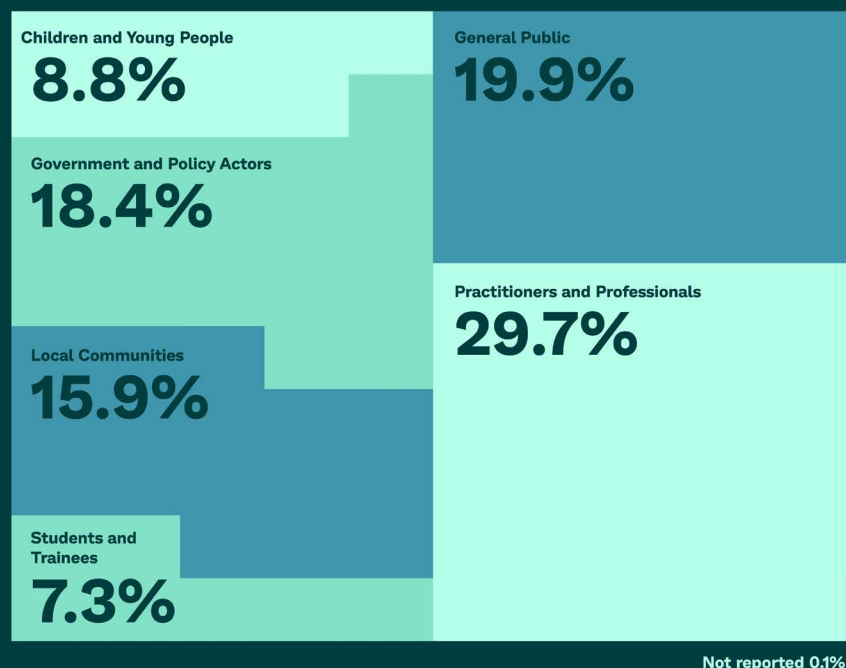
Almost half of the countries reported at least one education initiative targeting each of the six audience groups. Whilst this demonstrates that in many countries education is being reported as crossing governance, professional practice, communities and public life, it does not necessarily suggest shared ownership or participation in delivery. It also means that there are some countries that do not report education initiatives reaching all of society. 9.6% of countries report initiatives reaching three or less of our six defined audiences.

Looking across all 3,918 reported education initiatives, government and policy actors were the audience most commonly reported (by 95.7% of countries). Practitioners and professionals were the primary audience for the highest number of initiatives. Together, this suggests that reported education initiatives are primarily targeted towards professional adult audiences, rather than children and young people.

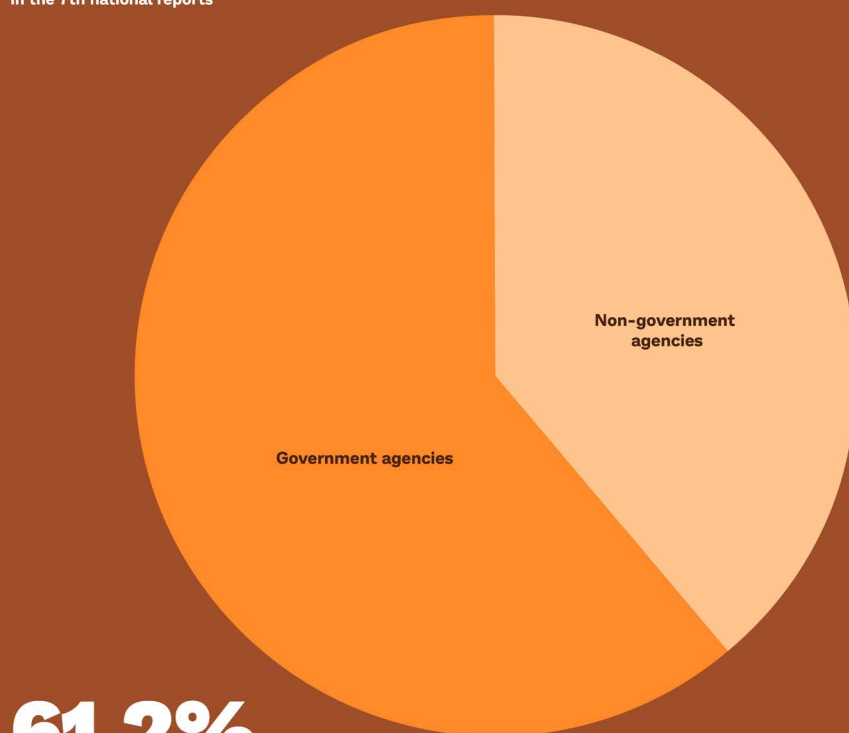
Analysis of education initiatives
in the 7th national reports

Reported education activities delivered to

different audiences



Analysis of education initiatives
in the 7th national reports



61.2%

of reported education initiatives are delivered
by government agencies

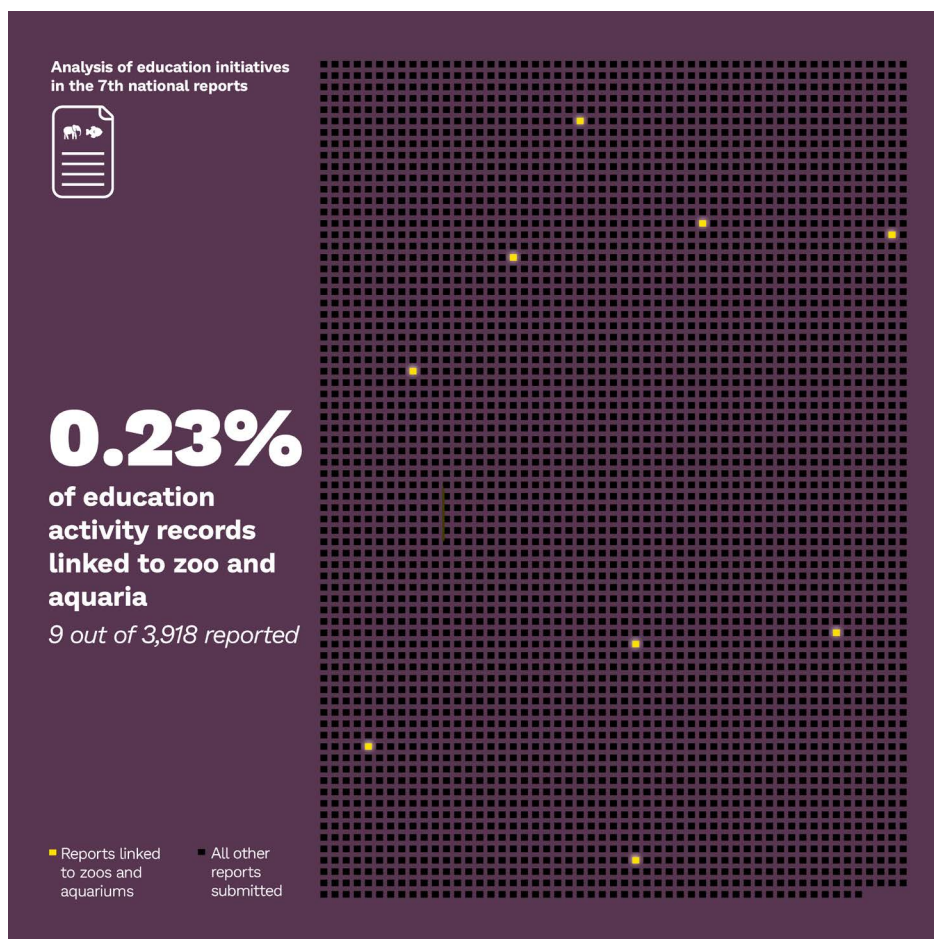
Whole-society reach is not the same as whole-society ownership. The reports show that government agencies are the most common reported delivery actor as well as being one of the most common reported audiences.

Government agencies	61.2%
Educational and research institutions	12.9%
Community and Indigenous organisations	8.8%
Civil-society organisations	7.2%
Environmental and conservation institutions	5.5%
Private-sector organisations	2.8%
Media and communication organisations	1.5%

Table 4: The percentage of reported initiatives for each delivery actor

National reports may emphasise government programmes and under-report education led by non-state actors. In the reporting, environmental and conservation institutions delivered just 5.5% of all reported initiatives. By contrast, the IUCN CEC 2025 *Global Survey on Education for Biodiversity*, based on 488 responses from education and communication specialists, captures a wide range of providers, settings and approaches, including school programmes, capacity-development workshops, citizen science, outdoor family learning, storytelling, arts, zoo visits, games, social-media campaigns and community festivals. This comparison suggests that non-state and community-led activity is happening but is underrepresented in official reporting. Including evidence from these actors would provide a fuller picture of education's contribution to the GBF goals and targets, while strengthening understanding of progress towards a whole-society approach.

Bringing non-state actors into national reporting would not only provide a fuller picture of a whole-society approach, but could increase focus on more transformative approaches. Only 5% of education initiatives in the 7th national reports were primarily coded as transformative or behaviour-change learning. In the 2025 IUCN CEC survey, 38% of organisations reported incorporating behaviour-change science into their work. Although these figures are not directly comparable, they suggest that non-state actors could contribute valuable knowledge and experience to the design, delivery and evaluation of education that supports transformative behaviour change.



Reporting of activities led by zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens, museums and other specialist conservation education organisations further illustrates what may be missing from national reporting. Together, these sectors were explicitly identified in only 90 of the 3,918 records. Zoos and aquariums appeared in just nine records, despite reaching hundreds of millions of people each year and working within a global biodiversity education framework through the WAZA/IZE Conservation Education Strategy – which advocates for transformative learning, robust evaluation of outcomes and other factors that are underrepresented in current national reporting. Creating overt routes for them to contribute evidence would provide a fuller account of education for biodiversity and make their experience available for shared learning.

Recommendations

- Create consistent and user-friendly national mechanisms through which civil society, communities, Indigenous people's organisations, youth groups, education providers, conservation institutions, media and businesses can contribute evidence towards a better record of progress towards the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity.
- Distinguish whole-society reach from whole-society ownership, partnership and decision-making.
- Ensure that funding is directed towards where activity is happening and needed.

A focus on children and young people

Key findings

- Children and young people are the primary audience in 8.8% of records, and 68.1% of countries report at least one initiative for this group (meaning that over 30% do not).
- Reported activity for children and young people is concentrated in environmental and sustainability education (32.8%), formal education (23.5%), and participatory and experiential learning (15.7%).
- Reports present children and young people mainly as recipients of learning, with less evidence of youth leadership, influence, peer exchange or youth-led action.

Children and young people are visible in national reporting. They are primarily included as recipients of education rather than as participants in decision-making or agents of change. They are the primary audience in 8.8% of all records, and 68.1% of countries report at least one education initiative for this group. Students and trainees account for a further 7.3% of records and are represented in 70.3% of country reports.

Across the reported initiatives aimed at children and young people, all education approaches are represented, but some more heavily than others. The picture is notably different when compared to other audiences – that are dominated by professional capacity development (29.1% of all records) and knowledge exchange and learning networks (17.2%). Table 5 demonstrates the percentages of reported initiatives directed at children and young people.

Environmental and sustainability education	32.8%
Formal education	23.5%
Participatory and experiential learning	15.7%
Community learning and empowerment	10.5%
Public engagement and awareness	6.1%
Professional capacity development	5.5%
Transformative and behaviour change learning	3.2%
Indigenous and traditional knowledge learning	2.3%
Knowledge exchange and learning networks	0.4%

Table 5: The percentage of reported education initiatives that target children and young people by educational approach used

This pattern suggests that reported education initiatives are strongest in teaching young people about biodiversity and providing structured or practical learning experiences. They are weaker in building the conditions for youth leadership, influence, peer exchange and sustained participation. Just 6 initiatives explicitly document youth-led delivery (0.18% of all initiatives). A broader 64 initiatives (10.1%) suggest some element of youth leadership or decision making. By comparison, the 2024 GYBN led survey *More than a Checklist: How ASEAN Youth are supporting the Global Biodiversity Framework* of 344 respondents across all ASEAN member states, identified 379 youth-led projects. Amongst these projects, communication, education, public

awareness, community development and capacity building were the most common activities. Whilst these reports are not directly comparable and were compiled for different purposes, the findings suggest that youth-led education work towards the GBF targets is happening and that the 7th national reports do not provide the full picture of child and youth engagement in education for biodiversity.

To understand how reported education compares with what young people want and need, we reviewed the initiatives against the 2026 GYBN survey *How Education Shapes our Power to Act*, which gathered the views of 300 young people globally. Key findings from the report suggest that while youth have solid foundational environmental knowledge, critical gaps exist in key areas of education delivery. These include:

1. Justice-centred education (power structures, colonialism, systemic drivers)
2. Space for critical thinking and dialogue in formal education settings
3. Mental health support and emotional validation for eco-anxiety and grief

The 2026 GYBN survey report concludes that these gaps directly limit youth preparedness and power to act. The findings appear to be corroborated in the national reports. Amongst the education initiatives described in the 7th national reports, four initiatives (0.6%) appear to explicitly address power, justice or structural causes, two suggest evidence of dialogue or debate in formal education settings and none explicitly reference deep or political dialogue or a focus on eco-anxiety and wellbeing. However, this does not prove that these activities are absent, but they are not easily visible in national reporting, which could be attributed to language used or the reporting structure.

Respondents in the GYBN survey also identified approaches to education that could support their feeling of preparedness and ability to act. The initiatives extracted from the 7th national reports, which are targeted towards children and youth and students and trainees, were scanned for the presence of these types of approaches.

Educational approach identified in the GYBN survey	Percentage of GYBN survey respondents who suggest it	Reporting evidence in the 7th national reports	Reporting share of initiatives targeting children, young people, students and trainees
Collective projects	70.7%	At least 57 initiatives involve collective projects or community action, often overlapping: examples include youth teams, school clubs, university field projects, networks and restoration groups.	9.0%
Deep conversations with friends/family	54.0%	No explicit examples.	0%
Political discussion and debate	47.0%	Two initiatives explicitly mention school debates. Around eight others report policy consultation, advocacy, youth positions or decision-making rather than clearly documented political discussion.	1.6%
Community action and local initiatives	46.0%	Examples include restoration, planting, cleanups, local stewardship, advocacy and school environmental improvements. These form much of the same 57-record collective projects group above.	9.0%
Arts and storytelling	43.0%	10 initiatives report using theatre, music, poetry, film, podcasting or storytelling	1.6%
Listening circles and dialogue spaces	34.7%	No listening circles are documented. However, approximately 17 initiatives suggest inclusion of dialogue or consultation spaces.	2.7%
Participatory research and field investigation	33%	20 initiatives cite citizen-science, BioBlitz, monitoring or field-research activities.	3.2%

Table 6: The number of reported education initiatives that suggest evidence towards activity approaches identified by GYBN survey respondents as leading to preparedness and ability to act.

Respondents to the 2025 IUCN CEC survey reported using many of the approaches identified by the 2026 GYBN survey respondents, including storytelling, arts, games, community festivals, citizen science and behaviour-change science. Including these actors in reporting, and working with them and with young people to deliver the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity (GPA-EB), could strengthen both provision and shared learning. This is consistent with the draft GPA-EB's call to involve young people in designing education activity, not only receiving it.

Recommendations

- Involve young people as partners in designing, delivering and evaluating education activities, supporting the aspirations of the draft GPA-EB, and ensuring that youth priorities and lived experience shape what is provided.
- Broaden education approaches so that children and young people not only learn about biodiversity but also gain the knowledge, skills, agency and support to contribute directly to achieving the GBF targets.

Alignment with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity

Key findings

- There is evidence of alignment with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity priorities, including whole-society education, participation, stewardship and action.
- Nature connection is marginal in reporting: 37 out of 3,918 initiatives across 19 countries, with none reporting measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes.
- 37 of 1,141 professional capacity-development activities explicitly target teachers or educators.
- Transformative and behaviour-change learning represents 5.1% of records, indicating an ongoing need to move beyond awareness and information provision.

Viewed against the draft GPA-EB, the national reports show broad educational activity across audiences and settings, but less evidence of the depth of change envisaged by the plan. Reporting is concentrated on professional capacity development, knowledge exchange and learning networks, with less visible evidence of educator development, connected lifelong-learning pathways, human–nature connectedness, equitable education and transformative learning.

Draft results framework for the Global Plan of Action for Education on Biodiversity

Expected outcomes				
1. Strengthened understanding of the connection with and stewardship of biodiversity		2. Strengthened educator and system capacity to foster understanding of biodiversity		3. Strengthened enabling conditions for the implementation of policies supporting the plan of action
Priority areas for action				
Fostering human-nature connectedness and stewardship actions	Pluralistic, holistic and equitable education	Capacity-building for educators and learning systems	Enhancing and stewardship of coordination, platforms and knowledge exchange	Embedding education on biodiversity in policy and curriculum frameworks and infrastructure
Cross-cutting enabling conditions for implementation				
Lifelong, life-wide and life-deep learning		Whole-of-society engagement		Sustainable financing and incentives

Whole-society and lifelong, life-wide learning

The range of reported audiences provides some evidence of whole-society reach, while professional, community and other activity beyond schools shows that learning occurs in several settings. However, the reports do not consistently show shared ownership across different actors or connected learning opportunities across life stages. They therefore provide stronger evidence of broad reach than of the whole-society and lifelong-learning pathways envisaged by the draft GPA-EB.

Human–nature connectedness

Human–nature connectedness is only marginally visible in the national reports. Nineteen of 138 countries report relevant activity, comprising 37 records. 51.4% of these initiatives target children and young people (which is relatively high considering the lower number of activities targeting this audience group). None reports measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes. The reports therefore provide limited evidence of nature connection across older life stages and settings, or of its effects.

Transformative and behaviour-change learning

Transformative and behaviour-change learning accounts for 5.1% of reported initiatives. This comparatively small share suggests that the reports provide limited evidence of approaches explicitly designed to build individual or systemic transformation. It may reflect limited delivery, limited reporting, or both.

Strengthened educator capacity

Only 37 of 1,141 reported professional capacity-development initiatives explicitly target teachers or educators. The reports therefore provide little evidence that the substantial investment in professional capacity development is extending to those who deliver education for biodiversity across formal, non-formal and informal settings.



Stewardship, participation and action

The reports contain evidence of approaches that can support stewardship and action: participatory and experiential learning represents 9.4% of records, community learning and empowerment 9.0%, transformative and behaviour-change learning 5.1%, and Indigenous and traditional knowledge learning 4.7%. However, the reporting describes these approaches more often than it demonstrates resulting changes in participation, practice or biodiversity. The findings therefore suggest a foundation for stewardship, but limited evidence of its outcomes.

Equitable education

The reports show education reaching several groups: 85.5% of countries report initiatives for local communities, 68.1% for children and young people, and Indigenous and traditional knowledge learning accounts for 4.7% of records. However, reach alone does not demonstrate equitable access, influence or benefit. Government agencies deliver 61.2% of reported initiatives, compared with 8.8% delivered by community and Indigenous organisations and 7.2% by civil-society organisations. The reports therefore provide evidence of audience breadth, but do not enable us to assess whether barriers are being removed or whether underrepresented groups share power in design and delivery.

Embedding biodiversity into curriculum frameworks

The analysis identifies 70 explicit school-curriculum focused initiatives across 43 countries. In these records, biodiversity education is often embedded in curricula through broader sustainability, climate, consumption or environmental education. Because the analysis focused on what was reported, not a systematic audit of all countries' national curricula—missing records should not be interpreted as evidence that curriculum provision is absent; it may just be unreported or described differently and therefore not picked up through our analysis.

Recommendations

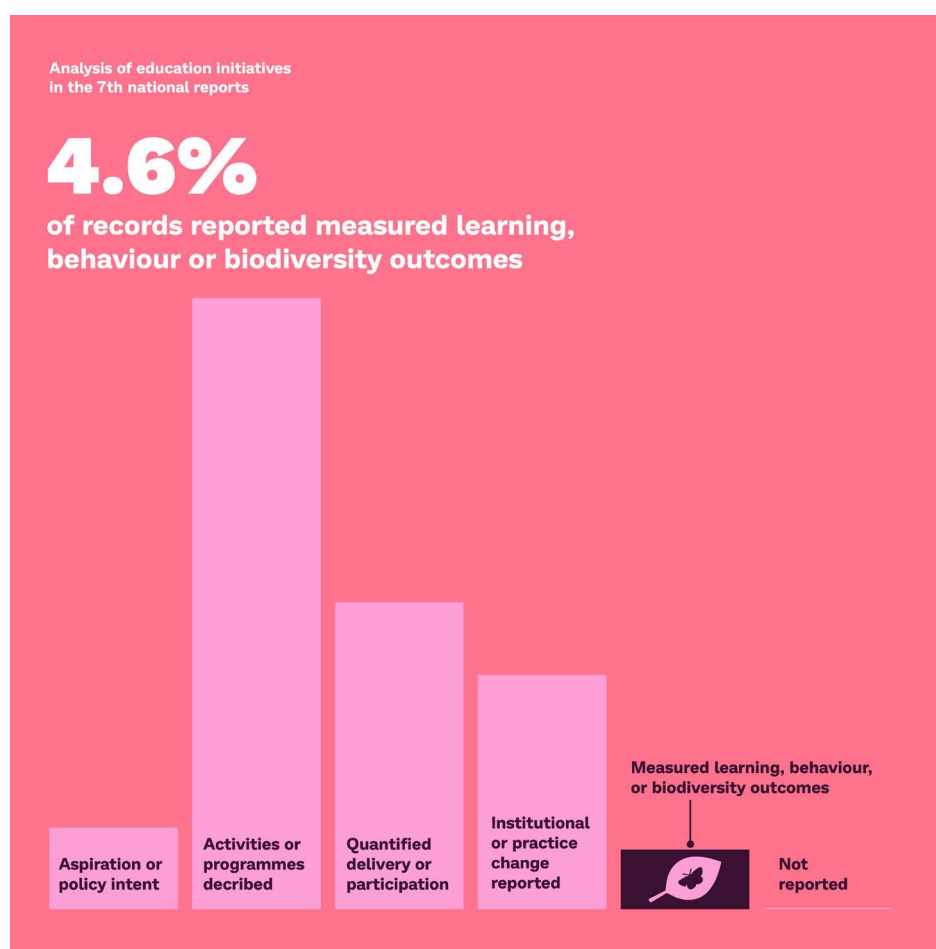
- Use the draft GPA-EB outcomes and actions as an explicit framework for planning and reporting education initiatives, particularly taking into account aspects of the draft GPA-EB that are not captured by current reporting such as inclusion, outcome measurements and transformative change.
- Invest in teacher and educator learning so that capacity building extends beyond technical and policy professionals.

Evaluation and evidence

Key findings

- References to evaluation within the reports focus on what was delivered rather than on what changed, for whom and for how long.
- Only 4.6% report measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes.

The national reports provide limited evidence of evaluation beyond delivery. Nearly half of records (47.2%) describe activities or programmes without quantifying delivery or participation; 23.7% quantify delivery or participation; 18.1% report institutional or practice change; and 6.3% record aspiration or policy intent. Only 4.6% report measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes.



This pattern reflects a wider challenge in education and conservation reporting: outputs are easier to record than changes in learning, behaviour, institutions or biodiversity. It may also reflect the national-reporting format, which appears better suited to describing activity than presenting detailed evaluation evidence. As in other areas of the analysis, the findings show what was reported and may not capture the full extent of evaluation undertaken.

Recommendations

- Strengthen reporting on outcomes from education activities, as well as reporting descriptions of activity and reach.

Conclusion

The 7th national reports demonstrate that education is already contributing across the GBF goals and targets, through professional development, knowledge exchange, public engagement, formal learning, community action and participatory approaches. They also reveal an uneven evidence base. Government-led and national-scale initiatives are most visible; non-state and locally led delivery may be underrepresented; children and young people are more often positioned as learners rather than decision-makers; alignment with the draft Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity (GPA-EB) is stronger on breadth of activity than on educator development, lifelong and transformative learning; and evaluation rarely extends to measured learning, behavioural or biodiversity outcomes.

The central opportunity is therefore not simply to increase the number of education initiatives, but to strengthen how education is designed, connected, evaluated and reported. More inclusive reporting pathways, meaningful participation by diverse actors and audiences, explicit alignment with the draft GPA-EB, and proportionate outcome evaluation could make the contribution of education to GBF implementation clearer and more effective.

Scope and limitations

The dataset reflects what 138 countries reported in their seventh national reports. Not all countries are represented and it should not be interpreted as a complete inventory of education activity or as a direct measure of the total scale or quality of delivery within a country. It is likely that government led reporting privileges certain types of activity and therefore other types may be underrepresented. Comparison reports with other data sources provided some context, but this is still not a full picture.

The analysis depends on the detail and consistency of source reporting. Each initiative was assigned one code in each category, which supports analysis and comparison but may simplify initiatives that span several audiences, approaches, actors or outcomes. AI tools supported extraction and coding, with human testing and reliability checks, but interpretation remains constrained by the limitations of the AI tools in addition to the wording and evidence available in the reports.

The IUCN CEC survey and GYBN surveys are used as points of comparison, not as equivalent datasets. In particular, the IUCN CEC survey helps illuminate education led by non-state actors, while the GYBN surveys provide a youth-informed account of what young people say they need and what they are already delivering. Together, these sources help identify possible gaps in national reporting and frame recommendations, but do not offer a full account of what is happening on the ground

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
AI	Artificial intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
GPA-EB	Global Plan of Action on Education for Biodiversity
GYBN	Global Youth Biodiversity Network
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN CEC	International Union for Conservation of Nature Commission on Education and Communication
IZE	International Zoo Educators Association
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
WAZA	World Association of Zoos and Aquariums

Acknowledgements

The project to analyse and report on how education is reported in the 7th national reports was led by Chester Zoo, with input, advice and editorial support from representatives of WWF, the Canadian Centre for Nature Based Education, Canadian Wildlife Federation, Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), the Centre for Global Education and the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication.

IUCN Commissions are networks of expert volunteers entrusted to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of IUCN. The views, information, or opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the IUCN CEC and do not necessarily represent those of IUCN or its Members.

The project team is grateful to Benjamin Bingley for his work extracting all of the education initiatives from the 7th National Reports.

Enquiries about this report should be directed to Charlotte Smith, Director of Conservation Education at Chester Zoo: c.smith@chesterzoo.org.