

100+ organizations voice concern at low ambition of biodiversity negotiations

Joint call at IUCN World Congress demands governments act to secure a nature-positive world by 2030

- **Unprecedented joint call from NGOs, business coalitions, faith groups, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local and regional governments, academics, and artists**
- **Growing concern at the lack of ambition by governments negotiating once-in-a-decade global biodiversity agreement**
- **Call for governments to strengthen the draft agreement ahead of COP15 in Kunming to secure a nature-positive world this decade**

MARSEILLE, France (7 September) Organizations representing all corners of society from around the world have come together to issue an unprecedented joint call for governments to strengthen a draft global biodiversity agreement.

The [post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) is currently being negotiated by governments under the auspices of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. It presents a once-in-a-decade opportunity for the world to secure a global agreement to halt and reverse the loss of nature, but the pace of negotiations has been slow and ambition lacking.

The growing concern is from leading organizations over the lack of ambition displayed by governments negotiating the agreement. NGOs, faith groups, local and regional governments, Indigenous Peoples, academics, youth, business coalitions and artists are united in calling for governments to deliver an ambitious agreement at COP15 that reverses biodiversity loss to secure a nature-positive world by 2030.

The joint call to action will be discussed today at a [launch event](#), convened by non-state actors at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, taking place in Marseille, France. Speakers at the event include Inger Anderson, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme; Sam Myers, Director of the Planetary Health Alliance; Lucy Mullenkei, Executive Director, Indigenous Information Network; and Sofia Sprechmann, Secretary General of Care International.

Sign up [here](#) to register for the event and participate in person or virtually.

Human activities are causing a catastrophic loss of biodiversity, with [one million species now threatened by extinction](#). This destruction of nature undermines its ability to support us, placing human health and livelihoods at risk.

The signatories, which include leading academics, stress that reversing biodiversity loss is a moral responsibility, but it will also help [avoid future pandemics](#), fight [climate change](#) and land degradation, and enhance environmental security. Continued loss of nature

threatens not only [half of global GDP](#), but also our opportunities to uphold human rights, and reduce social and gender inequalities.

The strong presence of humanitarian and development organizations among the signatories reflects biodiversity loss' role in undermining human security and the need for connected action for nature and people.

Crucially, the call to governments highlights the commitments made by many world leaders in the past year to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, through the *Leaders' Pledge for Nature* and the *G7 2030 Nature Compact*. Leaders are called on to deliver an ambitious global biodiversity agreement which acts on these commitments.

To secure a nature-positive world by 2030, governments are urged to include a nature-positive mission in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and to ensure a rights-based approach, including to nature-based solutions and to conserving 30% of land, freshwater and seas by 2030.

Governments are further called on to ensure the final agreement tackles the drivers of biodiversity loss - including unsustainable agriculture and food systems, forestry, fisheries, infrastructure, and extractives - by securing a just transition that halves the footprint of production and consumption by 2030. Other key areas of the draft agreement that need strengthening include ensuring adequate financial resources and an effective implementation mechanism.

Quotes are provided below from a selection of the signatories:

Marco Lambertini, Director General of WWF International, said:

"The world has woken up to the enormous threat nature loss poses, not only to the natural world we have the duty to coexist with, but also to human lives and livelihoods. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework offers governments a once-in-a-decade opportunity to change course, yet the draft agreement falls short in a number of key areas, including in failing to address the economic drivers of nature loss and the re-direction of financial flows towards a nature-positive transition. Diverse voices from across society are sounding the alarm that commitments from world leaders are not translating into a strong plan of action. Governments must urgently work to strengthen the draft agreement ahead of COP15 to secure a nature-positive world by 2030."

Sam Myers, Director, Planetary Health Alliance, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health

"The field of planetary health teaches us that what we have historically cast as an "environmental" problem is actually a "human survival" problem. The rips we are tearing in the fabric of life and the degradation we are causing across most of Earth's natural systems have reached a scale that threatens our own survival and that of the rest of life on Earth. Embracing a new way of living that protects and regenerates Nature is not a choice to protect the environment; it is an imperative to safeguard a livable future."

Patricia Zurita, CEO, BirdLife International

"The current, devastating pandemic provides a stark warning that healthy economies and

healthy people rely on a healthy planet. With the failure of the Aichi Targets to stem the tide of biodiversity loss, it is critical that the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework galvanises ambitious, urgent and concrete action across society to halt and reverse nature loss so that we are nature-positive by 2030. We must ensure that this decade is the one in which we repair our relationship with nature, for the sake of our future and of the planet's."

Sofia Sprechmann, Secretary General, Care International

"Poverty and environmental degradation are two sides of the same coin. We can only build inclusive societies if we protect the ecosystems on which the poor rely, and to protect the ecosystems, we need to address the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice by strengthening equality, including gender equality and women's voices. There is no social justice without nature's conservation, and conservation efforts cannot succeed without social justice."

Andrew Morley, World Vision International President and CEO

"Children in the poorest countries are least to blame for climate change and biodiversity loss, yet they are suffering most because of them. Climate change means no food on the table because of drought; walking miles for water, instead of attending school; and being forced from home because of devastating floods, landslides or storms. We must urgently work together to respect the planet's God-given resources. And we must listen carefully to children – they are part of the solution, and must be empowered to shape their own futures."

Ahmad Alhendawi, Secretary General, World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM)

"Intergenerational equity and responsibility is a principle that must be reinforced through the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. We have a collective responsibility to engage young people as rights holders and empower them through education, formal and non-formal, to promote values that are crucial to respecting and restoring our ecosystems."

Carlos Madjri Sanvee, Secretary General, World YMCA

"Wherever I look in the global YMCA Movement, I see that – whatever challenges they face – it's in young people's nature to be positive. That's just one of the reasons why young people embrace the quest for a 'nature-positive' world by 2030. The natural world is theirs to inherit. We fully support this call to action, demanding of governments a Global Biodiversity Framework that is worthy of its name."

Nitin Ajmera, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Parliament of the World's Religions

"According to the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, one million species are at risk of extinction. The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework must meet the urgency of this moment with a robust and ambitious plan to conserve our planet's biodiversity. Solutions are at hand if we have the moral courage to plan and implement them. The faith community has already engaged in critical conservation projects and stands ready to assist further in this important task."

Karenna Gore, Founder and Director of the Center for Earth Ethics at Union Theological Seminary *Faith communities are calling for a strong Global Biodiversity Framework. For too long economic development has come at the expense of nature. Not only does this deplete the beauty and integrity of the Earth, it threatens humanity, which is interdependent with other species. A strong GBF is the way to reverse this tragic trajectory. The world's faiths are more*

than just implementation partners; they hold powerful viewpoints on the value of nature, including its spiritual value, which is core to many faith teachings and indigenous peoples. This level of engagement is vital if we are to restore balance and sustain life.

Balkisou Buba, President, Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development Cameroon
"Mankind is faced with multiple challenges and difficult moments following the "New Normal" (Covid-19). As Indigenous people through our traditional knowledge and practices we are working hard in saving our communities and world at large from this common enemy of mankind (Covid-19), climate change and biodiversity loss through adaptation and mitigation strategies. Indigenous women and girls are the backbone of the process, we are the solution that world has been looking for"

Yolanda Teran, Coordinator, Indigenous Women Network on Biodiversity from Latin America and the Caribbean (IWNB-LAC)

"From ancestral times Indigenous Peoples have considered Mother Earth as sacred and alive with interconnected and interrelated elements. She is home for all of us: the animals, plants, rivers, mountains, the house for the sacred, secret, seen and unseen beings. She offers us protection, and nurtures us through food, water, medicine, lands and territories for our livelihoods and sacred places to practice our spirituality. Our ancestral guardianship for Mother Earth will continue through our advocacy and full and effective participation at local, national, and international meetings. In this post-pandemic critical and complex time, we, including women, youth, and elders, are ready to work as partners within a framework of mutual respect and trust with governments, decision makers and multilateral organizations. Our goal is to make sure the implementation of our human rights and to achieve the holistic conservation of Mother Earth and all her beings.

Eva Zabey, Executive Director, Business for Nature

"This is our best chance to build a nature-positive future. An ambitious, understandable and actionable Global Biodiversity Framework will give businesses the political certainty they need to scale and speed up action. Our collective mission must be clear: reverse nature loss by 2030, and the targets must be transformative: align all financial flows to a nature-positive world and eliminate and redirect harmful subsidies."

Mark Gough, CEO Capitals Coalition

"We have an exceedingly rare opportunity to influence what could be a make-or-break framework for the future of our planet. We must all recognize our collective duty to ensure that the Global Biodiversity Framework is sufficiently ambitious to meet the moment and that it contains a strong, measurable and prioritized set of enforceable targets across society. The framework must contain a commitment to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, and an ambition to embed the value of nature in decision-making at all levels. It is also clear that to succeed, the framework must address the interconnected issues of climate change, nature loss, social inequity and human rights in an integrated and holistic way."

Diane Holdorf, Managing Director, Food & Nature, World Business Council for Sustainable Development

"The COVID-19 pandemic and connected economic crisis have shown governments and business the necessity to transform all systems to net-zero before 2050 and become nature positive by 2030. The scale and scope of business action needs an ambitious nature policy

framework that puts in place clear targets, the right incentives and support mechanisms. Business action today, to halt and reverse nature loss, needs to become transformational through investments and collaborations that contribute to an equitable, net zero and nature positive future. An ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework will help this become a reality.”

Gustavo Alberto Fonseca, Director of Programmes, Global Environment Fund (GEF)

“The current pace of biodiversity loss and natural resource extraction is significantly impacting the well-being of people around the world as well as the health of our planet. We urgently need an ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework that can halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and put our food, energy, and economic systems on a more sustainable path. Committing adequate financial resources to this effect, and eliminating harmful subsidies, will also be of crucial importance.”

Mr Gino Van Begin, Secretary General: ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

“Cities are an integral level of government, closest to the people, ensuring integration, and contributing to transformative change. They are key implementers contributing to global and national biodiversity targets, and through the CitiesWithNature platform, they are sharing and reporting on their ambitions and actions to protect nature.”

Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montreal and ICLEI Global Ambassador for Local Biodiversity

“Cities are on the front lines of the climate change, biodiversity and health crises, and are already taking action to protect ecosystems. Local and subnational governments are ready to partner for an ambitious global biodiversity agenda, as expressed in the Edinburgh Declaration, which already has 158 signatories.”

Anne-Marie Melster, Co-Founder and Executive Director, ARTPORT_ making waves

“We need to act now, all of us, there is no time left for long term debates and decision making processes. And the Global Biodiversity Framework is a good way to push governments and corporations to accelerate action for securing biodiversity and reducing emissions. We need as many contributors to this Call for Action as possible. On behalf of an interdisciplinary arts organisation which is pushing for environmental change bottom up and top down since 2005 we are grateful to be able to join this initiative and hope that many other arts organisations will follow, because they transmit scientific thoughts to civil society and can convince many stakeholders towards transformation. The arts are the linking element between the sciences and the citizens.”

Mark Deputter, Coordinator of ACT – Art, Climate, Transition

“It has become increasingly clear that our understanding and acceptance of the interdependence of all beings and things is a key factor to guarantee a livable future. Our willingness to change the way of how we are living together among humans and with the other beings on the planet is crucial to tackle not only problems of climate change and biodiversity, but also global justice and development. We need a Copernican change of perspective on where we stand as humans and we, at ACT, believe that the arts can be part of that effort, as artists and audiences critically look at the world around us and conjure up alternative ways of living together.”

Notes to Editors:

Contact: WWF International Media team news@wwfint.org

- The call to action, *Secure an equitable, nature positive, net zero emissions world*, is available to view [here](#). This will be updated with the full list of initial signatories at launch.
- **For latest signatories, ahead of launch, please see [here](#).**
- The call to action will remain open for additional signatories after launch. For further information, contact: Masha Lekic (mlekic@wwfint.org).
- The UN Convention on Biodiversity has confirmed that the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) will take place in two parts, the first scheduled for 11-15 October 2021 and including a high level segment, and the second scheduled for 25 April-8 May 2022, in Kunming, China. and including a second high level segment and concluding negotiations.
- *#TheRaceIsOn: Nature Positive by 2030* is a global multi-stakeholder communications campaign, supported by governments, business groupings and civil society, to drive ambition and action on nature through to the biodiversity and climate CoPs in 2021, and beyond, into a 'Decade of Action'.

WWF

WWF is an independent conservation organization, with over 30 million followers and a global network active in nearly 100 countries. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. Visit panda.org/news for the latest news and media resources; follow us on Twitter [@WWF_media](https://twitter.com/WWF_media)