

Development by Design



The Nature Conservancy's Development by Design promotes a proactive approach to help guide sustainable development decision-making by looking beyond individual project locations to identify the cumulative impacts of development on natural areas across the landscape (whole ecosystems). Incorporating landscape-level conservation planning can dramatically improve traditional mitigation efforts. Development by Design supports blending conservation planning with the “mitigation hierarchy”—**first avoid, then minimize/restore, and finally offset**—to address critical issues for effective mitigation:

- Where might future development and conservation goals be compatible or in conflict?
- What impacts should be avoided? What impacts can be offset through compensatory conservation actions?
- How can offsets deliver ecological equivalence (i.e., similar conservation values)?
- How much do offsets compensate for project impacts?
- Which offsets can deliver the greatest conservation value at the lowest cost and risk?

Development by Design supports more effective mitigation options to balance development and conservation needs, avoid impacts to sensitive natural areas and wildlife, and identify opportunities to offset remaining impacts.

Marine Planning

Practical approaches to ocean and coastal decision-making.

<https://marineplanning.org>

Watch a Video of Development by Design concept: