

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
10 Downing St,
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15 September 2020

Dear Prime Minister

The conclusion of today's Global Biodiversity Outlook is no surprise: the international community has once again failed in its ten-year mission to halt the destruction of nature and avert a biodiversity crisis.

UK leadership could help ensure that the next ten years tell a different story. Ahead of global biodiversity talks in China in 2021, your Government can be at the forefront of global efforts to conclude a new agreement—one that can reverse nature's decline by 2030 and create a society that can function in harmony with nature by 2050. This is particularly important in the year of the UK's presidency of the COP 26 climate change negotiations, as our chances of mitigating and adapting to climate change depend on nature's recovery, and the ability of our natural world to lock away carbon.

Four actions would place the UK as a global leader: (1) announcing your support for a global target to restore biodiversity; (2) reflecting that commitment in domestic law, with legally-binding targets to restore nature and strong laws to protect our environment; (3) committing to the actions and investments needed to deliver the 25 Year Environment Plan in the forthcoming Spending Review; and (4) addressing the UK's growing overseas footprint and ending the destruction of nature associated with UK consumption by leading the clean-up of global supply-chains.

As the focal point of a new international agreement, we support **an overarching international target to restore species and habitats**. This should comprise individual targets for increasing species abundance and distribution and reducing extinction risk, and targets for improving the extent and condition of wildlife-rich habitats on land, at sea and in freshwater ecosystems. A successful outcome for the overarching objective must stipulate success in each of its constituent parts.

To ensure a successful outcome this time, international ambition must be matched by domestic action. The UK has also failed to meet its own objectives under the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and stronger action will be needed to succeed in future. Many species are still in long-term decline and just a third of wildlife-rich habitats in favourable condition. Without strong laws and increased investment, nature here in the UK will continue its long, relentless decline. So, to ensure that domestic efforts match up to international ambition, global goals and targets should be reflected in national law, alongside **increased investment in nature's recovery in the Spending Review**, in addition to the Nature for Climate Fund, the Nature Recovery Fund and support for a transition to environmental land management as part of a green recovery.

If it is strengthened, the targets framework in the Environment Bill could be a world-leading example of the kind of ambitious, measurable and enforceable domestic commitment needed worldwide.

While final targets will not be set until 2022, a **clear announcement now of your intention to set a domestic target for species recovery** would be extremely welcome. The Environment Bill should also include an ambitious due diligence obligation on businesses and financial institutions to eliminate negative environmental and social impacts from the UK's global supply chains.

The UN biodiversity summit on 30 September would be an ideal opportunity to announce your support for an overarching objective to restore species and habitats and your intention to set equivalent targets in law under the Environment Bill. An announcement that this country will protect at least 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030 would be a clear demonstration of early action.

The Dasgupta Review is leading the world in demonstrating the economic sense behind decisive early investment in nature. The global community and individual countries must open their eyes to the ecological emergency and act decisively, or all our efforts to avert climate change and create a better world will be in vain. With our sister environment Links around the UK, we are writing to all four administrations to propose that the UK can help sound a wake-up call for the world.

We hope you will take up that call by supporting a clear international target to restore nature, with legally-binding targets and renewed investment in the UK to ensure that nature's recovery begins at home.

Yours sincerely

Craig Bennett, CEO, The Wildlife Trusts

Dominic Jermy CVO OBE, Director General, Zoological Society of London

James Robinson, Director of Conservation, WWT

Crispin Truman OBE, CEO, CPRE the Countryside Charity

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, The National Trust

Beccy Speight, CEO, RSPB

John Sauven, CEO, Greenpeace UK

Julie Williams, CEO, Butterfly Conservation

Chris Butler-Stroud, CEO, Whale and Dolphin Conservation

Will Travers OBE, Executive President, Born Free Foundation

Brian da Cal, Director, Four Paws UK

Jill Nelson, CEO, People's Trust for Endangered Species

Andy Atkins, CEO, A Rocha UK

Dr Mark Avery, Director, Wild Justice

Jamie Cook, CEO, The Angling Trust

Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, The Open Spaces Society

Kit Stoner, CEO, Bat Conservation Trust

Andy Knott MBE, CEO, League Against Cruel Sports

Dr Steve Head, Chair, Wildlife Gardening Forum

Prof Fiona Mathews, Chair, The Mammal Society

Adam Grogan, Head of Wild Animal Science and Policy, RSPCA

Matt Shardlow, CEO, Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust

Nick Measham, CEO, Salmon & Trout Conservation

Dr Tony Gent, CEO, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Tanya Steele, CEO, WWF UK

Ian Dunn, CEO, Plantlife

James Thornton, CEO, ClientEarth

Dr Darren Moorcroft, CEO, The Woodland Trust

Dr Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife and Countryside Link