



WWF®

for a living planet®



Conservation highlights

WWF's achievements in protecting biodiversity and reducing humanity's footprint
in priority areas of the new global conservation programme in FY2009

May 2009

Biodiversity: WWF Priority Places and Species

Coral triangle heads of state summit

WWF's biodiversity meta-goal is to ensure the integrity of the most outstanding natural places on Earth. This includes the protection of biodiversity in high conservation priority areas, and restoring populations of those species with the highest ecological, economic and cultural value.



In May 2009, the six Coral Triangle heads of state made an historic and precedent-setting commitment to work together to protect marine environments and resources, ensure the food security of their peoples, and build climate change resilience. The Coral Triangle Initiative Leaders' Declaration launched the most detailed regional action plan for ocean conservation ever seen, and the countries individually announced new commitments on finance, law and marine protected areas. President Yudhoyono of Indonesia made a personal plea to conserve the marine environment.

The six countries will make a joint submission to the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December.

Nurturing the green heart of Africa



The world's largest Ramsar protected wetland – the 6.5 million ha Ngiri-Tumba-Maindombe complex – has been announced by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, wetland sites totalling more than one million ha in both the Republic of Congo and Gabon were added to the Ramsar Convention list of internationally important wetlands.

In Gabon, the country's first two FSC-certified forests were announced covering 1.3 million ha. This brings the total FSC-certified forest area in the Congo Basin region to more than four million ha, well on the way to WWF's target of seven million ha by 2012.

Protected areas for a living planet



This MAVA Foundation-funded programme, which promotes the protected area (PA) and sustainable funding targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in five WWF ecoregions – Altai-Sayan, Carpathians, Caucasus, Dinaric Arc and West Africa – has helped achieve a major increase in PA creation, resulting in 20 new PAs, with 27 more in the pipeline. National budgets for PA creation and management have also substantially increased.

Russia has added 2.2 million ha of PAs, and a gap analysis funded by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and WWF has recommended establishment of a further 566 new PAs covering 183 million ha.

World's largest protected area network enlarged



The EU's Natura 2000 Programme gained a huge boost in January with an additional 9.5 million ha of protected areas (PAs), consisting of 769 important sites in Romania and Bulgaria. The new sites will add protection for European priority species and habitats including wolves, brown bears, grasslands and forests. A European WWF focus for over a decade, Natura 2000 is the world's largest interconnected PA network, with more than 25,000 sites in 27 countries covering 85 million ha or 17 percent of the European landmass, and is a key weapon in the fight against biodiversity loss.

Linking protected areas in the Himalayas



Tigers, snow leopards and red pandas will all benefit from the creation of an important new 491,000 ha protected area (PA) in northern Bhutan. The Wangchuk Centennial Park creates an almost contiguous PA network stretching from Kangchenjunga in Nepal in the west, through India's Sikkim State and across northern Bhutan to India's Arunachal Pradesh State in the east.

Increasing PA cover and linking protected habitats into a well-managed PA network is a key aim of WWF's Living Himalayas Initiative.

Freshwater protected areas target achieved



The announcement of more than nine million ha of new Ramsar sites in the Congo Basin brings the total area of freshwater protected areas (PAs) created with WWF's support to more than 100 million ha in 10 years. Three-quarters of these freshwater PAs have been established under the Ramsar Convention.

In 1999, WWF set a target to achieve 250 million ha of new freshwater PAs worldwide by 2010, and committed itself to achieving 100 million ha of this global target by 2007. At the Ramsar Convention meeting in October 2008 WWF was recognized for its support of wetland conservation. To date, the Ramsar list of internationally important wetlands contains over 1,800 sites, covering a total of 180 million ha.

Biodiversity: WWF Priority Places and Species

Towards an Amazon protected area network

The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC), held in Barcelona, Spain, in October 2008, is the premier gathering of the world's leading specialists in conservation and sustainable development, together with government officials, private sector and NGOs. The WCC is held every four years, and offers an opportunity for WWF to encourage government and other leaders to discuss cooperation and make major conservation commitments. Significant announcements were made by the governments of Paraguay, Indonesia and the authorities in Sumatra.



The IUCN World Conservation Congress supported the proposed development of a Conservation Vision for the Amazon biome, an initiative led by REDPARQUES, the Latin American Network for Technical Cooperation on National Parks and Protected Areas, together with the nine Amazonian countries, the CBD Secretariat and WWF's Amazon Initiative.

The Brazilian state of Amazonas announced in March 2009 the creation of six new protected areas (PAs) totalling 2.3 million ha. This finalises a PA mosaic along the BR-319 highway which aims to reduce deforestation by limiting access to non-protected forest along the road.

Securing Sumatra's forests



In an historic commitment, Sumatra's 10 governors and four government ministries (Environment, Forests, Interior and Public Works) committed to a sustainable development model based on ecosystem-based spatial planning. This agreement commits Sumatra to protect areas with high conservation values, restore important ecosystems on the island and re-establish connectivity between forests and habitats.

This represents a vital breakthrough in protecting Sumatra's remaining forests, home to the Sumatran tiger, rhino, orang-utan and Asian elephant, all WWF priority species. Surviving forest sits atop carbon-rich peat soils which must be protected to avoid significant carbon emissions further worsening climate change.

Protecting cetaceans



Efforts to protect a key humpback whale breeding site in Colombia's Malaga Bay received a boost with the decision by the Ministry of Transport to not proceed with development of a port in recognition of the environmental risks this would pose.

Supported by WWF, the Government of Mexico is taking the lead on conserving the vaquita – the only cetacean endemic to North America. The vaquita is highly endangered. As few as 150 may survive and they are threatened by entanglement in gillnets. The government has committed US\$ 25 million on protection measures, including a vaquita sanctuary closed to gillnet fishing.

Conservation gains for coastal east Africa



In Tanzania, the government has acted on WWF's recommendations to protect three high priority forest areas covering 170,000 ha in the Eastern Arc Mountains, and the US Government has committed US\$ 20 million for WWF's community wildlife management areas programme.

The governments of Mozambique and Tanzania have joined a Southern Africa Development Community declaration agreeing to outlaw illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing which represents a major threat to local fisheries and livelihoods, and represents important progress towards achieving sustainable fisheries within WWF's Coastal East Africa initiative.

Global Tiger Initiative launched



Led by World Bank President Robert Zoellick, the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) brings together the Smithsonian Institution, Save the Tiger Fund, WWF and other partners with the objective of gaining the support of tiger range state leaders for effective conservation of the severely endangered tiger. Total tiger populations have plummeted from 30,000 in the 1980s to an estimated 4,000 today.

In December 2008, the Government of Malaysia launched a National Tiger Action Plan with the aim to double Malaysia's tiger population to 1,000 by 2020.

A champion for Brazil's environment – Marina Silva



In November 2008, WWF presented its most prestigious award – the Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Medal – to Marina Silva. As Brazil's Environment Minister from 2005 to 2007, she helped steer Brazil's pioneering Amazon Region Protected Area (ARPA) programme to improve protection and management of over 30 million ha of the country's Amazon forest.

Born into a rubber tapper family, Marina Silva worked with the late Chico Mendes, the renowned environmental activist. While minister, deforestation decreased by 59 per cent across Brazil, and she played a key role in developing Brazil's National Water Resource Plan to secure water for millions of people while safeguarding freshwater biodiversity. She remains a Senator.

Footprint

Transforming markets: Forests

WWF's second meta-goal is to reduce humankind's Ecological Footprint so that we live within the renewable resource limits of our planet. Work on reducing humanity's global footprint builds on strong foundations and targets humanity's carbon, commodities and water footprints which have the greatest impact on biodiversity.

WWF's work on transforming markets focuses on the production of key commodities including palm oil, soy, tuna, timber, pulp and paper, farmed salmon and shrimp, that impact our priority species and places, and contributes substantially to humanity's footprint.

By working with companies along commodity supply chains, showing that environmental impacts can be affordably and measurably reduced, and by creating consumer preference, entire commodity markets can be tipped and large-scale environmental outcomes delivered.



Wood and construction companies in São Paulo – Brazil's most industrialized and populous state – have committed to use only legal and certified wood, in a move which strongly supports WWF's call for sustainable management of commercial forests in the Amazon basin. The state consumes 16 per cent of the 16 million m³ of Amazonian timber produced annually in Brazil.

The area of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified forests in China has passed the one million ha mark, and the most recent FSC certification is in WWF's priority Amur-Heilong ecoregion. In total, more than 110 million ha of forests are FSC-certified worldwide in 88 countries, representing seven percent of the world's production forests, and generating sales worth US\$20 billion.

Transforming markets: Marine



The news that the Russian Walleye Pollock fishery in the Bering Sea, plus Norwegian Barents Sea cod and Chilean hake, have entered the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification process means that significantly more than 50 percent of the total world whitefish fishery is now certified or in process. Also going for certification is the Ecuador/Peru mahi-mahi fishery

Overall, the MSC is picking up speed in certifying environmentally responsible and sustainable fisheries, and in driving transformational change. Globally, 42 fisheries are certified and over 100 are seeking certification. The global market for MSC-labelled products doubled to reach a retail value of almost US\$1 billion.

Transforming markets: Freshwater



In 2009, WWF became a founding member of the Water Footprint Network, a group of 50 partners committed to reducing impacts of crop and commodity production on the world's most critical freshwater habitats. The network will standardize wise water use methods across business and set the standards for water standards, stewardship and disclosure. Members range from Nestlé, The Coca-Cola Company and Unilever to the Swiss Development Cooperation.

In October 2008, Coca-Cola announced ambitious new targets to improve water efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable agriculture to help conserve some of the world's most important river basins.

Reducing agriculture's footprint



WWF's Market Transformation Initiative announced the arrival in Europe of the first certified palm oil shipment – the beginning of a turn away from clearance of tropical forests to grow oil palm. The shipment is compliant with Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) principles and criteria to ensure production is socially and environmentally responsible.

The roundtables on two of WWF's priority commodities, the Better Cotton and Better Sugarcane Initiatives, published draft global standards. Companies sourcing products meeting these standards will measurably reduce their water footprint and the impacts of fertilizer and pesticides on the environment.

Smart fishing



Following on the successful halving of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in the Barents Sea, the Government of Norway has negotiated powerful terms for EU fishing fleets to access Arctic cod in Norwegian waters. The EU has agreed much stronger conditions to reduce amounts of fish discarded, to implement gear change to avoid bycatch, and protect spawning cod.

A major grouping of the world's tuna industry representing half of canned tuna has, together with the marine science community and WWF, jointly founded the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation to achieve long-term conservation and wise use of tuna stocks, reduce bycatch and promote ecosystem health.

Sustainable aquaculture products on the menu



WWF has helped establish the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), to independently certify environmentally-responsible and sustainable aquaculture farms. The ASC will raise standards in the industry and give consumers a guarantee they can purchase products such as mussels, shrimp and trout from sources that do not damage the environment.

Progress on bycatch in the coral triangle



Prompted by a WWF report detailing the huge loss of juvenile yellowfin tuna as bycatch within skipjack tuna fisheries, the Government of the Philippines has drafted legislation to prevent this unnecessary destruction.

Overfishing of coral fish such as groupers and wrasse for consumption in Asian restaurants is a major threat, but in an important move the Palawan Live Reef Fish Trade Alliance of Philippines has agreed to reduce annual quotas from 700 tonnes currently down to a sustainable 140 tonnes by 2011.

Safeguarding the marine environment



A milestone in the protection of the oceans was reached in September 2008 as a global ban on tributyltin (TBT) – one of the most toxic chemicals deliberately released into the sea – entered into force. An international convention on the control of harmful anti-fouling systems obliges signatory countries to ensure no vessels using hull paints containing TBT and similar toxic chemicals go under their flags or call at their ports. WWF lobbied for the ban on TBT for a decade.

Living Planet Report



The launch of WWF's seventh *Living Planet Report* (LPR) in 13 languages gained more than 1,800 media stories in 50 countries, from Nepal to Qatar, and from Malawi to China.

The core message – that we are continuing to use the Earth's renewable resources at an unsustainable rate – warned that humanity is approaching an “ecological credit crunch” and the report outlined wedge analyses for avoiding this. Linking closely with concerns over the global financial crisis, the LPR was covered widely in the business media.

Towards a greener China



The China for a Global Shift initiative supports China in adapting development and growth within the ecological limits of one planet. Following on the first-ever report on China's Ecological Footprint, published mid-2008, WWF sponsored a high-level conference where top Chinese environmental and banking institutions confirmed the country's commitment to address its environmental impact.

WWF is helping China's banking sector develop environmentally sound lending policies. A first analysis of sustainable banking in China, jointly issued by the Peoples' Bank of China and WWF, highlights the potential for the financial services sector to channel investment to help the country transit towards sustainability.

International freshwater conservation treaties



WWF made effective use of the World Water Forum, held in Turkey in March 2009, to advance the signing and ratification of the UN Transboundary Rivers Convention. Together with the Ramsar Convention, this underpins joint sustainable management of transboundary rivers. The Convention has 16 signatory countries and requires a further 19 to enter into force. A high level event to recognise the leadership and example of the signatory countries mobilized a further 14 countries to commit their support for the Convention.

Achieving zero net deforestation



Following the commitment to achieve zero net deforestation by 2020, announced at the World Conservation Congress, Paraguay has extended its Forest Conversion Moratorium by a further five years, and committed to compensate forest owners who maintain forest cover through payment for environment services.

Similarly, in February 2009 Argentina passed a new forest law to stop massive forest conversion to agriculture and implement payments for environmental services. This would greatly benefit Argentina's one million ha of Atlantic Forests, a WWF priority place shared with Paraguay and Brazil. Provincial zoning plans are being developed to identify which of Argentina's 33 million ha of forest must be protected or managed sustainably.

Climate

Arctic climate change threatens the polar bear

The climate crisis is perhaps the ultimate test of WWF's ability to harness its strengths to leverage political commitment at the scale required by an issue that threatens the world as we know it.

Freshwater ecosystems will be particularly impacted by climate change. WWF is working on conservation and adaptation measures for high altitude wetlands in the Himalayas, African Rift and Andes to protect critically important glaciers and wetland sites.

High level meetings have already been held in Poznan, Poland and in Bonn, Germany, to develop the architecture of the proposed new global climate treaty, which will replace the Kyoto Protocol when its first commitment period ends in December 2012. Several more meetings will be held in the run-up to the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen at the end of 2009. WWF has launched a campaign, starting with Earth Hour on 28 March 2009, which will use every opportunity to build the political agreement for a just, effective and science-based global climate deal.



In a vital first step towards saving the polar bear – severely threatened by the accelerating loss of summer sea ice due to climate change – the five nations signatory to the international Polar Bear Conservation Treaty agreed that the future of the polar bear is closely linked to urgent global action on climate change. The next steps will be to feed this into climate treaty discussions in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009 and push for Arctic management policies to be based on resilience.

On the 20th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil tanker disaster and its massive impact on Alaska's marine environment and commercial fisheries, politicians were presented with rocks still dripping Exxon oil to underline the acute danger of oil exploitation and transit.

Climate savers



At a Climate Savers Summit in Washington DC, US, an independent survey showed that WWF's Climate Savers Programme has achieved voluntary reductions of 50 million tonnes of greenhouse gases since the programme started in 1999. This is equivalent to the annual emissions of Switzerland.

WWF works with the 21 companies that have joined the programme to date, including household names such as Nike, Nokia and Sony to achieve aggressive emission reductions against a credible baseline. The companies report their efforts achieve greater operational efficiency and significant cost reductions, while growing their business.

Towards a global forest carbon market



Leading international experts in climate change, forestry and finance came together in the Forest Carbon Finance Summit in March 2009, in collaboration with Harvard and Duke University, to identify how to mobilize funding to protect forests, including an effective carbon market. A key WWF aim is to have funding mechanisms agreed for forest carbon as part of the global climate deal to be discussed in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009.

The Government of Norway's Forest and Climate Initiative has recognized WWF as a strategic partner. The government has committed EUR400 million annually for five years to support the establishment of a global, binding, post-2012 regime that will halt emissions due to deforestation and degradation.

Earth Hour



On 28 March 2009 at 20:30 local time, Earth Hour swept across the planet, reaching out to a billion people. Hundreds of millions of people in 88 countries across 4,000 towns and cities, and including 20,000 companies and 1,000 iconic landmarks such as the Giza Pyramids, Eiffel Tower, Acropolis, Christ the Redeemer in Rio, and the Bird's Nest Stadium in Beijing participated in Earth Hour by switching lights off for one hour. This uniquely powerful action urged governments to agree an effective global climate deal at the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Earth Hour will now continue to mobilize public support for urgent action on climate change, through the Vote Earth campaign.

Earth Hour champions - Archbishop Desmond Tutu



Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu lent his voice to Earth Hour's global call for action on climate change, accepting WWF's invitation to be a Earth Hour champion. "Climate Change is the greatest human-induced crisis facing the world today. It is totally indiscriminate of race, culture or religion. It affects every human being on the planet," he said.

As the recipient of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize following his struggle against apartheid, Desmond Tutu knows better than most the power of individuals uniting for a common cause. He said that by performing this one simple act together, it sends "a message to our governments too powerful for them to ignore. They will know the eyes of the world are watching."

and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged citizens around the world to join WWF's Earth Hour to demand action on climate change. In an address on YouTube, the Secretary-General said Earth Hour would represent the largest demonstration of public concern about climate change ever. He underlined the need for a global climate deal when the world's leaders meet in Copenhagen.

"We need an ambitious agreement that is fair and effective. An agreement based on sound science," he said. "We are on a dangerous path. Our planet is warming, we must change our ways. We need green growth that benefits all communities. We need sustainable energy for a more climate-friendly, prosperous world. This is the path of the future. We must walk it together."

On the horizon

UN climate summit



WWF's overriding priority in 2009 is to help achieve agreement in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009 at the UN Climate Summit on a just, effective and science-based global climate deal which will ensure greenhouse gas emissions peak and start falling by 2020, and that emissions are reduced 80 per cent from 1990 levels by 2050. These targets are set to keep average global temperatures from rising by more than 2° C, above which climate change will have catastrophic consequences. WWF's campaign will publicly demand decision-makers act responsibly and work with government leaders to provide the solutions.

Congo forest summit



The Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo together with COMIFAC, the regional secretariat of forest ministers of the Congo Basin, propose to stage a high-level summit in 2010. This will mark the 10th anniversary of the WWF-supported Yaoundé Summit which inspired the regional commitment to achieve conservation and wise use of the Congo Basin forest and freshwater ecosystems.

WWF will strongly support the Summit – to be attended by heads of state and key officials from the region and other key countries including China, France, Germany, and US. Key announcements can include progress with protected areas commitments, regional policies on mining, hydropower, bushmeat and protected areas for primates – all contributing to the Green Heart of Africa Initiative.

The Year of The Tiger



WWF is working with the World Bank's Global Tiger Initiative to stage a summit of heads of state of tiger range states to help build the political will required to protect surviving tiger populations and restore these to healthy levels. This will be held in 2010, to mark the Year of the Tiger in the Chinese calendar.

WWF will aim to mobilize key tiger range states to commit to improved protection; increased connectivity of habitat especially across borders, for example China/Russia, Thailand/Malaysia and Nepal/India; recovering prey populations; and stopping the threat from trade.

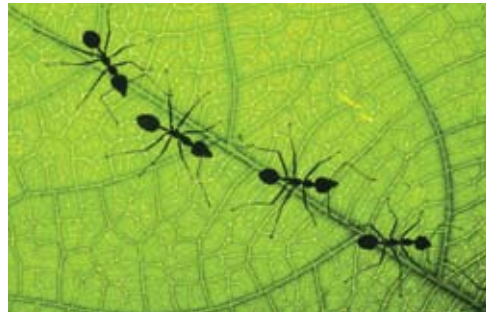
Expanding marine protected areas



Marine conservation is expected to receive a boost with the creation of several key marine protected areas (MPAs) in coming months.

In Mozambique, details of the long-awaited Primeiras and Segundas MPA are being finalized. At 1.7 million ha this will become the largest MPA on the Africa coast. Further south in the Southern Ocean, the Government of South Africa has announced creation of the 18 million ha Prince Edward Island MPA – the world's fourth largest. And across in Australia, WWF is encouraging the government to protect the Coral Sea – one of few remaining intact areas of marine biodiversity complete with large predator populations. Protection of the Australian Coral Sea area, covering almost 1 million km², would become the world's largest MPA.

The Convention on Biological Diversity



Coming up in October 2010, the 10th ministerial summit on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) – the global conservation convention – will be hosted by Japan. A watershed meeting, this represents the deadline by when the world pledged both to establish representative, well-managed protected area networks, with sustainable funding, and to have slowed the loss of biodiversity.

Working in partnership with the two CBD host governments, Germany and Japan, WWF will use this deadline, as well as a series of regional meetings building up to the summit, to gain far-reaching commitments crucial to the conservation of WWF's priority places and species.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.



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