

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH BACKS FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN CALLING FOR \$500BN FUNDING TO PROTECT NATURE

- Global conservation organisation Fauna & Flora International (FFI) launches **OUR ONE HOME**, a campaign urging governments and businesses to seize a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebalance global funding to prioritise the protection and restoration of nature and biodiversity
- More than 140 nature conservation groups from over 50 countries sign letter to the United Nations Secretary-General urging member states to collectively commit an initial \$500 billion in funding to protect the natural world
- This powerful letter coincides with today's UN Biodiversity Summit and outlines the need for conservation funding to be put into the right hands, investing in the local organisations worldwide who are best-placed to achieve maximum – and lasting – impact to safeguard nature
- High-profile supporters of the campaign include FFI vice-presidents Sir David Attenborough, Dame Judi Dench, Stephen Fry, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Giles Clark and James Wong
- FFI is appealing to the general public to support its campaign to deliver urgent and powerful change by signing a public petition on [Change.org](https://www.change.org)

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 - More than 140 conservation groups from over 50 countries around the world have signed a letter calling on governments and businesses to seize a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect nature and prevent a wave of extinction by committing an initial \$500 billion for nature conservation worldwide.

The letter, coordinated by FFI, the world's oldest international wildlife conservation organisation, and backed by Sir David Attenborough, has been delivered to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the start of the UN Biodiversity Summit.

It marks the launch of FFI's **OUR ONE HOME** campaign, which calls for a \$500 billion yearly funding commitment led by governments and including private sector organisations, scaling upwards by \$50 billion year-on-year, to support local conservationists in protecting the natural world. This is a conservative estimate of the funding necessary to protect and restore nature, based on calculations by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity that around \$900 billion¹ funding is required.

Sir David Attenborough, world-renowned broadcaster, naturalist and long-standing vice-president of FFI, said: “Our natural world is under greater pressure now than at any time in human history, and the future of the entire planet – on which every single one of us depends – is in grave jeopardy. We still have an opportunity to reverse catastrophic biodiversity loss, but time is running out. We urgently need world leaders and global businesses to acknowledge the crucial importance of nature, commit to investing in it, and unite behind a massive collective effort to conserve it.”

In addition to funding demands, FFI and the signatory organisations are calling for a fundamental reordering of global financial flows from businesses and government, moving finances away from activities harmful to nature and into the hands of locally-led conservation organisations who can use re-prioritised funding to protect nature and help ensure collective global health.

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/c3f7/163d/b1f2c136506037842cebc521/sbi-03-05-add2-en.pdf>

Mark Rose, chief executive of Fauna & Flora International, said: “We are in the midst of a once-in-a-generation opportunity for a great reset, where governments, businesses and public alike must seize the moment to tackle head on the conservation and extinction crisis we are facing. The natural world is crucial to human and economic health, but is under immense pressure and remains drastically underfunded.

“UN member states must take the lead in getting ahead of this crisis and putting funding into the hands of those who are best placed to use it – local conservation organisations who see first-hand the challenges facing the natural world and have the knowledge necessary to secure real change.”

Five ways to fund \$500bn in conservation each year

FFI’s letter to the UN Secretary-General recognises nature and biodiversity as the cornerstone of both human health and global economies.

The World Economic Forum estimates that the natural world is worth \$125 trillion to the worldwide economy², but rather than being valued and protected, nature is being destroyed.

WWF warns that destruction of habitats has contributed to an average 68 per cent reduction in wildlife populations since 1970³ and recent research found wilderness area the size of Mexico has been converted for commercial use in the last 13 years.

Despite this loss, it is estimated that just \$80-90 billion is spent on protecting the natural environment. Meanwhile, governments and businesses continue to spend many billions of dollars in areas detrimental to our planet, such as on weapons of war⁴ or subsidising harmful industries such as fossil fuels⁵.

FFI believes that steps towards reaching \$500bn in funding, and reducing finances for activities harmful for nature, could include:

- Unlocking \$300bn through UN member states, that currently fall short, meeting their Official Development Assistance (ODA) target of 0.7% GDP
- Increasing to 5% the amount of ODA allocated for conservation, representing \$130bn in total
- A 0.25% redirection of global GDP from fossil fuel subsidies towards conservation totalling £200bn
- Greater emphasis on corporate responsibility within the finance sector in line with recommendations made by The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Natural Capital Finance Alliance, who recently called on the finance industry to boost biodiversity ambition and engagement⁶

² <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/10/this-is-why-putting-a-price-on-the-value-of-nature-could-help-the-environment/>

³ https://livingplanet.panda.org/en-us/?utm_campaign=living-planet&utm_medium=media&utm_source=report

⁴ <https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/ican/pages/1549/attachments/original/1589365383/ICAN-Enough-is-Enough-Global-Nuclear-Weapons-Spending-2020-published-13052020.pdf?1589365383>

⁵ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2019/05/02/Global-Fossil-Fuel-Subsidies-Remain-Large-An-Update-Based-on-Country-Level-Estimates-46509>

⁶ <https://www.unepfi.org/publications/banking-publications/beyond-business-as-usual-biodiversity-targets-and-finance/>

- Current economic incentives mean that a forest is worth more cut down than left standing, extinction is profitable and polluted air boosts GDP. Governments must eliminate these perverse incentives and ensure that destroying nature comes at a financial cost, while protecting nature adds value to economies

Putting funding into the hands of those who need it

FFI knows that the most effective long-term conservation solutions lie in local hands, having worked for decades in partnership with organisations across the world to protect iconic species and help them flourish. A recent study published in the scientific journal *Conservation Letters* highlights the impact of these efforts, finding that since 1993, 48 species have been saved from extinction as a result of conservation action⁷.

As part of its campaign, FFI and its partner groups are calling on governments to:

- Work with civil society to identify local and national environmental priorities, so that funding can be urgently directed to the organisations that can deliver solutions
- Redirect funding from large, centralised commitments to local level activity and direct funding
- Publicly recognise that sustainability must be at the heart of economies and societies, and make renewed commitments to specific funding goals and actions in the midst of emergence from the coronavirus pandemic

Supporting the campaign and a signatory to the letter, **Vivienne Solís Rivera, representative for conservation organisation CoopeSoliDar, Costa Rica**, said: “The Central American region and its valuable ecosystems are very environmentally vulnerable which, added to the model of economic development pursued in the region, has created a very inequitable territory. Indigenous peoples, local communities and organizations are the hands and voices that defend and support biodiversity. Strong conservation actions towards defending biodiversity will not only protect the valuable ecosystems in the tropics, but will guarantee food security and contribute to the maintenance of social and environmental resilience into the future.”

QUOTES FROM OUR ONE HOME SUPPORTERS

Dame Judi Dench, actress, ten-time BAFTA winner, FFI vice-president:

“We must all accept our responsibility as global citizens to protect nature and biodiversity for future generations. Across the world, many species and natural resources are under threat from the devastating effects of climate change and we cannot afford to be complacent. As a vice-president of FFI, I am proud to endorse this much-needed campaign which seeks to bring funding to local conservation organisations who are best-placed to deliver long-lasting change for our natural world.”

Stephen Fry, actor, writer, presenter, FFI vice-president:

“Our beautiful planet that we call Earth, and the existence of countless beautiful species, face a serious threat from climate change. We must all be bolder and act in unison to

⁷ <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/conl.12762>



minimise our impact on nature and reverse the damage that has been caused to biodiversity. In addition to the daily actions that we take as custodians of the Earth, local conservation efforts play a vital role in protecting our natural world. I feel so passionately about supporting this campaign which brings funding into the hands of local conservationists who need it the most.”

James Wong, botanist and broadcaster, FFI vice-president:

“We must not underestimate just how vital a healthy ecosystem is to the well-being of communities across the globe. By ensuring that local conservationists have adequate financial support, rather than continuing to invest in harmful and redundant fossil fuels, we can take a huge step in protecting our natural world. This is why I’m proud to be getting behind this campaign to bring funding to those who have the local knowledge and experience to use it wisely.”

Giles Clark, conservationist, TV presenter and director of The Big Cat Sanctuary, FFI vice-president:

“Protecting nature and the many species threatened by climate change should be at the forefront of our minds. Throughout my career, I’ve seen first-hand the impact that local conservationists can have in protecting biodiversity and endangered species. However, many species and their habitats remain under threat, and now is the time to take action and ensure local conservationists have access to the funding and resources they require.”

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, celebrity chef, TV personality and food writer, FFI vice-president:

“You’ll have heard about the devastating decline in the planet’s wildlife and biodiversity. The less gloomy news is that action taken now really can make a difference. The right funding for local conservationists around the world will support the right actions to protect nature and restore vital habitats. Let’s not delay.”

About Fauna & Flora International (FFI) (www.fauna-flora.org)

FFI protects threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and that enhance human well-being. Operating in more than 40 countries worldwide, FFI saves species from extinction and habitats from destruction, while improving the livelihoods of local people. Founded in 1903, FFI is the world’s longest established international wildlife conservation organisation and a registered charity.