

A photograph of a mangrove forest. The upper portion shows the green, leafy canopy of the trees against a clear blue sky. The lower portion, which is more prominent, shows the dense, vertical, brownish-grey prop roots of the mangrove trees, creating a textured, almost abstract pattern.

DRIVING SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION: A WWF MANIFESTO FOR COP27 AND COP15

November 2022

2022 has been a challenging year for multilateralism. While the world is finally emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple crises are scaling up on inflation, energy, food and water security, health, climate change and biodiversity loss. At the UN General Assembly in September, the UN Secretary General António Guterres described our world as teeming in turmoil and used the ship transporting grain from Ukraine to Africa as a symbol of what we can accomplish when acting together.

The UNSG also mentioned the suicidal war against nature and climate change as being the defining issue of our times. At the Landmark Leaders Event for a Nature-Positive World, many leaders also underlined that the environmental crises of climate change, drought and land degradation, pollution, and an increasing incidence of zoonotic diseases are all interlinked and united by one thread: nature loss.

According to WWF's 2022 Living Planet Report, land-use change is still the biggest current threat to nature, destroying or fragmenting the natural habitats of many plant and animal species on land, in freshwater and in the sea. However, if we are unable to limit warming to 1.5° climate change is likely to become the dominant cause of biodiversity loss in the coming decades. Rising temperatures are already driving mass mortality events, as well as the first extinctions of entire species. Every degree of warming is expected to increase these losses and the impact they have on people.

And 1.5 is increasingly at risk as the window is closing fast: the recently released UNFCCC NDC Synthesis Report and the UNEP Gap Report have alerted us that we are not on track on climate commitments and that we are headed to around 2.1 to 2.9 °C of global warming.

In 2022, the ship of multilateralism still has two crucial stops: the UNFCCC COP27 in November in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, and the CBD COP15 in December, in Montreal, Canada. The climate and nature crises are dealt with by two different international regimes that require specific responses and innovative solutions this year. We must advance on both regimes with their own negotiation tracks and deliverables, but there are common overarching challenges and solutions for the two COPs and those are the focus of this Manifesto. To make it clearer, each COP must succeed on its own and also contribute to reinforcing the role of global cooperation in addressing the intertwined crises.

WWF urges leaders to tackle the two enormous challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss in 2022 to drive the systems transformation we need for net-zero emissions by 2050 and a nature-positive world by 2030 through:

1

RESTORING TRUST IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL REGIMES

“ *No major challenge can be solved by a coalition of the willing - what is needed is a coalition of the world.* ”

UN Secretary General António Guterres

We need a renewed sense of shared stewardship and responsibility for our planet and its natural resources. One of the key lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic was that only through cooperation we can defeat global shocks, even though that cooperation was far from perfect. The climate emergency and biodiversity crisis are among the biggest challenges of our times and can only be effectively tackled through multilateral approaches, despite the valid contribution of other forms of cooperation.

To restore trust in the climate regime, the UNFCCC must build on the outcomes of COP26 in Glasgow and provide new and strong impetus for **implementation with ambition, equity and access**. The biodiversity regime must deliver and adopt a strong Global Biodiversity Framework, with ambitious targets and financial resources, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to achieve a nature-positive world by 2030.

2

BROADENING AND STRENGTHENING COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION

Governments have much to do to protect and safeguard the world's natural resources, but they can't do it by themselves. We need all hands on deck. Pledges from Non-State Actors and other forms of cooperation, such as coalitions of Governments and other actors, are crucial to the success of the climate and nature global agendas. Broader and stronger cooperation must be based on:

A whole-of-society approach - The Action Agenda/Marrakech partnership has proven to be a successful venue to harness commitments and action by non-Party stakeholders, including business, academy and subnational governments and others.. The CBD is currently working to strengthen the Sharm El-Sheik to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People, as a vehicle to raise ambition and drive implementation of the new Global Biodiversity Framework to be agreed at COP15. Government Leaders should recognize and support such initiatives.

A whole-of-government approach: In most countries, implementation and planning of commitments and strategies on climate and nature are undertaken by the Ministry of Environment. It is key that governments put in place governance structures that allow for the participation of other Ministries and subnational entities, as well as civil society, in decision-making processes and monitoring and implementation of commitments.

Participation: Broad and participatory consultation processes that include all parts of society, including youth, minorities and Indigenous Peoples and Local communities, must be put in place both for decision-making and implementation planning on climate and nature.

Rights: The design and implementation of climate and nature policies and actions should take a rights-based approach, recognizing and securing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs).

3

DELIVERING IN THE CRITICAL DECADE

By 2030 the world needs to reduce emissions by 43% in relation to 2019 levels (according to the latest scientific information of the IPCC AR6) to stay on a 1.5°C pathway. 2030 is also the milestone for halting and reversing biodiversity loss. Delivery must happen in two ways:

- *Through stronger commitments for action:* Current commitments under the climate regime must be reviewed and strengthened to close the ambition gap and foster implementation. In the biodiversity regime, the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework in COP 15 has to be the political signal and ambitious plan the world needs. It needs to include strong transparency and accountability mechanisms. We also need stronger and sectoral commitments from businesses and subnational governments on both issues.
- *Through enhanced and coherent national plans.* National plans (Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, Long Term Strategies and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, including National Biodiversity Finance Plans) should take into account the climate and nature nexus and adopt benchmarks such as net-zero emissions; nature-positive by 2030 and 1.5 compatibility. Those plans must also include nature-based solutions to maximize their delivery potential while optimizing the use of financial resources.

4

DRIVING THE MAKE-OR-BREAK TRANSITIONS

A Just Energy Transformation to Renewables

The IPCC AR 6 Report from Working Group III has once again highlighted the urgent need for decarbonizing energy systems. The International Energy Agency 2020 Roadmap to Net Zero in the Energy Sector has also demonstrated it's possible for the sector to get to net-zero emissions by 2050. What we need now is political will and leadership. Developed countries must set a date to end fossil fuels and pledge support to other countries for the transition; middle-income economies must work on decarbonization plans in their Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies and the least developed and most vulnerable countries must focus on their own climate resilient development and protecting their ecosystems.

The war in Ukraine has laid bare the vulnerability of our fossil fuel dependency, even though renewables have been on the rise, and is driving short-term decisions that could delay the phase-out of fossil fuels. The conflict is also driving a food crisis and will potentially affect biodiversity and ecosystems through inadequate land-use planning and exploitation of fossil fuels in biodiversity-rich areas.

WWF calls on Leaders to put in place the following conditions and practices for the Just Energy Transformation:

- Economic and social policies that prioritize environmental and social goals, upholding high employment and social rights;
- Protection and restoration of nature, as it provides the foundations of society's wellbeing;
- Sharing best practices, but also technologies; providing financial support to the right projects and supporting good governance.

Protecting at least 30% of the Earth's land, freshwater and ocean areas

According to the IPCC AR6 Working Group II report, climate change threatens ecosystems and biodiversity and consequently their roles in adaptation and mitigation. Maintaining the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystem services at a global scale depends on effective and equitable conservation of approximately 30% to 50% of the Earth's land, freshwater and ocean areas.

It's imperative that this recommendation is taken into account in the new processes of the UNFCCC (Mitigation Work Program, Global Goal on Adaptation). The ambition to conserve and effectively and equitably manage and govern at least 30% of land, freshwater and sea should be adopted as target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework, while securing the rights of IPLCs. Substantially increased restoration efforts will also contribute to both climate nature objectives.

Returning to within planetary boundaries

Increased ambition on conservation and restoration needs to be accompanied by increased ambition to reduce the drivers of biodiversity loss, including the way in which we produce and consume our world's natural resources. The GBF must ensure that we halve the footprint of production and consumption and return to within planetary boundaries by 2030. Collective action at the global level can incentivise a just transition of productive sectors, business and financial institutions, that supports jobs and livelihoods while protecting and restoring nature.

Transforming food systems

Food security is a socioeconomic issue that has become even more serious with the scaling up of climate change and the rise in prices from the war in Ukraine. Tackling the whole food system and prioritizing sustainable approaches, such as agroecology and halting food loss and

waste, will help lower those prices and increase productivity at a lower cost to biodiversity. Transformed food systems can deliver climate, biodiversity and social benefits. The transition on food systems must get stronger political space and attention under both regimes. The climate and biodiversity plans mentioned above should adequately address food systems.

Halting Conversion and Deforestation of all Ecosystems

GHG emissions from agriculture and forestry must be drastically reduced, and deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems for commodity production need to be eliminated urgently. There is a tremendous amount of carbon stored in soils and vegetation that we cannot afford to emit to the atmosphere.

Another existential challenge associated with the global food system is the ongoing global biodiversity loss, 70% of which is directly associated with land use change. Ending the destruction of forests and other natural ecosystems is critical to the CBD's goal of reversing biodiversity loss and building a nature-positive world by 2030, as well as to efforts to mitigate catastrophic climate change. This goal is also critical in preventing future pandemics, ensuring our own safety and wellbeing and that of future generations.

Conserving and restoring ecological connectivity

Ecological connectivity is the circulatory system of nature. Connecting areas both on land and sea is one of the most important adaptation responses to ensure climate resilience of species and ecosystems, as well as helping prevent the next pandemic.

However ecological connectivity is being rapidly lost, due to habitat conversion and fragmentation, new barriers such as infrastructure, and - critically - climate change impacts and mitigation measures. That loss of ecological connectivity is hampering climate change adaptation measures.

By taking account of risks and benefits for ecological connectivity, decisions on climate finance and climate action can enhance mitigation and adaptation outcomes through strengthened ecosystem resilience, whilst maximizing biodiversity co-benefits.

5

MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR RAPID AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Finance is a key enabler for commitments and implementation of climate and nature plans and strategies. We need strong and transparent commitments from Financial Institutions, both public and private, to deploy adequate, timely, predictable and accessible capital for nature and climate finance – in particular for climate adaptation and natural climate solutions - including exploring innovative financial vehicles and supporting more public-private blended finance vehicles. Finance should maximize co-benefits while recognising the need for specific dedicated finance for both nature and climate.

Under the UNFCCC, we need tangible actions from governments to deliver on the \$100 billion pledge and at least double public finance for adaptation on a 50% ratio with finance for mitigation. A facility for Loss and Damage must be created at COP 27.

Under the CBD it's essential to also eliminate the harm that is being done by finance: harmful incentives, including subsidies that destroy ecosystems on which all forms of life depend, need to be eliminated or redirected. Those are currently estimated to be five to seven times greater than funding to protect nature¹. Financial flows need to be aligned with the targets of the GBF, to begin with through risk and dependency disclosures.

We also call for financial regulators and central banks to include climate and nature related concerns in their mandates and embed sustainability in credit and regulatory risk calculations.

¹ www.financeforbiodiversity.org

OUR 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.

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