

Reporting Summary

Nature Research wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Research policies, see [Authors & Referees](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistical parameters

When statistical analyses are reported, confirm that the following items are present in the relevant location (e.g. figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section).

n/a Confirmed

- The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
- An indication of whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
- The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.
- A description of all covariates tested
- A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
- A full description of the statistics including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
- For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.
- For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
- For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
- Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated
- Clearly defined error bars
State explicitly what error bars represent (e.g. SD, SE, CI)

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) may be useful.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection

No software (besides Excel spreadsheets and Powerpoint for charts) was used

Data analysis

No software (besides Excel spreadsheets and Powerpoint for charts) was used

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors/reviewers upon request. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Research [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A list of figures that have associated raw data
- A description of any restrictions on data availability

The project database generated and analysed during the current study is available at <https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000289554>. Source data for the figures is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

Life sciences Behavioural & social sciences Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see [nature.com/authors/policies/ReportingSummary-flat.pdf](https://www.nature.com/authors/policies/ReportingSummary-flat.pdf)

Life sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Sample size	<i>Describe how sample size was determined, detailing any statistical methods used to predetermine sample size OR if no sample-size calculation was performed, describe how sample sizes were chosen and provide a rationale for why these sample sizes are sufficient.</i>
Data exclusions	<i>Describe any data exclusions. If no data were excluded from the analyses, state so OR if data were excluded, describe the exclusions and the rationale behind them, indicating whether exclusion criteria were pre-established.</i>
Replication	<i>Describe the measures taken to verify the reproducibility of the experimental findings. If all attempts at replication were successful, confirm this OR if there are any findings that were not replicated or cannot be reproduced, note this and describe why.</i>
Randomization	<i>Describe how samples/organisms/participants were allocated into experimental groups. If allocation was not random, describe how covariates were controlled OR if this is not relevant to your study, explain why.</i>
Blinding	<i>Describe whether the investigators were blinded to group allocation during data collection and/or analysis. If blinding was not possible, describe why OR explain why blinding was not relevant to your study.</i>

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	The study mostly draws on quantitative data (financial and technical data on projects that have been financed by multilateral development banks [MDBs]). To help us understand the patterns that are visible in the data (and, in some cases, to clarify questions regarding the project data of specific banks), the analysis was complemented by expert interviews with senior MDB officials.
Research sample	Quantitative data: All applicable projects from all relevant MDBs, that were mentioned in MDB databases. Complementary expert interviews: All interviewees are experts that were recently involved in energy projects financed by both the public- and private-sector branches of the MDBs under study.
Sampling strategy	Quantitative data: All applicable projects from all relevant MDBs (see Methods section for details). Complementary expert interviews: All interviewees are experts that were recently involved in energy projects financed by both the public- and private-sector branches of the MDBs under study. As the interviews were held under the Chatham House Rule, no references can be made to the interviewees nor their affiliations; however, Supplementary Table 2 provides an overview of interviewees' job titles/roles. The interviewees were contacted using information available from public sources and through the networks of the authors. A total of 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with officials from 6 different MDBs during 2016–2017.
Data collection	For almost all of the MDBs (except the CAF and the IsDB), we primarily drew upon project fact sheets, appraisal reports, environmental & social (E&S) reviews, project memos, board briefings and related documents, which were published by the banks following the approval of a project under their access-to-information policies. While basic information, such as project name, country and financing amount, is often published on the bank's website in a uniform way, further data needed to be extracted from documents with significant variations in structure and detail, which often represent different stages of the approval process (e.g. the initial project appraisal report assumed a higher financing volume than was later approved). Thus, the data was manually coded by seven research assistants. To account for missing data, secondary information was sourced via web searches of press reports (in English, Spanish and French) and company announcements. Each entry was independently checked by a second coder and, in case of disagreement, a senior researcher was involved. For the CAF, the Annual Reports include short summaries of all approvals made in the respective year. For the IsDB, an excel file of project approvals, including project name, country and financing amount, was provided. To further ensure the quality of the dataset, consistency checks were conducted on projects that were co-financed by several MDBs (each of which published their own project documents), as well as on projects that drew on a concessional financing source which similarly published some information on its supported projects (e.g. the Climate Technology Fund).
Timing	The study covers projects that have been approved 2006-2015; data collection happened 2016-2018
Data exclusions	No applicable data was excluded (the scope of projects under study is described in detail in the Methods section)
Non-participation	No participants dropped out/declined participation (some individuals we contacted for potential expert interviews did not reply to the e-mail; however, the interviews only served as complementary information for the discussion of the quantitative results, interviewees are

not supposed to be representative)

Randomization

Not applicable

Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	Briefly describe the study. For quantitative data include treatment factors and interactions, design structure (e.g. factorial, nested, hierarchical), nature and number of experimental units and replicates.
Research sample	Describe the research sample (e.g. a group of tagged <i>Passer domesticus</i> , all <i>Stenocereus thurberi</i> within Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument), and provide a rationale for the sample choice. When relevant, describe the organism taxa, source, sex, age range and any manipulations. State what population the sample is meant to represent when applicable. For studies involving existing datasets, describe the data and its source.
Sampling strategy	Note the sampling procedure. Describe the statistical methods that were used to predetermine sample size OR if no sample-size calculation was performed, describe how sample sizes were chosen and provide a rationale for why these sample sizes are sufficient.
Data collection	Describe the data collection procedure, including who recorded the data and how.
Timing and spatial scale	Indicate the start and stop dates of data collection, noting the frequency and periodicity of sampling and providing a rationale for these choices. If there is a gap between collection periods, state the dates for each sample cohort. Specify the spatial scale from which the data are taken
Data exclusions	If no data were excluded from the analyses, state so OR if data were excluded, describe the exclusions and the rationale behind them, indicating whether exclusion criteria were pre-established.
Reproducibility	Describe the measures taken to verify the reproducibility of experimental findings. For each experiment, note whether any attempts to repeat the experiment failed OR state that all attempts to repeat the experiment were successful.
Randomization	Describe how samples/organisms/participants were allocated into groups. If allocation was not random, describe how covariates were controlled. If this is not relevant to your study, explain why.
Blinding	Describe the extent of blinding used during data acquisition and analysis. If blinding was not possible, describe why OR explain why blinding was not relevant to your study.
Did the study involve field work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Field work, collection and transport

Field conditions	Describe the study conditions for field work, providing relevant parameters (e.g. temperature, rainfall).
Location	State the location of the sampling or experiment, providing relevant parameters (e.g. latitude and longitude, elevation, water depth).
Access and import/export	Describe the efforts you have made to access habitats and to collect and import/export your samples in a responsible manner and in compliance with local, national and international laws, noting any permits that were obtained (give the name of the issuing authority, the date of issue, and any identifying information).
Disturbance	Describe any disturbance caused by the study and how it was minimized.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Included in the study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unique biological materials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Antibodies
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Eukaryotic cell lines
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeontology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Animals and other organisms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Human research participants

Methods

n/a	Included in the study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ChIP-seq
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Flow cytometry
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> MRI-based neuroimaging