

His Excellency
António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations Headquarters in New York
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY, 10017, USA

Your Excellency,

Local communities and organisations working on the ground closest to nature know better than most that humanity is reliant on nature for all of its daily needs - from food and water to clean air and livelihoods, as well as for physical and mental wellbeing. Nature is the ultimate provider. And this understanding means that those living most closely with the natural world are best placed to protect habitats and ecosystems so they provide for us long into the future.

Yet despite this knowledge, history of stewardship and reliance on nature, too often local voices have been ignored and marginalised. This must change. The numerous crises the world now faces, from climate change to species extinctions, will only be addressed when these voices are put at the heart of decision making, when their rights are acknowledged and their knowledge appreciated and supported.

Many billions of dollars a year are spent on defence, and trillions of dollars are spent on subsidising fossil fuels. By comparison almost nothing is spent on protecting and restoring the one thing that underpins life itself, and that together we cannot live without: nature. Recent reports say the world must spend many hundreds of billions every year on protecting nature and ecosystems, yet estimates are that only a fraction of this is invested in nature and biodiversity. We call on this to change. Local people, communities and organisations stand ready to protect irreplaceable habitats and restore degraded ecosystems, but their capacity to do this must be greatly increased, and this requires financial investment that matches the scale of the problem.

As the UN meets this week to discuss how to tackle the biodiversity crisis ahead of the critical UN biodiversity conference next year, we call on global governments to provide nature with the financial investment needed to safeguard all our futures. It is time for governments and businesses of the world to step up, take responsibility and deliver the funding for nature that is found so easily for activities that are harmful to nature. **We are calling for an initial \$500 billion yearly funding commitment, scaling up year-on-year, to reverse ecosystem degradation and protect the natural world.** This scale of financing is critical for future nature restoration as well as more immediate COVID-19 related relief, where cutbacks to frontline staff have opened the door to environmentally damaging activities. More funding must find its way to grass roots levels where it will be used most effectively.

But more money for nature is not enough on its own. It is time to shift what is prioritised. A healthy economy is only possible alongside a healthy environment. **So as finance for activities beneficial to nature is significantly increased, finance for activities that harm nature must be reduced and penalised. A fundamental reordering of how and where money gets spent is necessary.** Economists have determined that the services provided by ecosystems are worth \$125 trillion a year,



but in reality none of our economic activities are possible outside of nature. Nature is the invaluable element underpinning our human societies.

We are living through unprecedented times. It is time to take immediate, concrete action to protect the natural world so it can deliver wellbeing and provide for humanity long into the future. The COVID-19 crisis is a warning – whenever nature is misused and abused there will be consequences. Across the world, species that are critical to balanced ecosystems are threatened by habitat destruction, deforestation and over-fishing. Some have already been driven to extinction. And with increasing frequency we see the other consequences of an unbalanced relationship with nature – record-breaking floods, droughts, storms, and heat. From forest and ocean carbon sinks to natural flood defences, ensuring nature is protected and restored is essential to controlling climate change. The way land is used must also change. Despite the clearance of huge swathes of biodiverse land for commercial agriculture, two billion people on our planet are food insecure. New forms of food production, on land and in the oceans, based on local rights that empower communities, are necessary to provide long-term livelihoods and ensure food and its profits go to those who need it.

We cannot go on like this. A healthy environment is not a luxury – it is a right. The time for action is now. More failure is not an option.

Those of us working closest to nature know what it takes to achieve successful outcomes. We know that when nature is prioritised and properly financed, ecosystems can be protected, wildlife can thrive and people can be provided with the safe and secure livelihoods essential to a prosperous future.

Yours sincerely,

Fauna & Flora International, UK

Anguilla National Trust, Anguilla

Applied Environmental Research Foundation (AERF), India

Asociacion Movimiento de Jovenes de Ometepe (AMOJO), Nicaragua

Asociación Sanito de Nicaragua (SANITO), Nicaragua

Asociatia Zarand, Romania

Association for Community Development Agropastoral, Guinea

Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity Kazakhstan (ACBK), Kazakhstan

Association of Forest Land Users of Kyrgyzstan (AFLUK), Kyrgyzstan

Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group, Scotland

Barbados Sea Turtle Project, University of West Indies - Cavehill Campus

Bat Conservation Trust, UK

Biflores - Conservação da Biodiversidade, Republic of Cabo Verde

BIOFUND, Republic of Mozambique

BIOMA (Biocenosis Marina), Costa Rica

Biometepe R.L., Nicaragua

Bioresurs, Kyrgyzstan

Bumblebee Conservation Trust, UK

CALIDRIS, Colombia

Caribaea Initiative, France

Center for Biodiversity Conservation and Endangered Species, Vietnam



Center For Justice Governance & Environmental Action, Kenya
Centre de Forestier N'Zérékoré, Guinea
Centro Ballena Azul, Chile
Centro de Estudios Marinos, Honduras
CESTA FOE, El Salvador
CHRTF, Cambodia
CIMAD, Colombia
Community Association of Lochs and Sounds (CAOLAS), Scotland
Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST), Scotland
Community Resources Network Scotland, Scotland
Coope SoliDar, Costa Rica
CORDIO East Africa, Kenya
Crane and Wetlands Conservation Programme, Uganda
Danube.org, Hungary
Department of Environment, Antigua
Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Anguilla
Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Jersey
East African Wild Life Society, Kenya
Eco Friendly Volunteers, Sri Lanka
Ecosistemas, Chile
Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), South Africa
Enriched Horizons, Cambodia
Environmental Awareness Group, Antigua
Equilibrio Azul, Ecuador
Europarc Federation, Belgium
Evgeniya Chirikova, Russia
Fidra, Scotland
Flower Valley Conservation Trust, South Africa
FMB - Fundação Maio Biodiversidade, Republic of Cabo Verde
Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM), Haiti
Forestry Development Authority (FDA), Republic of Liberia
Foundation for Study and Conservation of Biodiversity (CEBio), Argentina
Free the Bears, Cambodia
Friends of Lake Turkana, Kenya
Friends of the Sound of Jura, Scotland
Froglife, UK
Fundação Príncipe, São Tomé and Príncipe
Fundación Cayos Cochinos, Honduras
Fundación Entropika, Colombia
Fundación Islas de la Bahía, Honduras
Fundación Lider, Nicaragua
Fundatia ADEPT Transilvania, Romania
Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento Sustentavel, Mozambique
Ganki Tabiat, Tajikistan
Georgia Greenwatch, Georgia
Global Penguin Society, Argentina



Global Wildlife Conservation, USA
Gorongosa National Park, Mozambique
GreenViet, Vietnam
Grootbos Foundation, South Africa
Harpy Eagle Conservation Program, Fundacion Esfera, Venezuela
Healthy Planet Indonesia, Indonesia
Herp Conservation Ghana, Ghana
Institute of Ecological Research (IPÊ), Brazil
Instituto Natura, Peru
International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP), DRC/Rwanda/Uganda
Jane Goodall Institute Austria
Jane Goodall Institute Canada
Jane Goodall Institute Chile
Jane Goodall Institute France
Jane Goodall Institute Global
Jane Goodall Institute Italy
Jane Goodall Institute Netherlands
Jane Goodall Institute Spain
Jane Goodall Institute Switzerland
Jane Goodall Institute Taiwan
Jane Goodall Institute UK
Jane Goodall Institute USA
JUSTSEA Foundation, Colombia
Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN), Myanmar
Keep Scotland Beautiful, Scotland
Kulob Botanic Garden, Tajikistan
Kuruwitu Conservation and Welfare CBO, Kenya
LARECOTURH, Honduras
Las Mujeres Tejedoras, Nicaragua
Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, Republic of Liberia
Liberia Green Advocates, Republic of Liberia
Liga para a Protecção da Natureza, Portugal
Lokshakti Abhiyan, India
Mabuwaya Foundation, Philippines
Madagasikara Voakajy, Madagascar
Marine Science Associate of Myanmar (MSAM), Myanmar
Mediterranean Conservation Society (AKD), Turkey
Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Barbados
Ministry of the Environment, Water and Forests, Republic of Guinea
Mohnyin Greening and Development Association, Myanmar
Mpingo Conservation & Development Initiative, Tanzania
MTDX, Brazil
Mwambao Coastal Community Network, Tanzania
Myanmar Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association, Myanmar
Myanmar Organic Growers and Producer Association, Myanmar
Myeik University, Myanmar



National Academy of Sciences, Tajikistan
Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional, Ecuador
Nature Iraq, Iraq
Nature Rights Protection, Armenia
NatureLife Cambodia, Cambodia
Northern Rangelands Trust, Kenya
OceanGives, Scotland
Oceans Alive, Kenya
Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Kenya
Overberg Renosterveld Conservation Trust, South Africa
Parcs Nationaux de l'Upemba, Virunga et Kundelungu, Democratic Republic of Congo
Pelican Specialist Group, Greece
People Resources and Conservation Foundation, Myanmar
Planeta Océano, Peru
ProPark, Romania
Proyecto Tití, Colombia
Rainforest Concern, Chile
Rainforest Concern, Colombia
Rainforest Concern, Costa Rica
Rainforest Concern, Ecuador
Rainforest Concern, India
Rainforest Concern, Peru
Rainforest Concern, Romania
Red de Productores Agroecológicos de Ometepe, Nicaragua
Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland (RLKM), Belgium
Rivers without Boundaries International Coalition, Russia
Romanian Wilderness Society, Romania
Roots and Shoots Beijing, China
Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), Scotland
Saint Lucia Forestry Department, Saint Lucia
Saint Lucia National Trust, Saint Lucia
Save the Frogs, Ghana
Scottish Badgers, Scotland
Scottish Communities Climate Action Network, Scotland
Scottish Community Alliance, Scotland
Scottish Farming and Wildlife Advisers Group, Scotland
Scottish Salmon Think Tank, Scotland
Scottish Wildlife Trust, Scotland
Skye & Lochalsh Environment Forum, Scotland
Skye Communities for Natural Heritage, Scotland
Sociedade Chaua, Brazil
Song Saa Foundation, Cambodia
Sustainable Inshore Fisheries Trust, Scotland
Sustainable Rural Development Vietnam, Vietnam
Swaziland Environmental Law Center, Swaziland
The Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand, New Zealand



The Leatherback Project, USA
The Ministry of Tourism & Wildlife, Kenya
The Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Nigeria
The Open Seas Trust, Scotland
The Science Exchange Sea Turtle Internship Program, Mexico
The Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society, Scotland
Trees for Life, Scotland
Trésorier de l'Association Toxicologie-Chimie, France
Tropical Forest and Rural Development, Cameroon
UDAPT, Ecuador
Uganda Wildlife Authority, Uganda
Ujamaa Community Resource Team, Tanzania
Union Island Environmental Attackers, Union Island, St Vincent and the Grenadines
University of N'Zerekore, Guinea
Vadim Kirilyuk, Russia
Whale and Dolphin Conservation, UK/Germany/Australia/North America
Whitley Fund for Nature, UK
WildDominique, Dominica
Wilderness & Wildlife Conservation Trust, Sri Lanka
Ya'axche Conservation Trust, Belize
Yayasan Nazareth, West Papua, Indonesia
Yayasan Pelestari Ragamhayati dan Cipta Fondasi Indonesia (PRCF), Indonesia
Zam Zam, Tajikistan