

RESEARCHER LINKS

www.britishcouncil.org

NEWTON FUND - LATIN AMERICA BIODIVERSITY REGIONAL RESEARCHER LINKS WORKSHOPS

Countries included in this call are:

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

VERSION 0.13

Call to open: 14 AUGUST 2017

Call closes: 13 OCTOBER 2017

The table below provides an overview of the changes from version 12 of this document:

Page number in previous version	Change	Page number in this version
18	Change in Appendix 1, eligibility criteria for PERU	18

1. Background

The Newton Fund builds research and innovation partnerships with 17 partner countries to support their economic development and social welfare, and to develop their research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth. It has a total UK Government investment of £735 million up until 2021, with matched resources from partner countries.

The Newton Fund is managed by the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through 15 UK delivery partners, which include the Research Councils, the UK Academies, The British Council, Innovate UK and the Met Office. For further information visit the Newton Fund website at www.newtonfund.ac.uk.

Tackling global challenges – such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security, and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population – requires an integrated research and innovation approach, bringing together communities from different disciplines, sectors, and countries in high-quality collaborations.

All Researcher Links-funded workshops will have the following three overarching objectives:

- **Support international development-relevant research** – Workshops are intended to support research areas relevant to the economic development and welfare of partner countries.
- **Contribute to capacity building of researchers** – The design of the workshops must consider how it will contribute to the personal and professional development of the participants. Workshop co-ordinators are asked during the application process to indicate how they envisage this occurring, including any plans for long-term mentoring of early career researchers (either within each country, or cross-nationally).
- **Establish new research links or significantly develop existing links, with the potential for longer term sustainability** – In the application process Co-ordinators must outline the specific outputs anticipated from the workshop. The aim of the workshops is to stimulate longer term links between the partner countries, as well as to contribute to the personal and professional development of the participants. The assessment of the workshop proposal will consider the mutual benefits to researchers and institutions taking part. They will also be assessed in terms of the potential longer term benefit that might arise, considering who will benefit and how they might benefit and including the actions that will be taken to ensure that potential impact is realised.

Regional Researcher Links workshops extend the benefits of bi-lateral research relationships across a broader region and enables the development of regional networks of expertise, beneficial to all involved. The themes for the workshops are explained in the next section and are in line with the priorities of the partner countries involved in the workshops, also workshops will aim to share best practise and mutually build capacity to address shared regional challenges.

Background and Structure of Biodiversity Programme

A common challenge in Latin America is to develop a resilient natural resource economy. Social and economic policy linked to environmental pressures will result in land-use changes that will influence biodiversity and ecosystem processes at multiple scales. Moving to a natural resource economy will necessitate radical improvements in the quality and quantity of information on the biodiversity and the ecosystem services the biodiversity sits within. To deliver this economy, data on Latin American biodiversity provide essential knowledge underpinning conservation, sustainable management and our understanding of ecosystem functions and the services they provide. In many areas the data required for the next-generation models of ecosystem function and landscape scale management are lacking.

Understanding the role of biodiversity underpinning ecosystem services and benefits is key in managing environments for sustainable development. To achieve this across Latin America requires a transnational collaborative research activity to identify biodiversity at new levels of detail, understand ecosystems functions and their value, creating knowledge leading to informed environmental management and restoration, balanced with economic and social development needs. Such activity will align to several SDGs including: 8 (promote the Bio-economy), 12 (understand the value of land management), 15, (protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss”). See more broad context described in Appendix 4.

Phase 1 (this call)- Capacity and networks

Led by the British Council, this phase will create capacity building and mobility schemes in the first year of the programme to increase the countries' R&D capacity and boost interaction between Latin American (LATAM) countries and the UK; setting a stronger foundation for large scale research collaboration. The output will be the increased capacity of a multi-lateral research community; further development of the thematic lines of a research programme identified by the funders; research networking aligned to the thematic areas.

Phase 2 – Research programme phase led by NERC

This will be a multi-lateral research call based on the thematic areas identified by the Latin American funders and developed within the workshops of Phase 1. The proposed research areas is complex and challenging because it requires a mix of disciplines ranging from taxonomy, landscape ecology, soil science and more general ecosystem science; EO, eDNA and modelling expertise, social and economic expertise. The research programmes will be expected to where possible work with and data share with the expeditions supported within phase 2. This final phase will be launched later in the year.

2. Overview of the Activity

The aim of this programme “Biodiversity – ecosystem services for sustainable development” is through collaborative multinational research and capacity building to provide trans-regional level understanding of the role of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and the services they provide in managing environments for sustainable development, such that informed environmental management is balanced with economic and social development needs (for more information on priority areas see Section 9 and Appendix 4).

Regional Researcher Links Workshop grants are designed to provide financial support to bring together UK, partner country and regional researchers to form a multilateral cohort of researchers to meet the overarching objectives. The programme will be supported by UK government and partner country support and forms part of the Newton Fund (<http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/researcher-links>).

In total, the activity will consist of 4 workshops conducted in either of the Host Countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru). The workshop attendees will be split into three equal quotas for:

1. UK researchers
2. Host Country researchers
3. Regional researchers

The quota reserved for regional researchers must include participants from at least two of the following countries (additional to the Host Country):

- Argentina
- The State of São Paulo, Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Mexico

- Peru

Each workshop will be co-ordinated by two Leading Researchers¹, one from the Host Country and one from the UK, and will focus on either of the research areas described in Section 3 and Appendix 4.

Workshop co-ordinators need to identify additional Leading or Established Researchers¹ from additional countries to be involved in the workshop, and in the event of having early career researchers, act as mentors. The three quotas can be filled as the Leading Researchers see fit under the guidance stated below

If no previous connections exist between researchers in more than one country, please see section 11 for information about support that will be provided by [Universities UK International \(UUKi\)](http://Universities UK International (UUKi).).

Each of the 4 thematic workshops will be structured as follows:

- **Maximum of 36 participants**
- **Participants: 8-12 per quota (all quotas are mandatory):**
 - Quota 1 – Host country researchers
 - Quota 2 – UK researchers
 - Quota 3 – Regional researchers (at least 2 additional countries)
- **Workshop leaders:**
 - Quota 1 – 1 Host country coordinator (mandatory)
 - Quota 2 – 1 UK coordinator (mandatory)
 - Quota 3 – Leading or Established researchers from 2 to 4 countries: “mentor”

Not-for-profit higher education and research institutions or publicly-funded research organisations can participate in Researcher Links workshops. For-profit organisations and not-for-profit organisations can participate but are usually **not** eligible to apply for Workshop grants. **For-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds.** Please see list of eligible UK research institutions here:

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/eligible_uk_research_organisations_v.10.pdf.

Please contact us at Natalia.Toledo@britishcouncil.org if you are in doubt about the eligibility of your institution.

UK institutions can partner with institutions affiliated to other UK institutions, (e.g. an overseas campus) to deliver workshops provided that the workshops also include other eligible higher education and research institutions or research organisations in the partner country. Applicants will need to work closely with and include researchers from the institutions based in the partner countries that are not affiliated to a UK university.

Expected outputs at the end of the grant:

¹ For an indication of profiles for the different categories of participants, we suggest applicants refer to the European Commission document ‘Towards a European framework for research careers’ https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf. Co-ordinators and mentors should be at ‘R4 – Leading Researcher’ level or ‘R3 – Established Researcher’ level, and early career participants at ‘R2 –Recognised Researcher’ level or at the beginning of R3 level.

The selected researcher links groups are expected to deliver the following outputs at the termination of the grant:

- Roadmap for continuing research collaboration detailing specific themes/ideas that originated from the workshop.
- Action plan for exploring further funding mechanisms.
- A proposal of a research project to take forward in any country in LATAM that could bring light in any of the main priority areas. Note: linked to Phase 2, this output will be the basis of further applications for additional calls.

3. Relevance to economic development and social welfare

Researcher Links Workshops are intended to support research areas relevant to the development of partner countries.

We define research with development relevance as research (applied or fundamental) that has the potential to contribute to the economic development and social welfare of low- and middle- income countries², benefitting low income and vulnerable populations in these countries.

In order to be considered for funding under this programme, all proposals must clearly articulate a plausible pathway showing how the research may lead to positive impact for these populations within a reasonable timeframe (within 3–15 years). Applications which do not meet this criterion cannot receive UK Newton Fund support.

In some disciplines, development relevance can be longer-term and less direct than in other areas and impact may be societal. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to articulate how the research area or activity proposed will meet these criteria. Applicants should not expect reviewers to make assumptions about development impact that is not clearly described within the proposal.

In order to show development relevance within the context of their proposed project, applicants are encouraged to include reference to any local or national consultation, links to government policies, and any links with government institutions.

For more on our approach to ODA, please see <http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/about/what-is-oda/>.

Agreements for ownership and exploitation of intellectual property generated through project activities must be consistent with the primary aim of addressing development issues.

Under this call, the following research and innovation challenge areas will be given priority. Multidisciplinary proposals are welcome, and may include social sciences and arts and humanities. The priority areas are as follows (for more detailed information see Section 9 and Appendix 4):

1. ***Understanding habitats and species***
2. ***Biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods and bio-economy***
3. ***Global Climate Change, Biodiversity and ecosystems***
4. ***Maintaining and restoring natural capital***

² As defined by the OECD DAC list of official development assistance (ODA) recipients. (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm>).

4. Eligibility

Leading Researchers may apply to be workshop co-ordinators and must propose a theme for the workshop using the online application form [here](#) and under the 4 thematic research areas described in Section 9 of this call. The proposal must be a joint application, with one co-ordinator based at a UK institution and one based in the host country. Applications must have the support of the home and partner institutions, confirmed by supporting letters uploaded in the online application.

In this round, only one application may be submitted per co-ordinator, but there is no limit to the number of applications submitted per institution.

If you do not have a partner or collaborator but would like to apply, Universities UK International (UUKi) can support established/leading researchers in Newton Fund countries to connect with UK counterparts. Applicants will need to complete UUKi's [Partner request form](#) and also include their project request in the [Opportunities for collaboration](#) grid.

Proposals must fulfil the following criteria in order to be eligible for funding under this Programme:

- Each proposal must have one Principal Applicant from the UK **and** one Principal Applicant from the host country
- Both Principal Applicants must be Leading Researchers or Established Researchers
- Principal Applicants must be permanent employees of one of the following (this means that Emeritus and Honorary Professors may not apply as lead):
 - ❖ A not-for-profit higher education and research institution unless specified otherwise in Appendix 1
 - ❖ A UK higher education institution (all UK higher education institutions are eligible)
 - ❖ A not-for-profit research organisation.
 - ❖ A Catapult Centre (in the case of the UK Principal Applicant).
- Both of the Principal Applicants' institutions (the 'Lead Institutions') must have the capacity to administer the grant where contracting requires
- Individual departments within a single institution can make multiple applications per call provided that the proposed activities are clearly different
- Principal Applicants may only submit one Researcher Links application per Researcher Links call.
- Principal Applicants that have received Researcher Links grants **in previous years** can submit further applications for Researcher Links provided the proposed activities are clearly distinct from, or build on, any already funded through the Newton Fund.
- Organisations affiliated to higher education and research institutions in the UK or any other country and based in the host country, (e.g. an overseas campus) may apply as the Lead Institution in the partner country provided that other eligible higher education institutions or research organisations are also involved as Associated Partners in-country.
- Organisations cannot apply as Lead Institutions in links with their *own* affiliates in other countries.

Not-for-profit higher education and research institutions or publicly-funded research organisations **are eligible** to apply as Lead Institutions.

For-profit organisations and not-for-profit organisations can participate in but are usually **not** eligible to apply for Researcher Links grants. Furthermore, **for-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds except to cover travel-associated costs.**

Please contact us at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org if you are in doubt about the eligibility of your organisation.

Eligibility checks will be applied to all proposals on receipt. Proposals which are not led by a recognised not-for-profit higher education institution or a publicly-funded research organisation (unless specified otherwise in Appendix 1) will be rejected during these checks. Please see Appendix 2 for a full list of eligibility criteria.

If you are unsure about your organisation's eligibility, for UK see the link at https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/eligible_uk_research_organisations. **For partner countries, please see Appendix 1.**

5. Duration of the workshops

The minimum duration of a workshop is three (3) days and the maximum duration is five (5) days.

6. Timing of the workshops

Workshops must take place between 1 March 2018 to 31 August 2018.

7. Participation in the workshops

Applications to run a workshop will require 2 workshop coordinators, 1 from the host country and the other from the UK. The workshop co-ordinators must identify Leading/Established Researchers (see footnote on page 1 for a definition) from the host country, the UK and the wider region as well as researchers at an earlier stage in their career. The maximum number of participants per workshop is 36 (including co-ordinators, mentors and early career researchers). It is intended that this is split into three equal quotas for the host country, the UK and researchers from across the region although some flexibility may be agreed with the British Council on a case by case basis.

We would expect early career researchers to have been awarded their PhD not more than 10 years prior to the workshop (or to have equivalent experience), with allowances made for career breaks. If a researcher does not hold a PhD but has research experience equivalent to a PhD holder and works in a field where a PhD is not a prerequisite for established research activity, they can still be considered eligible. Participants from for-profit organisations cannot be funded.

Role of the workshop co-ordinators: Co-ordinators submit the online application form along with a budget request, determine the workshop theme and shape the content/agenda of the workshop. Workshop co-ordinators will also be responsible for selecting UK and Host Country established and early career researchers, as well as identifying researchers from the wider region to participate in the workshop. This suggested list of participants must be provided when submitting the application, more guidance on support for identification and recruitment of regional researchers in Section 11.

Under this call for proposals, workshop co-ordinators will be responsible for all organisational aspects of the workshop logistics (including travel arrangements for participants and booking of the workshop venue). Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis.

In most cases, the grant agreement will be signed by the UK workshop co-ordinator's home institution which will be responsible for the management of the grant (including financial reporting). However, in some countries this is subject to change and the final terms will be communicated to successful applicants.

8. Language

Workshops will be held in English. It is expected that all participants will have a sufficient standard of English to engage fully in discussion. However, consideration should be given to non-native speakers.

9. Thematic focus of the workshops

1. *Understanding habitats and species*

The objective of this theme is to better understand the relationship between habitats and species and species composition across what is an increasingly anthropogenic region. There is a need specifically to understand the functional role of biodiversity in LATAM ecosystems across a range of ecosystem goods and services, environmental gradients and scales typical of real landscapes.

2. *Biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods and bio-economy*

The objective of this theme is better understand the biodiversity resource available within the region, using new technological and skills capacity, to monitor, model; and provide decision making tools directed towards ensuring the region's bio-economy is biodiversity based and thus sustainable.

3. *Global Climate Change, Biodiversity and ecosystems*

The objective of this theme is to better understand presence and in-situ value of the biodiversity resource within the region, through the use of a range of natural capital approaches (and beyond economic valuation only). In doing so, and in association with the other themes this will inform on the most suitable approaches for maintaining the biodiversity.

4. *Maintaining and restoring natural capital*

The objective of this theme is to place the better understanding of LATAM biodiversity, its range, functioning and management, within a global and climate impact context.

10. Content of the workshop

Workshop co-ordinators are expected to lead on developing the research content of the workshops under the 4 thematic areas outlined in this call. However, workshops are intended to be a career development opportunity with a focus on promoting international collaboration, and there are specific guidelines to facilitate this. The following is a brief overview, and more detailed guidance will be provided to successful applicants:

Sessions should be as interactive as possible, and all participants encouraged to share knowledge, experience and ideas. Workshop co-ordinators and established researchers should share their expertise.

Suggested sessions:

- Networking sessions where researchers are able to interact and explore opportunities for collaboration, (e.g. speed-networking sessions)
- Overview of the research base and funding opportunities: a brief introduction to the research base in the UK and partner country – how research is funded, size, strengths, international collaborative activity and links with industry.
- Formal keynote lectures by the workshop co-ordinators and mentors. These must take up no more than a half-day in total (ideally spread over the workshop).
- Optional content within workshops (where appropriate these sessions would be welcome but applications will not be disadvantaged if they do not include them):

- ❖ Depending on the research field or theme of the workshop, co-ordinators may wish to include a session which invites industry or other non-academic partners to talk about cross-sector collaboration.
- ❖ Public engagement activity/visit to a relevant research facility.
- How to form international collaborations (intercultural skills, challenges, opportunities, best practice, etc.).
- Career development opportunities in the UK and partner country. This could be an informal discussion amongst the researchers or a more structured look at career development.
- Research sessions where the early career researchers are able to share their current research. This could be in poster format or oral presentations.

11. Recruitment of participants

In order to support Principal Applicants and Participants in the workshops, [Universities UK International \(UUKi\)](#) has designed the following support mechanism, we encourage you to make the most of it while the call is open.

1. UUKi match-making service for prospective workshop lead applicants (coordinators) who are looking for a co-applicant in the UK:

Applicants complete UUKi's [Partner request form](#), and will receive UUKi's support to connect with potential UK collaborators. Their partnership request will also be included in UUKi's [Opportunities for collaboration](#) grid.

2. For applicants that already have a collaborator/ co-applicant in the UK, but who need to recruit provisional workshop attendees (ECRs) and mentors (established researchers)

Lead applicants "coordinators" who have already found a co-applicant, but need to recruit workshop participants can complete [This Form](#) to provide UUKi with information about their proposed workshop. UUKi will then publish a 'workshop list' on their "[Opportunities for collaboration](#)" [webpage](#) including proposed workshop themes and coordinator contact details so that ECRs and mentors from other Newton Fund countries can contact the lead coordinators to register their interest in attending the workshop.

The link to the 'workshop lists' will be shared widely by British Council in-country teams and partner country agencies to support participant recruitment.

Workshop co-ordinators will be responsible for reviewing this resource, contacting and selecting participants to the workshops in line with the three quotas outlined in section 2.

Selection of participants:

Early career researchers recruited to participate in the workshop must have a PhD or equivalent research experience. **No more than half** of early career researchers from each country may be recruited from within the institutions of the co-ordinators and mentors.

The maximum number of participants per workshop is 36 (including co-ordinators, mentors and ECRs).

The selection of researchers to participate in the workshop must be fair and transparent.

Equal opportunities and diversity are at the heart of the British Council's cultural relations ambitions. Co-ordinators are encouraged to work towards as equal a gender balance as possible, promote diversity, and ensure that no applicants are excluded from participation on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability.

12. Funding

Under the Newton Researcher Links programme, it is expected that UK funds are matched from partner countries. In some participating countries, this matched funding comes from national agencies. This can be in the form of a financial or in-kind contribution from the country partner institution to cover the partner country costs included in the grant application (and any further costs). In some cases it will be required that the contribution comes directly from the institution involved, or from another organisation (e.g. a development bank, a charitable foundation, a multilateral organisation), provided that the origin of the funding is not the UK Government.

Commitment for financial and/or in-kind contribution to cover these costs should be confirmed where necessary in the supporting letter submitted by the partner country home institution.

If the workshop is to be held outside the UK, matching funding is required to cover costs incurred in-country. These costs could, for example, include domestic travel, subsistence, venues and event costs.

The level of grant funding available from the Newton Fund may depend on the host country: please see Appendix 1 for country-specific limits.

The grant contribution given to support the organisation of the Researcher Links workshops is calculated using a combination of flat unit rates per person and accountable costs.

There are five budget categories: International travel, Domestic travel, Subsistence, Event costs per day and Additional workshop costs.

Please see Appendix 1 for maximum amounts that can be requested in each budget category. Applicants are required to provide a budget request upon submission of their proposal. All budget requests will be assessed for feasibility and appropriateness.

International travel

This is a contribution towards: travel costs to the country of the workshop for international participants, visa costs, travel insurance and local transport to the workshop venue. It is calculated using a unit cost for each workshop participant, at the travel rate stated for the country where the workshop takes place.³ International economy class airfares should be booked by the workshop co-ordinators as far in advance as possible to minimise costs.

Workshop co-ordinators and workshop participants must take out adequate insurance. The British Council cannot take responsibility for any issues which occur when the participants are in-country.

Domestic travel

This covers costs of domestic travel to the venue for workshop participants based in the country where the workshop takes place. The domestic travel contribution is calculated using a unit cost for each workshop participant and is specific to the country where the workshop takes place.

Subsistence

This covers the costs of accommodation, medical insurance and daily expenses such as phone and local transport. Subsistence is calculated using a unit cost for each workshop participant multiplied by the number of days of the workshop, and is specific to the country where the workshop takes place.

³Costs of any additional travel during the workshop – for international and domestic participants – may be covered using the subsistence budget.

Event costs

This covers the costs of venue hire and meals. The event rate grant contribution is calculated using a unit cost for each workshop participant multiplied by the number of days of the workshop, and is specific to the country where the workshop takes place.

Contribution to additional workshop costs

Workshop co-ordinators can request a sum to cover:

- additional event costs not already covered, e.g. projector, flip charts and other materials needed for the organisation of the workshops (including networking and social activities).
- administrative costs such as communications cost, printing costs and stationery.

Staff costs and honoraria cannot be covered by the Researcher Links grants.

Payment of the grant

The Newton Fund grant for Researcher Links workshops will be paid in 2 instalments: a 90% pre-financing payment will be paid within 30 days of signature of the Grant Agreement, and 10% post-workshop payment, or a recovery, on approval by the British Council of a final report. If the workshop has not been delivered as planned, or if fewer participants attended than originally envisaged, resulting in a reduction in costs, the final payment may be withheld and if necessary a proportion of the grant recovered.

The Researcher Links Grant Agreement will be signed by and the grant paid to one of the workshop co-ordinators' home institutions, usually the UK. The grant recipient institution that signs the agreement will then be responsible for the management of the grant (including financial reporting). The final terms will be communicated to successful applicants.

Funding offered under the Researcher Links programme is intended as a **contribution** towards the costs of the workshops. Workshop co-ordinators are expected to add a contribution in-kind towards the overall cost of the workshop by dedicating their time to the planning and delivery of the workshops.

13. Reporting

Workshop co-ordinators must submit a final report within 30 days after the workshop. The final report template will be sent to successful applicants as part of the grant agreement and will include financial and narrative sections. Further details will also be provided to successful applicants in the detailed workshop guidelines.

Individual workshop participants will be asked to complete an online baseline survey, a baseline follow up survey six months after the workshop and a post workshop feedback questionnaire. Workshop co-ordinators will be asked to send the link to the baseline survey to their participants and also to administer the post-workshop questionnaire.

14. Ethics and research governance

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported under this Programme. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. Specifically, applications that involve research on animals, human participants, human tissue or patient/participant data must be accompanied by necessary permission certificates from the relevant local ethical review committees/authorities in the UK and the partner country, or an undertaking to obtain this permission in advance of the activity commencing. Failure to do so will result in applications

being rendered ineligible and any funding already committed through this Programme being rescinded.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct' (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/>), the InterAcademy Partnership report 'Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise' (<http://www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx>) or contact us at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org for further guidance.

15. Diversity

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all our activities. This includes avoidance of bias due to gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief.

Co-ordinators are encouraged to work towards as equal a gender balance as possible and promote diversity, and must ensure that no applicants are excluded from participation on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability.

Applicants may apply for funding to cover extra costs for such participation. Please email UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org with requested costs to cover the inclusion of under-represented groups for consideration, after you have submitted your application and quoting your unique application reference number.

Please contact us at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org for further information on funding and for more on the British Council's approach, see our Equality Policy at https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/equality_policy_1.doc.

16. Application process

Please read this entire section before submitting your application

The submission deadline is 16:00 UK time on 13 October 2017. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

The deadline applies to all parts of your application, including upload of fully completed supporting documentation. Any applications which are not submitted in full by the deadline, with all required supporting documents, will be considered ineligible. Appeals against this decision will not be accepted.

Applicants for all calls must submit a completed online application form which includes the upload of supporting information. Applications and supporting information should be written in English. The online form allows applicants to enter information and save it for a later date until final submission. There are strict character limits for each section which cannot be exceeded.

The online form and a Word version can be found on the opportunity webpage:

www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/regional-workshops-newton-latin-america

The online application form is available [here](#).

(https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application_form_newton_latin_america_biodiversity_wg_july2017)

Applicants from the State of São Paulo, Brazil, must also follow the guidelines at www.fapesp.br/11099

In addition to filling in the online form, applicants are required to upload the following documents, as described, by the deadline. **Late submission of supporting documents, or submission of documents which do not comply with these requirements, will render the application ineligible.** Appeals against this decision will not be accepted. The documents are:

- Two signed letters of support for the workshop from the Head of Department (or equivalent). One letter from the UK institution and one from the host country institution. (Letters should be written on headed paper and uploaded in Word or pdf format. If the applicant is a Head of Department, another senior academic should sign the supporting letter).

Any problems with the online submission system should be reported to the following email address: Natalia.Toledo@britishcouncil.org.

Applicants must confirm on the online form that:

- Applicants have obtained **permission to submit the application on behalf of the UK and host country institutions**
- The UK or partner country co-ordinators' institution **is willing to receive the funds and to sign a grant agreement with the British Council.**

***Important:* Once you submit this application you will not be able to edit your application in any way and you will not be permitted to create a second application. Please also be advised that the UK Researcher Links Team do not have permission to make changes to your application.**

If you experience problems with the online submission system, please contact

Natalia.Toledo@britishcouncil.org before the submission deadline. If you alert us to technical issues only after the deadline, we may not be able to take them into consideration when assessing the eligibility of your application. Once the online application is submitted, the system will generate a unique application ID number. Applicants should note this number and use it in all communications with the British Council. Applicants who have not received this ID number should contact the British Council at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org.

17. Application assessment and notification of results

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility and quality criteria (Appendix 2 and 3). Appeals against this decision will not be accepted.

Successful applicants will be notified by the end of December 2017.

18. Selection process

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the eligibility criteria given in these Guidelines, including Appendix 1 and the Eligibility Checklist at Appendix 2.

Eligible proposals then undergo independent external quality review on the basis of quality, fit to development needs and country priorities and the overarching Researcher Links Workshops objectives.

Eligible workshop proposals will be assessed in the UK by one of five Review Panels:

- **Arts and Humanities**
- **Biological and Medical Sciences**
- **Engineering, Physical and Space Sciences**
- **Environment, Agriculture and Food Sciences**

- **Social Sciences.**

Workshop co-ordinators must indicate in their online application form which Review Panel their proposal should be assessed by, and the subject(s) their research covers. Up to 3 subject areas can be selected in priority order, but the applicant can indicate only one Selection Panel.

In the UK, Workshop proposals will be assessed by two reviewers against the quality criteria in Appendix 3. Each review results in a total score between 0 and 60. The final score will be decided by the Review Panel. Applications scoring less than 30 points will be considered not fundable. However, please note that achieving an average score of 30 or above does not imply that the proposal will be funded.

The final selection decision of the funded workshop to take part in each host country will be made in-country in collaboration with national stakeholders and partner funding organisations.

As detailed previously in this guideline, only those proposals will be considered for funding that have clearly articulated relevance to the economic development and social welfare of low- and middle-income countries, benefitting poor and vulnerable populations in these countries.

19. Call deadline

The submission deadline is 1600 hrs, Friday 13 October, UK time. Proposals submitted after the deadline **will not be considered for funding.**

20. Data protection

The British Council will use the information that you are providing for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any award.

We shall share any necessary data on your application with the UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills, and with our funding partners in your country in order to assist with management of the application process; any decisions on grants will be made in collaboration with them.

Organisation details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information, where collected, is used solely in preparing statistical reports.

The British Council collects country of origin for reporting and statistical purposes and to contact you within your own country.

Under UK Data Protection law you have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, and the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information. If you want more information about this please contact your local British Council office or the Data Protection Team at infogovernance@britishcouncil.org or see our website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>.

21. Applicant screening

In order to comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process, carry out searches of relevant third party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant nor any of the applicant's employees, partners, directors, shareholders is listed:

- as an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings;
- as being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime;
- as being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body;
- as being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director; and/or

- as being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.
- If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call.

The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches. Please read the text to this effect on the application form and tick the box to show that you understand this.

22. Contractual requirements

- The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status).
- The successful applicants will be expected to undertake activities in the UK and in the Newton Fund countries listed in section 2 of the guidelines.
- The British Council is subject to the requirements of the UK Freedom of Information Act, (“FOIA”). Please indicate in your application whether FOIA also applies to your organisation, so that we can reflect this in the Grant Agreement should you be successful in your application.
- The British Council’s contractual approach in respect of the grant is set out in the Grant Agreement a copy of which can be downloaded from the attachments to this call: Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement (“Grant Agreement”). By submitting a response to this call for applications, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of these guidelines and the Grant Agreement without further negotiation or amendment
- In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Grant Agreement, you should submit a clarification request to natalia.toledo@britishcouncil.org in accordance with the provisions of this call for applications by the application deadline. The British Council reserves the right not to make any changes to the Grant Agreement.
- The British Council is under no obligation to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Grant Agreement requested following the application deadline.

APPENDIX 1: COUNTRY-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE AND GRANT RATES

Please note that the unit costs given below constitute the maximum amounts that can be requested in each category and that all budget requests will be assessed for feasibility and appropriateness. While the maximum contribution cannot be exceeded, applicants can request less in which case the amount requested cannot be increased at a later stage.

1. Mexico	
National co-funder:	NA
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications must include a UK Principal Researcher and a Mexican Principal Researcher (Senior Researcher), based at a public or private University; Research Centre or National Research Institute and Public Administration Entities. • Mexican Principal Applicants must belong to the National System of Researchers (SNI I,II, III or candidate) and must belong to a RENIECYT Institute to be recipients in order to be eligible for future national grants • If applicable, applications must include the research authorisations from the relevant authorities. 	
International travel:	Up to £1200
Domestic travel:	£150
Subsistence costs per person per day:	£100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	£2000

2. Colombia	
National co-funder:	COLCIENCIAS
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research groups with current recognition by Colciencias, linked to legally established entities in the Department of Cundinamarca or Boyacá, whether in alliance with national groups or individually. • Research groups with current recognition by Colciencias and seeders of research accompanied of a research group with current recognition by Colciencias. • Research groups with current recognition by Colciencias in Alliance with non-recognised research groups, attached in both cases to legally established entities in the Department of Cundinamarca or Boyacá, as organised civil society, companies, territorial entities, and/or autonomous corporations with jurisdiction in the Department of Cundinamarca or Boyacá. Likewise, alliances with Max Plank groups and Research 	

<p>and Technological Development centres are allowed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For applications and development of projects, groups or alliances can be made. Associates must evidence their commitment through the established mechanisms in this call, guaranteeing the participation during the execution of the project, as well as the contribution of match funding, either in cash or in kind decided to support the project. If applicable, applications must include the research authorisations from the relevant authorities. 	
International travel:	Up to £1300
Domestic travel:	£150
Subsistence costs per person per day:	£100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	£2000

3. Chile	
National Partner:	CONICYT
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<p>Chilean Principal Applicants must be working for any of the following institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public or private not-for-profit higher education institutions (universities, institutes) Public or not-for-profit private research centres Not-for-profit organizations with experience in research 	
International travel:	Up to £1600 (economy)
Domestic travel:	Up to £200 (economy)
Subsistence costs per person per day:	£100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	(venue will not be financed by the fund)

4. Peru	
National co-funder:	CONCYTEC
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peruvian Principal Applicants must be working for any of the following institutions: 	

- Public or private higher education and research institutions (universities, institutes)
- Public or private not-for-profit research centres
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Peruvian Lead Institutions must have at least 3 years of activities, and hold an active RUC (“activo y habido” according to SUNAT).
- All institutions, except higher education institutions, should demonstrate their high quality research level through at least two published papers on biodiversity in peer-reviewed research journals. Abstracts should be attached in a ZIP-file at the end of the online application.
- Peruvian Principal Applicants must have all their information updated in DINA (National Directory of Researchers and Innovators), especially publications and scientific research.
- Peruvian Principal Applicants must be registered in REGINA (National Registry of Researchers), or have a scientific publications record that would allow to obtain the minimal score to be registered in REGINA (See the REGINA rules here and the REGINA scoring table here).
- Peruvian Principal Applicants should not have breached previous contracts with Cienciactiva/FONDECYT.
- The letter of support from the Peruvian Lead Institution must include the nature and duration of the relationship with the Peruvian Principal Applicant.

International travel:	Up to £1500 (economy)
Domestic travel:	Up to £150 (economy)
Subsistence costs per person per day:	Up to £100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	Up to £2000

5. Brazil	
National co-funder:	FAPESP for domestic travel for Researcher based in the State of Sao Paulo
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop Coordinators from the State of São Paulo must be or have been Principal or Co-Principal Investigators of research projects funded by FAPESP within at least one of the following FAPESP funding lines: Thematic Projects, Young Investigators Award (JP), Research, Innovation and Dissemination Centers (CEPIDs/RIDCs), and Research Partnership for Technological Innovation (PITE). • Further funding for domestic travel only for Brazilian researchers, based in the State of Sao Paulo, is available from FAPESP. Please, follow the additional guidelines at www.fapesp.br/11100 to seek more information. 	

International travel:	Up to £1500
Domestic travel:	£150
Subsistence costs per person per day:	£100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	£2000

6. Argentina	
National co-funder:	CONICET / MINCyT
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications must include a UK Principal Researcher and an Argentine Principal Researcher (Senior Researcher), based at a public or private university, CONICET Research Centres, National Research Institutes, or Research Facilities of Public Entities. • Argentine Principal Applicants must be a research staff member of the Entities mentioned above and be part of ongoing national research projects. • If applicable, applications must include the research authorisations from the relevant authorities. 	
International travel:	Up to £1500
Domestic travel:	£150
Subsistence costs per person per day:	£100
Event costs per person per day:	£25
Additional workshop costs:	£2000

Calculating your budget request

To calculate the budget contribution that can be requested in each category, applicants should use the unit costs for each country where the workshop takes place, as indicated in Appendix 1.

International travel unit rates and visa costs should be multiplied by the number of international participants.

Domestic travel unit rates should be multiplied by the number of domestic participants.

Subsistence should be multiplied by the combined number of International and domestic participants and by the number of days the workshop lasts.

Additional workshop costs must be a maximum of £2000.

EXAMPLE: The budget for a workshop lasting 4 days and taking place in a partner country (example) attended by 20 UK-based researchers and 20 researchers based in the partner country would be calculated as follows:

20 X £1200 (international travel) = £24000

20 X £150 (domestic travel) = £3000

40 X £100 (subsistence costs) = £4000 X 4 days (duration of the workshop) = £16000

40 X £30 (event rate) = £1200 X 4 days (duration of the workshop) = £4800

£2000 (additional workshop costs)

= £49,800 total maximum contribution that can be requested.

APPENDIX 2: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CHECKLIST

Eligibility criteria checklist	
The application has been submitted by the applicant by the published deadline	
The applicants have uploaded letters of support from each of the co-ordinators' home institutions	
The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given	
The application form has been completed in English	
Only one application per co-ordinator has been submitted in this round (please note that there is no limit on the number of applications submitted per institution)	
The workshop will take place between 1 March 2018 to 31 August 2018	
The institutions where the workshop co-ordinators are based are recognised publicly funded research establishments or Higher Education Institutions (can include private universities)	
Applicants must have the capacity to administer a grant and satisfy British Council requirements to prevent bribery, fraud and professional misconduct. Applicants will confirm that they comply with British Council requirements by responding to pre-submission questions in the online application form	
The workshop participants are in line with the quotas as described in this document.	

APPENDIX 3: QUALITY REVIEW SCORING SYSTEM

Assessment of the quality and development relevance of the proposals will be performed by panel members in the UK, and the final funding decisions will be made in discussion with British Council country office and in-country partners, if applicable. Proposals with an average score of less than 30 points are considered not fundable. Equally, only proposals that have clearly articulated relevance to economic development and social welfare of the partner country will be considered for funding.

Section 1: Relevance to economic development and social welfare	Score	Range
<p>The proposal clearly articulates a plausible pathway along which the research may contribute to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country and lead to positive impact on the lives of people on a low income within a reasonable timeframe (10–15 years).</p> <p>Please see guidance for applicants for further details.</p>		YES/NO

Section 2: Research quality and relevance	Score	Range
		0–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The academic importance and timeliness of the research topic is clearly demonstrated. The workshop co-ordinators have sufficient relevant experience to lead the proposed workshops and achieve the stated objectives. The collaborating institutions are of appropriate academic standing. 	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	

Section 3: Workshop proposal	Score	Range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the workshop includes clear, feasible and realistic objectives and outputs. There is clear evidence that the proposed workshop supports new links or significantly extends and develops existing links. The benefits and relevance of the collaboration to the UK and partner country institution, and to the research itself, are clearly described. There is strong evidence of support from both the home and host institutions. The workshop is justified as a standalone activity, or as part of a larger programme. The agenda of the workshop is will structured with interactive sessions. 		0–20
	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	

Section 4: Sustainability and capacity building	Score	Range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential in terms of professional development and capacity building for early career researchers taking part in the workshop, and for other potential beneficiaries, is clearly described. The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of how the workshop co-ordinators' institutions intend to sustain their collaboration over the longer term. 		0–20
	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	
Total score for quality assessment (Section 2 + Section 3 + Section 4)	Score	Range
		0–60

APPENDIX 4: PRIORITY AREAS IN BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMME (JOINTLY CONSTRUCTED WITH NERC)

The programme will be delivered through four, inter-related themes that set out the considerations required to deliver a better understanding of the regional biodiversity and how it can be effectively managed as the region develops:

1. Understanding habitats and species

Many regions in LATAM are either underexplored for biodiversity, or are suffering significant biodiversity loss. Across the region, biodiversity is still very poorly described compared with that of temperate regions. There are three key knowledge deficiencies: 1) while some taxa are relatively well known (for example tropical plants or birds) these are rarely surveyed in sufficient detail across whole landscapes, which detracts from our ability to understand ecosystem functioning or human impacts at this level; 2) other key biodiversity groups (for example, soil organisms), are not well studied at any level; 3) interactions between organisms, such as those above- and below-ground or across trophic levels, are poorly understood yet are likely play a key role in regulating habitats and biogeochemical cycles.

These three knowledge gaps mean that there is a need to: 1) expand existing sample networks for well-sampled taxa; 2) supplement networks with basic assessments and valuations for poorly studied taxa, including evaluations of their distribution, abundance and community composition, and; 3) field experiments that link biodiversity with their functional roles in intact and human-disturbed systems.

We have a very limited understanding how the species richness and its functional consequences in terms of levels of biodiversity required to provide the ecosystem services we need and how to manage land and resource use to support important biodiversity-ecosystem function relationships in an integrated way.

The objective of this theme is to better understand the relationship between habitats and species and species composition across what is an increasingly anthropogenic region. There is a need specifically to understand the functional role of biodiversity in LATAM ecosystems across a range of ecosystem goods and services, environmental gradients and scales typical of real landscapes.

2. Biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods and bio-economy

There is an urgent need in Latin America to develop a resilient natural resource economy. Social and economic policy linked to environmental pressures will result in land-use changes that will influence biodiversity and ecosystem processes at multiple scales. Moving to a natural resource economy will necessitate radical improvements in the quality and quantity of information on the biodiversity and the ecosystem services the biodiversity sits within. There is a need to link biodiversity to function, and to better understand the different ways in which biodiversity imparts value (for example, through functions, through resilience and through iconic species).

To help deliver a stable economy, data on Latin American biodiversity will provide essential knowledge underpinning sustainable management and our understanding of ecosystem function. In many areas the data required for the next-generation models of ecosystem function and landscape scale management are lacking. There are three major challenges: a) implementation of high throughput monitoring; b) modelling and understanding land-use biodiversity function metrics; c) delivering an integrated tool for decision makers. Each of these involves a large effort, given the scale within the region, and so exemplar approaches may be required.

The objective of this theme is better understand the biodiversity resource available within the region, using new technological and skills capacity, to monitor, model; and provide decision

making tools directed towards ensuring the regions bio-economy is biodiversity based and thus sustainable.

3. Maintaining and restoring natural capital

Many pressing biodiversity challenges in Latin America relate to human interactions with biodiversity, either negative (e.g. anthropogenic impacts) or positive (e.g. sustainable economic activities and livelihoods based on biodiversity, development of successful bio-economies, climate-smart agriculture etc.). This requires intensified research efforts into the identification of species, landscapes or ecosystems of potential use: for example the identification of wild species for food, forestry, health or biotechnology. Research in these contexts, integrating community-level perspectives, priorities and knowledge with scientific understanding of biodiversity, requires an interdisciplinary approach.

The challenges of managing biodiversity in situ in Latin America are intricately linked with these issues. Whilst fundamental research into the status of species and ecosystems provides critical guidance for management strategies of, for example protected areas, these approaches are not always successful. Development of a better understanding of the natural capital that biodiversity represents and the ecosystem services it delivers – from multiple perspectives including local populations, and across ‘natural’/human-modified/urban landscapes – and integration of these values into decision-making, will be essential for sustainable management.

Prioritisation and delivery of successful ex situ conservation efforts requires a greater understanding not only of the properties, traits and relative importance of target taxa (e.g. threatened species, useful species, endemic species), but also of the techniques necessary for their long-term maintenance. For example, fundamental information on which seed plant species can be stored through traditional approaches, and which (e.g. recalcitrant species) require development of specialised approaches such as cryopreservation, is still lacking for large proportions of the Latin American flora.

The objective of this theme is better understand presence and in-situ value of the biodiversity resource within the region, through the use of a range of natural capital approaches (and beyond economic valuation only). In doing so, and in association with the other themes this will inform on the most suitable approaches for maintaining the biodiversity.

4. Global Climate Change, Biodiversity and ecosystems

Whilst regions within LATA are hotspots of terrestrial biodiversity, the loss, fragmentation and degradation of the habitats across the region are drivers of global biodiversity loss and have important implications for the global climate system. For example, the loss of tropical forests has important implications for the global climate system, as well as a range of other ecosystem services. Deforestation is second only to the combustion of fossil fuels for energy generation as a source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The objective of this theme is to place the better understanding of LATAM biodiversity, its range, functioning and management, within a global and climate impact context.

Delivery of programme

Integrating ground data with emerging technologies

New technological capacity is enabling rapid improvement in quality and quantity of information on biodiversity and ecosystems at regional, national, and international scales. This is mirrored by enhanced data visualisation and predictive capability of modelling approaches. Changes are occurring at both ends of the biodiversity analysis spectrum: advances in genetic metabarcoding have enabled a rapid assessment of biodiversity at highly resolved spatial and taxonomic scales;

earth observation (EO) sensors, e.g. European Copernicus satellites, deliver unprecedentedly high-resolution spatial and temporal observations of biophysical parameters.

Of equal importance is the capability in ground-based data collection on Latin American biodiversity, which provides essential knowledge underpinning conservation and understanding of ecosystem function. These data provide a fundamental complement to, and verification of, remotely sensed and genetic information. Whilst technological advances in earth observation and modelling offer huge potential for multi-scale survey, prediction and monitoring of biodiversity in Latin America, the value of the information they deliver will depend on the quality and quantity of the ground data supporting them. Knowing what species are is vital for next-generation models of ecosystem function; and whilst remote sensing is suitable for landscape scales, it cannot name individual species. In particular, it is clear that rare species – often taxonomically neglected and hard to name – may play disproportionate roles as environments change.

In many parts of the region such ground-based data are still lacking. There remains a pressing need to fill knowledge gaps, which can only be achieved through targeted, fundamental ground-based biodiversity studies. The roles of approaches such as species inventory and checklists, collections, taxonomic identification, ecological studies and establishment of permanent monitoring plots, therefore remain vitally important in this context. The challenge here is to ensure that field data are collected in standardised, compatible formats, and based on accurate identifications aligned to standardised taxonomic frameworks, such that data can not only be connected and shared effectively at regional scale, for example in the context of evaluating the impacts of climatic change on ecosystem function and species distribution, but also integrated systematically into emerging techniques for biodiversity analysis and monitoring.

Barcoding and metabarcoding techniques offer potential for rapid generation of high-resolution ground data, and their use will often depend on connecting individual sequences to named organisms. However, the underlying taxonomic/genetic data set does not currently exist for many regions. The true value of both data sets will rely on their integration and a strategic, coordinated approach is required for achieving this at regional scale.

Advances in EO (such as the increasing range of biophysical parameters for example from the ESA Climate Change Initiative (CCI) and the Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBV) programme), genomics, and modelling and computation, can be used to analyse high-resolution spatial datasets of biodiversity and ecosystem services and their spatial patterns and temporal changes. Ensuring the value of analysis at these scales requires the presence of ground based (taxonomic/ecological) data; together they may enable a more objective and spatially relevant assessment of changes in land management and ecosystem resilience.

Regional approaches to research and management of biodiversity are therefore hampered by the lack of consistent data frameworks and their interoperability. For example, there is a lack of standardised vegetation classifications, which differ widely across Latin America, especially where biomes and ecosystems are shared across national borders. Better agreed definitions of biomes and ecosystems would allow generation of checklists for major formations such as rain forests, savannas and dry forests, which do not currently exist, and would facilitate regional analysis and cooperation.