

Partnerships for People and Planet

Third International Conference on Health and Biodiversity – Cohab3
Galway City, Ireland, 14th – 17th September 2026

Call for Abstracts and Side Event Proposals

Abstract and side event deadline extended to Friday 28th August 2026

Abstracts for oral and poster presentations and proposals for side events for the Third International Conference on Health and Biodiversity are welcome from a diversity of disciplines, perspectives, topics and approaches at the interface of health and biodiversity, and their nexus with other global challenges including climate, water, food, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

1. Oral presentations

Oral presentations should align with the main theme of the conference, **Partnerships for People and Planet**, contributing to discussions on the importance of co-operation between governments, economic sectors, scientific disciplines and communities on issues linking health and biodiversity, and the intersection of these with climate, water, food, disaster risk and humanitarian assistance. Presentations may focus on any relevant aspect of science, policy, theoretical frameworks, or practical interventions.

Abstracts should be proposed for a specific parallel session or major theme, from the following list:

- **Pandemic Prevention:** The role of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem sustainability in reducing pandemic risks, accounting for human, wildlife, livestock, plant and ecosystem health.
- **Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition:** Exploring the importance of biodiversity for food and nutritional resources, including social well-being and cultural dimensions of food production, preparation, and trade.
- **Oceans and Health:** Exploring the importance of ocean ecosystems for health and well-being, including relevance to communicable and non-communicable diseases and disaster risk reduction.
- **Health Equity for Women and Youth:** Understanding the gender dimension in biodiversity-health interlinkages, from differentiated dependencies and risks to unique perspectives and contributions to governance; empowering woman and youth in decision making, and promoting inter-generational learning for planetary health.
- **Disaster Risk Reduction, Relief and Recovery:** The role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in building resilience: reducing disaster risk, supporting disaster relief, and assisting in disaster recovery efforts.
- **Urban Community Health and Well-being:** Understanding the urban dimensions of health-biodiversity linkages, including epidemiological issues, the urban sustainability paradox and ecosystem justice, and community engagement.

Offered presentations should focus on the core theme of the particular session for which they are proposed, and additionally should aim to fall under one of the following three thematic pillars, each of which will be addressed within each session:

- State of Knowledge
- Coherence and Synergies
- Human Rights-Based Approaches

Intending presenters should review the outline of key issues to be considered under each session (see [Parallel Session Overview](#) attached as an appendix to this document). This provides an indicative list to guide intending presenters, and perspectives are welcome from all relevant disciplines and perspectives. Presenters should also refer to the [Agenda](#) page on the conference website. Consideration of cross-cutting issues is also welcome.

Please note: Intending presenters are reminded that the conference audience will comprise a diversity of disciplines, backgrounds, subject matter expertise, and interests, and are expected to tailor their presentations accordingly. As such, oral presentations which aim to focus solely on a specific narrow scientific research finding or dataset, or a narrow policy interest, are unlikely to be appropriate for the conference *unless* the information is accompanied by a more expansive interpretation of their relevance to the session themes, or presented in a broader context, e.g. the wider application of concepts, principles, research findings, interventions, needs assessment, rights-based approaches, etc. in line with the agenda of the relevant parallel session.¹

Please direct any questions on possible oral presentation topics to the organisers at cohab3@cohabinitiative.org.

Organisations and intending participants wishing to offer an oral presentation are kindly requested to send their abstract(s) by email to cohab3@cohabinitiative.org (or as an attachment to their letter of nomination), and to provide the following details:

- The title of the presentation
- A short abstract of up to 300 words
- The conference parallel session(s) for which the presentation is being offered (presentations may be relevant to more than one session)
- The pillar(s) with which the presentation will align (State of Knowledge, Coherence and Synergies, or Human Rights-Based Approaches) (presentations may be relevant to more than one pillar)
- The name of the presenter(s) and their affiliations
- The type of presentation intended and resources required (e.g. PowerPoint, video etc)

Presentations should be prepared for 15 minutes in duration, including time for two to three questions or discussion. Up to five abstracts may be submitted per organisation, however please note that the number of presentations accepted from any single person or organisation may be limited, in order to facilitate our goals of promoting equitable participation and engagement (subject to consideration of abstracts submitted, and the thematic and regional spread of presentation content).

Responses to abstract submission will be issued within 7 days of receipt of the abstract(s), at which time further details may be requested including a more detailed abstract (up to 500 words), or guidance given to ensure that the presentation will align with the intended aims of the relevant session.

¹ For example, a presentation based solely on research results on the occurrence of a specific pollutant in a community setting would most likely not be fitting for any session unless the presentation placed the issue in the context of the conservation or sustainable use of biodiversity and its relevance to health, and / or nature-based solutions / ecosystem based approaches to reducing health risk, and / or the relevance of the findings from a human rights perspective.

The extended deadline for oral abstract submission is **Friday 28th August 2026**.

2. Poster presentations

The scope for poster presentations is much more open than for oral presentations; intending presenters should ideally align their poster topics with a specific conference session or theme, but more leeway on content is offered.

Space for poster presentations will be provided in a pre-conference area. Organisations and intending participants wishing to offer poster presentation are kindly requested to send their abstract(s) by email to cohab3@cohabinitiative.org (or as an attachment to their letter of nomination), and to provide the following details:

- The title of the presentation
- A short abstract of up to 300 words
- The conference parallel session(s) for which the poster presentation is most closely aligned
- The name of the presenter(s) and their affiliation

Poster dimensions should be standard A1 paper size (594 x 841 mm), with a tolerance of plus 5% to minus 10% in width and height, and in portrait orientation.

Up to five poster abstracts may be submitted per organisation, however please note that the number of posters accepted from any single person or organisation may be limited, in order to facilitate our goals of promoting equitable participation and engagement (subject to consideration of abstracts submitted, and the thematic and regional spread of presentation content).

Responses to poster abstract submission will be issued within 7 days of receipt of the abstract(s), at which time further details may be requested including a more detailed abstract (up to 500 words), or guidance given to ensure that the poster presentation will align with the intended aims of the conference. Please note that space will be limited, and therefore it may not be possible to accept every presentation offered. However, in such cases virtual space may be offered here on the Cohab Initiative website, and posters may still be included in the conference proceedings, where feasible.

The extended deadline for poster abstract submission is **Friday 28th August 2026**.

3. Side Events

Proposals for side events are invited from interested participants or organisations. Time and space for side events may be offered to participants subject to alignment with the general themes of the conference. Side events may be held during the morning before the official start time for the conference sessions, during the lunch break, or in the afternoon following the close of the conference sessions.

Allocation of times for side events will be subject to availability and on a first-come, first-served basis and at the discretion of the conference organisers.

Organisations or participants wishing to host a side event are requested to apply for a space by email to cohab3@cohabinitiative.org (or as an attachment to their letter of nomination) providing the following details:

- Title of the side event

- A summary of up to 1,000 words
- The style of the side event (e.g. workshop, seminar, panel discussion etc)
- The name of the presenter(s), speakers or panellists
- Resources required (e.g. PowerPoint, video monitors etc)

Side events will be up to 90 minutes in duration. A fee of €150 will be applicable to side events to cover costs of additional administration and resourcing.

Persons or organisations may propose up to three side events. Collaborative events hosted by more than one organisation are particularly encouraged. Responses to side event proposals will be issued within 7 days of receipt of the application, at which time further details may be requested.

The deadline for side event proposals is **Friday 28th August 2026**.

4. Requests for additional meeting room space

Meeting room space for additional workshops, meetings etc may be available on a first-come, first served basis on the day after the close of the main Cohab3 conference, on Friday 18th September 2026. To book a meeting room for the 18th, the following details are requested:

- Title of the event
- A summary of up to 1,000 words
- The style of the side event (e.g. workshop, seminar, panel discussion, organisational meeting etc)
- Resources required (e.g. PowerPoint, video monitors etc)

Additional meeting rooms are available on 18th September for a maximum of 3 hours.

For meeting rooms on 18th September, a fee of €250 is applicable.

Responses to requests for meeting rooms will be issued within 7 days of receipt of the application, at which time further details may be requested.

The deadline for booking meeting rooms on Friday 18th September is **Friday 28th August 2026**.

All queries regarding oral and poster presentations and side events should be directed to cohab3@cohabinitiative.org. This document, the abstract submission process and associated terms are subject to review and may be amended at any time at the discretion of Cohab. Updates of this document will be posted on the conference website.

Call for abstracts
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Cohab Initiative Secretariat

Third International Conference on Health and Biodiversity – Cohab 3

Galmont Hotel and Spa, Galway City, Ireland. Monday 14th – Thursday 17th September 2026

Overview of Parallel Sessions**1. Main conference theme**

The overarching theme of the conference is **Partnerships for People and Planet**. The conference aims to highlight opportunities for enhanced multilateral cooperation on planetary health, and new partnerships across disciplines, sectors, borders, and communities.

Each parallel session will address a specific cross-cutting theme linking biodiversity and health in a specific context, within which scientific and policy findings will be shared with examples from existing initiatives, on-the-ground experience and community perspectives.

2. Thematic pillars

In order to ensure that each session can contain a balance of content across science, policy and practical experience-sharing, and align with the main conference theme, the parallel sessions are framed by three specific pillars which help to provide a narrative structure within which knowledge and experience can be shared:

- I. ***The State of Knowledge*** – based on scientific research, policy experience, lessons from practical interventions, and local / community knowledge and needs
- II. ***Synergies and coherence*** – exploring opportunities for integrating the issues across multilateral agreements (on environment, health, human rights, and humanitarian assistance) and at national and subnational levels, and in research and practice
- III. ***Human-rights based approaches*** - ensuring that policy, science and practical interventions for health, biodiversity, climate food and water are designed, implemented and monitored in accordance with international human rights obligations and principles, with particular attention to the rights of Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and under-represented, marginalised or groups in situations of vulnerability.

Discussions and presentations within each parallel session will align with one or more of these pillars; this will support cross-linking between sessions and facilitate preparation of the final conference report.

3. Session topics and key issues

A preliminary outline of key issues to be considered under each parallel session is provided below.

Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition

- a) The importance of agricultural biodiversity and wild biodiversity in realising the rights to adequate food, nutrition and health through diverse, resilient diets
- b) Agroecology, agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, and integrated crop–livestock systems for resilient, nutrition-sensitive food systems
- c) The value of agrobiodiversity in school gardens, and education on agrobiodiversity for children's diets; realizing children's rights to food, health, education and development, while shaping healthy and sustainable diets.
- d) Conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture, local seeds and native food crops, crop wild relatives, and the role of underutilised species, as the foundation for the right to food, climate resilience and intergenerational equity
- e) Addressing perverse incentives and agribusiness practices which impact biodiversity and ecosystem health,, culturally appropriate diets, food diversity, and food sovereignty
- f) Opportunities for human rights-based coherence between policies on biodiversity, food, climate and health, and synergies between multilateral agreements
- g) Linking soil health, food diversity and dietary health
- h) Water resource security for agroecosystems
- i) Foodborne diseases, zoonotic risks in food systems, and antimicrobial resistance across the food chain
- j) Recognising and promoting the right to adequate food, nutrition and health through diverse, resilient diets
- k) The role of local and indigenous food systems and wider biocultural aspects of food production, preparation, and trade
- l) Upholding the rights to culture, food, health and self-determination within biocultural systems, and addressing threats to culturally appropriate diets, local and traditional food systems, and food sovereignty

Pandemic prevention

- a) Relationships between biodiversity, ecosystem change and risks of disease emergence, including consideration of climate change and other key drivers of emergence (and including diseases of humans, domesticated animals, crops and wildlife)
- b) Priority research and action areas for pandemic prevention that are grounded in human rights, equity and prevention-oriented approaches

- c) Foodborne diseases, zoonotic risks in food systems, and antimicrobial resistance across the food chain
- d) Practical experience from One Health approaches at national and local levels, integrating human rights, biodiversity protection and public health outcomes
- e) Synergies at global, regional and national level – Global Pandemic Agreement, UNFCCC, UN CBD, CMS, Ramsar etc
- f) Integrated and intersectional solutions for addressing pandemic risk through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including community-led initiatives
- g) Pandemic risk, protected areas, and right-based approaches
- h) The use of integrated surveillance and data-sharing systems for early detection; ecological countermeasures etc.
- i) Community perspectives: linking biodiversity, livelihoods, poverty and disease risk with attention to equity, participation and the rights of those most affected.

Health Equity for Women and Youth

- a) The differential impacts of biodiversity loss on the health of women and youth, including consideration of biocultural aspects and the additive impacts of climate change
- b) The contributions of women and youth across all communities to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as key rights holders, knowledge holders, and agents of change
- c) Advancing women's economic empowerment and biodiversity goals through sustainable resource use and equitable benefit sharing
- d) Empowering women and youth in leadership roles for planetary health science, policy, and action plans
- e) Supporting intergenerational knowledge transfer on biodiversity and health
- f) Gender and youth-responsive policy development and implementation - enhancing equitable, effective and inclusive biodiversity and health outcomes
- g) Gender and youth health priorities as drivers of policy coherence, synergy and transformative change
- h) Dimensions of justice for women and youth addressing recognition, participation, distributional and contextual dimensions, and ensuring their effective engagement in policy implementation and decision-making processes.
- i) Distributive health impacts of pollution on women and youth

Oceans and Health

- a) Relationships between coastal and marine ecosystems and health, highlighting their significance for wellbeing, livelihoods and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- b) The role of oceans and coastal ecosystems in mediating climate-related health risks
- c) Ocean resource exploration and exploitation – opportunities and risks for health with attention to harm, equity and accountability
- d) Marine and coastal food resources, food systems and food safety, and risks from contaminants, harmful algal blooms, and foodborne diseases
- e) Policy synergies and opportunities to enhance coherence – including via CBD, UNFCCC, UNCLOS and the High Seas Treaty, OSPAR etc - to advance rights-based and integrated action on oceans, climate and health
- f) Coastal community perspectives, particularly from small island developing states, highlighting lived experiences linking marine biodiversity, right to health, and right to food
- g) Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) and artisanal livelihoods, especially those led by women
- h) Human, wildlife and ecosystem health implications of ocean plastics, wastewater, chemicals and other forms of pollution, and related health aspects of global contaminant transport
- i) Cultural and social well-being dimensions of ocean ecosystems

Urban Community Health and Well-being

- a) Environmental drivers shaping community health outcomes, including through biodiversity loss, pollution, unequal access to green and blue urban environments, climate change, invasive alien species etc.
- b) Epidemiology of mental well-being and physical fitness in urban environments, including socio-cultural aspects of access to nature
- c) Cardiovascular disease, allergy, respiratory disease,
- d) Long term, nature-based solutions for biodiversity, climate change and health for growing urban populations, in the same line – highlighting the role of biodiversity and social determinants of health
- e) Identifying and addressing the specific risks and needs for the health of women and girls in urban areas
- f) Linking health and biodiversity in impact and risk assessment for urban planning, and linking with climate action
- g) Accessibility of green and blue urban environments and implications for health equity
- h) Implications of migration to and from cities and other demographic changes in urban communities for the design and quality of green and blue urban environments
- i) Biocultural competence in urban health care

- j) Urban food systems and food sovereignty, including women-led community initiatives and urban school gardens

Disaster Risk Reduction, Relief and Recovery

- a) Nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches and ecosystem services in disaster risk reduction
- b) Health benefits of nature-based climate risk mitigation and adaptation - supporting the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment
- c) Ecosystem approaches in multi-hazard early warning systems, risk assessment, and cross-sector coordination for prevention and preparedness
- d) Conflict, biodiversity and health including impacts on vulnerability, access to resources and the protection of civilians
- e) Addressing the health impacts of ecosystem disruption associated with conflict, and the role of biodiversity conservation in post-conflict recovery and peace-building
- f) Differentiated impacts of ecosystem disruption from armed conflict and colonial legacies on indigenous peoples
- g) Delivering relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, supporting equitable and sustainable post-disaster outcomes
- h) Addressing inequalities in relative risk across communities and social groups, and the use of rights-based approaches to reduce disproportionate impacts and strengthen resilience.
- i) Social and health implications of biocultural dislocation for refugees and displaced people

Cohab Initiative Secretariat
<https://cohabinitiative.org>