IN CHALLENGING TIMES, WE ARE WORKING FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE
We must set nature on the path to recovery by 2030 or fail the countless future generations who will suffer the catastrophic consequences of inaction. With opportunities for positive change narrowing by the day, the world desperately needs the wise counsel, innovative thinking and bold action that have been the hallmark of WWF’s approach to conservation for decades.

In 2023, WWF, together with a growing global movement for change, redoubled efforts to support the difficult transition to a sustainable future of harmonious coexistence with nature. But the pace and scale of global action must increase further, requiring many more people to get involved. Whatever your role in global society, there is a place for you in changing the world for the better.

Cover picture: Sara Simoni Kalinga from Tanzania is one of the many women around the world backed by a WWF partnership to make their local communities and environment resilient to the impacts of the climate crisis. See more on page 7.

Intensifying nature loss and climate change, decades in the making by humanity, have left us facing an existential crisis.
If there are two words that summarize the current state of global conservation it’s urgency and action. The work we have in front of us today is bolder, more complex and more ambitious than anything we have ever done collectively as a conservation organization before.

The speed with which we continue to lose biodiversity in virtually all the places we care about is overwhelming. The impacts of climate change are being felt in every part of the world and much faster than many had anticipated. Divisions are becoming more emphatic, turbulence and polarization are rising across the globe and the space for civil society in many places is shrinking.

At the same time, we now have the incredible opportunity offered by both the Paris Climate Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, both of which have been signed by almost 200 countries. Both agreements contain many of WWF’s priorities for 2030.

Yet the world has seen many such global agreements in the past. A recent progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals provided a very candid message from UN Secretary-General António Guterres: “Unless we act now, the 2030 agenda will become an epitaph for a world that might have been.” How do we seize this momentum to ensure the commitments made in the global biodiversity and climate agreements we all worked so hard for do not become mere 2030 epitaphs?
While global wildlife populations have plummeted in recent decades, 2023 saw some welcome signs of progress including new CITES protections for hammerheads and other shark species.

See more on page 23.

Kirsten Schuijt is Director General of WWF International, which both supports the work of independently incorporated national WWF operations and directly runs country-level conservation programmes - a global federation active in over 100 countries and collectively known as the WWF Network.

Kirsten was CEO of WWF-Netherlands for over six years before becoming Director General in 2023. She has extensive experience in conservation and leading non-profit organizations, having worked in international conservation for 25 years, 20 of which in various global conservation leadership positions across WWF.

DELIVERING CONSERVATION IMPACT

The answer is that we must embrace the strong, collective urge amongst many of us to focus on the opportunity in front of us: leading with courage to act and deliver conservation impact. The difference we make for nature and people in the land-, water- and seascapes we deeply care about, through the local communities and Indigenous Peoples who live there, is where our true accountability lies as an organization.

For WWF, this means stepping up our own 2030 ambition and sharpening our focus on what we do best.

This requires scaling up the many conservation successes we have achieved over the past decades and the current Annual Review highlights the great things we get done as a network when we come together with others. In Canada, for example, we supported Indigenous Peoples and provincial and national governments in developing an action plan for the first-ever planned network of marine protected areas in the country’s western coastal waters. And, across national boundaries, we helped bring governments together for a historic declaration on safeguarding river dolphins and the health of the rivers they live in.

Stepping up our 2030 ambition also requires us to take a true systems approach to conservation impact by strengthening our work in the places we care about, intensifying our crucial work on the key global >
WWF-India’s support for local communities in the Sundarbans mangrove forest is helping prevent human-wildlife conflict. They receive training on setting up bee boxes to avoid seeking out wild beehives where there are risks of encounters with wildlife.

Drivers, from unsustainable production and consumption to corruption and ineffective planning, that impact our work on the ground—and getting much better at connecting the two. We need to seek much stronger collaboration with global and local partners as we strive for lasting impact together, including local communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations, businesses and governments.

**WE MUST BRING HOPE**

Lastly, stepping up our ambition means that we must get better at holding ourselves accountable as an organization by setting clear 2030 targets for ourselves. To that end, WWF International launched a strategic review in 2023 to enable its secretariat and country offices to maximize their unique role in the WWF Network and play their part in delivering the 2030 global targets. WWF International will also be coordinating a network-wide process in 2024 called the “2030 Roadmap”, which will seek to set global 2030 targets for the network as a whole.

As the world is waking up to the realities of climate change and biodiversity loss, it is imperative for WWF to engage everyone with our mission and demonstrate that, in spite of the challenges facing us all, there is still hope. Embracing a powerful sense of urgency and working with the many people that want to act are the most important things we can do—demonstrating that change is not only very much needed, it is possible.
THE WAY AHEAD

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

While many complex challenges need to be addressed to restore nature and stabilize the climate, there is a clear way forward if, together, we grasp every opportunity to act.

As WWF celebrates achievement on the ground in this Annual Review, and charts progress in the global policy space, we acknowledge that biodiversity globally continues to decline and carbon emissions continue to rise. A widely endorsed global narrative that is pro-environment and pro-sustainability masks the stark truth that our collective strategies to conserve and restore nature are dwarfed by the money and political influence dedicated to unsustainable production and consumption patterns. This reality poses various challenges for WWF and its staff, requiring us to carefully consider where and how we best deploy our limited resources.

Dealing with complexity

The nature and climate crises are possibly the ultimate ‘wicked problem’, with multiple interdependent factors making them seem impossible to solve. For WWF it means our work requires complex and innovative solutions that address economic, financial, governance and social levers in an integrated approach. While designing for complexity is a challenge for us, it is also an exciting space – creating opportunities to expand our skill sets and find new partners. We have strong attributes and shared values across the global WWF Network that position us well in combining systems thinking with conservation efforts on the ground.

Navigating conflict and instability

With many of the world’s most important natural spaces enduring conflict and instability, WWF and other nature conservation NGOs are facing increasing threats from shrinking civic space and attacks on their organization, staff and partners. Environmental human rights defenders (EHRDs) working on the ground are the main victims of these attacks, suffering harassment, intimidation, assaults and worse. WWF is well placed to use our voice to hold violators of the environment and human rights to account. But this is becoming increasingly difficult as more and more WWF offices experience these trends first hand.

Connecting nature and climate agendas

Climate change and declining biodiversity are twin crises, but the approach to solutions is often not integrated. It is increasingly clear that to be successful we need to tackle both issues together. Nature-based solutions, for example, can contribute to both climate and biodiversity objectives.
However, WWF advocacy for these solutions is made harder by split responsibilities between departments in governments and institutions – meaning extra stakeholders, and extra work and resources in convening partners.

**BROADENING THE NARRATIVE**

To accelerate action on the nature and climate agendas, WWF must continue reaching out to wider audiences beyond its established partnerships in the nature and climate arenas. There must be an increased recognition of the link between a healthy environment and the health of people, thriving livelihoods and economic vitality.

WWF has a unique position among our peer NGOs: we have a powerful platform of global- and national-level representation to urge faster and deeper actions from governments, the private sector and individuals that urgently address nature loss and climate change. WWF’s strong brand, together with our globally respected public voice, also reinforces this pivotal role. Our message is getting through but encouraging collective action will involve increased synergizing of our mission with the work of other organizations and championing rights-based and inclusive approaches through our communications and in our ways of working.

**ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS**

Identifying the challenges is the first step to successfully step up for impact. But the way we organize ourselves in a diverse and decentralized network will decide how effectively we contribute to forging solutions. WWF’s thematic global communities of practice (see page 20) provide a strong platform for sharing experiences and building skills across offices and skill areas. These communities are enriching our conservation design, building strategic relationships and partnerships, influencing key decision-makers and connecting WWF practitioners to exchange and innovate.

As a result, we are breaking new ground – from brokering novel financial mechanisms to focusing efforts on species that provide multiple conservation outcomes. However, we need to build on these efforts with increased action and urgency to help deliver the UN’s 2030 goals and create a sustainable future for people and all life on Earth.

**CHANGING POWER DYNAMICS**

Governance is about how decisions are made, who makes them, how they’re applied and who’s accountable. Understanding how all this happens is not easy. Understanding how to change and shift dynamics to those that support rather than undermine our work is even more difficult.

In 2020, the WWF Governance Practice developed the Political Economy Analysis for Conservation Impact (PEACI) Framework as an approach to help offices identify how power dynamics enable or prevent our goals, and find entry points for change. Since then, the practice has developed exchanges and learning opportunities for staff to apply this framework. Among these learning opportunities, last year, was a mentorship journey pilot in Cambodia to identify a new approach to addressing drivers of deforestation in countries that have adopted REDD+, the UN voluntary framework to reduce carbon emissions through better forest management.
O U R  N E W  P R E S I D E N T

Globally renowned academic and policy expert Dr Adil Najam became the new President of WWF International in July 2023.

Dr Adil Najam is a leading public scholar whose teaching, research and public engagement focuses on issues of global public policy, especially those related to conservation and environment, sustainable and human development, and climate change in the Global South.

Dr Najam, who is Dean Emeritus of the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University and continues as its Professor of International Relations and of Earth and Environment, was a lead author for the Third and Fourth Assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and has written over 100 scholarly papers and book chapters.

He is a former Trustee of WWF International’s International Board (2011-2019) and has served on multiple other boards including as Chair of the Luc Hoffmann Institute and South Asian Network of Development and Environment Economics. He has also frequently served as an advisor to other international organizations and NGOs, and to governments across the world.

In February 2009 he was appointed to the Committee for Development Policy by the United Nations Secretary-General, and he has been awarded the two highest civil awards of Pakistan: the Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence) in 2010 and the Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Crescent of Excellence) in 2023 for his services to education, environment and science.

Kirsten Schuijt, WWF International Director General, said: “Adil’s vast experience, knowledge and passion are crucial to WWF’s mission to stop the degradation of the Earth’s natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature.”

Dr Najam replaces Neville Isdell, who was the President ad interim for 13 months while the search for a permanent candidate was undertaken. Kirsten Schuijt said: “On behalf of my colleagues at WWF International, I would like to thank Neville for his incredible dedication and commitment as President ad interim, and for all he has done in support of the WWF Network.”

“I am greatly humbled to be invited to become the President of WWF at a time when its long-standing mission of working to heal and sustain the natural world and its life-supporting systems has become more urgent than ever. I am deeply honoured to be able to work again with dedicated ‘pandas’ all across the world – members, partners, experts and colleagues – whose dedication and commitment to creating a just, fair and sustainable planet for all its people and for nature has always been a source of great inspiration for me.”

Dr Adil Najam

A snow leopard in the Naltar Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. See page 37 for our work to carry out the first ever road ecology study in the Hindukush-Karakoram-Himalaya landscape, a key habitat for snow leopards.

© Muhammad Osama / WWF-Pakistan
HOW OUR GLOBAL NETWORK WORKS FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE

WWF’s achievements are the result of the combined conservation efforts of our diverse worldwide network, active through local leadership in over 100 countries and backed by the global secretariat WWF International. Nine WWF global communities of practice – Wildlife, Oceans, Forests, Freshwater, Climate & Energy, Food, Finance, Governance and Markets – bring together this conservation expertise into an impactful global force, building strong relationships and taking ambitious action alongside individuals, communities, businesses and government for a nature-positive, carbon-neutral and equitable future for people and planet. Read some of our key global achievements for 2023 on the following pages.

In Fiji, community turtle monitor Emosi Time observes a hawksbill turtle hatchling start its journey in life. See page 47 for news about WWF-backed community efforts to safeguard vital nesting sites for this critically endangered species.
As space for nature continues to shrink, human-wildlife conflict is a growing threat to both wild species and the communities that live alongside them. We’ve been developing a proactive and systematic approach to tackling this complex issue, which we’ve begun piloting in Bhutan, Mozambique, Republic of Congo, and Tanzania. The Conflict to Coexistence approach is about building trust and working together so people are both willing and able to live alongside wildlife, while wildlife thrives alongside them.

One of the keys to tackling conflict is to reduce the costs and increase the social and financial benefits of living with wildlife – and this is at the heart of our work on big cats, in partnership with Panthera. Focusing on lions, jaguars and snow leopards, our partnership puts Indigenous communities and other local people at the centre of decision-making and ensures they benefit from the conservation of these iconic species.

Although many species still face extinction, our work alongside partners is providing powerful examples of what can be achieved. In Bhutan, for example, the snow leopard population leapt by 40% from 96 in 2016 to 134 in the latest survey; and in Africa, elephant numbers remained stable in the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) landscape while the overall number of rhinos in Africa increased by 5.2% in a year.

CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, agreed new protections for some species that WWF has pushed hard for. Around 90% of shark and ray species now can’t be traded internationally if this threatens their survival; and timber from over 140 tropical tree species will need to be certified as legal and sustainable before export is permitted.

With our partners in the Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA), our work continued to strengthen professional support for rangers on the frontline of conservation – from developing a global standard for employment and working conditions, to addressing gender issues.

GLOBAL POPULATIONS OF FISH, BIRDS, MAMMALS, AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES HAVE FALLEN BY 69% ON AVERAGE SINCE 1970. WE WANT TO SEE WILDLIFE THRIVING, INCLUDING ENSURING 30% OF THE WORLD’S SURFACE IS MANAGED IN A WAY THAT CONSERVES WILDLIFE.

GLOBAL WORK

In Nepal’s Lumbini World Heritage site, WWF and partners restored wetlands to help support the second-largest population of sarus crane, the world’s tallest flying bird and listed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.
WE ARE WORKING FOR PRODUCTIVE OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS, INCLUDING A NETWORK OF MARINE PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS COVERING AT LEAST 30% OF THE OCEAN, THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH AND RESILIENCE OF SPECIES, COMMUNITIES AND THE CLIMATE.

HIGH SEAS SUCCESS
A groundbreaking UN High Seas Treaty, aimed at conserving marine life and controlling harmful activities in international waters, was agreed in 2023. WWF was a leading advocate for the treaty and supported government negotiations over nearly two decades.

The high seas, which are outside the jurisdiction of any country, cover two-thirds of the ocean, but only about 1% of this vast area is currently protected. This leaves vulnerable ecosystems and wildlife exposed to the impacts of unsustainable industrial fishing, shipping and other human activities. The new treaty, formally adopted in June 2023, will make it possible to establish networks of marine protected areas in international waters – crucial for achieving the goal of protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030, which UN members committed to in December 2022.

States must carry out impact assessments of activities planned on the high seas, which will help ensure sustainable use of the ocean. The obligation to share knowledge and technologies, and to build capacity across countries, should also enable a more equitable participation in ocean conservation.

PROGRESS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
WWF’s long-standing engagement with over 1,000 small-scale fishers in the Mediterranean has led to the creation of seven new no-fishing zones and three new areas with fisheries restrictions in just five years. But our work here is far from done, with plans that include helping fisherfolk reduce their ecological and carbon footprint and increase their resilience to climate change.

DEEP SEABED MINING
WWF’s advocacy efforts against deep seabed mining in international waters have seen strong progress, with 24 states and many more businesses endorsing our position. Arguments presented in a WWF-commissioned study, The Future is Circular, have been used in global negotiations to counter claims that deep seabed mining is necessary to supply critical minerals for the green transition.

RESTORING CORAL AND MANGROVES
Coral reefs and mangrove forests are vital for coastal communities but face serious threats, not least from climate change. Our focus for 2023 included the Sulu-Sulawesi seas – an area shared by Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines – where over 550 community members and protected area managers led monitoring and restoration efforts.
DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION CONTINUE AT AN ALARMING RATE. URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED TO SET US ON THE RIGHT PATHWAY TO PROTECT, RESTORE AND SUSTAINABLY MANAGE OUR WORLD’S FORESTS, AND HALT DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION.

LANDMARK DEFORESTATION LAW

After years of campaigning by WWF and others, the EU deforestation law came into force in June 2023. The first of its kind in the world, this new regulation makes it illegal to sell products linked with deforestation on the EU market. Large and medium-sized companies will have 18 months to make their supply chains deforestation-free.

More than 210 NGOs and 1.2 million people worldwide backed our #Together4Forests campaign for robust legislation. Now that the law is in place, our focus is on making sure it’s properly enforced by EU member states and that it works on the ground in deforestation hotspots. And there are still some loopholes to be closed: the European Commission is currently conducting an impact assessment to determine if the regulation should also cover other wooded land – like the Cerrado – and apply to the financial sector.

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

With eight other NGOs, we released the Tropical Forest Credit Integrity Guide to help companies differentiate high-quality carbon credits that deliver real benefits for the climate, nature and people. We also launched a new platform to mobilize public and private finance for high-quality nature-based solutions, focusing initially on five landscapes in Brazil, Madagascar, Mexico, Peru and Viet Nam.

CONGO BASIN CONSERVATION

In a new partnership with COMIFAC, the Central Africa Forests Commission, we are seeking opportunities to increase finance for forests in the Congo Basin, the world’s second largest rainforest. Congo Basin countries need a significant increase in financial support to conserve and sustainably manage their forests while delivering their sustainable development and climate plans.

AWARD-WINNING FIRE FILM

Together with animation studio NOMINT, we produced a powerful stop-motion film to raise awareness of the links between wildfires and climate change. A Flammable Planet has received multiple awards, including the prestigious WEBBY and British Arrows, and was shortlisted in the Cannes Lions Animation category.
THE WORLD IS FACING A WORSENING WATER CRISIS THAT IS UNDERMINING HUMAN AND PLANETARY HEALTH. WWF IS HELPING TO TACKLE THIS CHALLENGE BY PARTNERING TO PROTECT AND RESTORE HEALTHY FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEMS SO THAT THEY CAN SUSTAIN PEOPLE AND NATURE.

A PIVOTAL YEAR FOR RIVER DOLPHINS

The first ever Global Declaration for River Dolphins was adopted by 11 states in Asia and South America – covering 80% of the states where river dolphins are found. Driven by WWF, the historic declaration commits countries to take urgent measures to safeguard their river dolphins and enhance the health of the great rivers they inhabit – including the Amazon, Ganges, Indus, Mahakam and Mekong. As well as securing the future of these iconic mammals, this will benefit countless other species and hundreds of millions of people living in these river basins.

All six species of river dolphin are faced with extinction – but it’s not too late to turn things round, as the latest census of the critically endangered Yangtze finless porpoise showed. After decades of decline, numbers are now on the up thanks to concerted conservation efforts by the Chinese government, organizations and communities, rising by nearly a quarter in five years from 1,109 to 1,249.

Governments alone cannot achieve the goals of the declaration. The Global Coalition for River Dolphins was launched by 21 civil society organizations to help drive progress under the declaration, while Indigenous Peoples, global conventions, multinationals and the World Bank pledged their support.

GLOBAL FRESHWATER PLAN

Building on last year’s historic UN nature recovery agreement, the largest freshwater restoration initiative ever was launched with support from WWF. Championed by countries in the Global South, the Freshwater Challenge has ambitious goals: restore 300,000km of rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands by 2030, and conserve intact freshwater ecosystems. During a ministerial event at COP28 climate summit, 38 more countries from all continents joined the challenge.

COUNTRY-LEVEL ACTION

Our work ranged from preventing a destructive mine in the Lower Zambezi National Park in Zambia and securing extensive new protected areas around rivers in Mongolia to opening up rivers in Europe, including the first dam removal in Latvia, approval for the first removals in Croatia and the biggest ever series of removals in Finland.

UN WATER CONFERENCE

We played a major role in the first UN Water Conference for nearly half a century, which brought real momentum for action on freshwater ecosystems. Building public support was crucial to its success, with water advocate Mina Guli’s epic 200 marathons inspiring people from 202 states and territories to pledge their own commitment through the WWF-supported RunBlue campaign.
IN 2023, CLIMATE RECORDS WERE SHATTERED ACROSS THE PLANET. IT’S NOT TOO LATE TO ESCAPE THE WORST IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, AND BUILD A SAFER FUTURE FOR ALL. BUT OUR WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IS RAPIDLY NARROWING – ACTION IS NEEDED NOW.

THE ENERGY TRANSITION MUST ACCELERATE

While the COP28 climate summit in Dubai showed how national commitments to limit global warming to 1.5°C are woefully inadequate, there was welcome progress towards ending the fossil fuel era. Countries reached a historic agreement to “transition away” from fossil fuels—a significant moment as this is the first time all types of fossil fuel have been explicitly included in climate negotiations decisions, despite being the main driver of climate change.

Along with many partners, including small island states that are particularly vulnerable to climate change, we pushed hard for countries to commit to a full phase-out of coal, gas and oil. While the final outcome falls short of this, it should help accelerate the energy transition—supported by new commitments to triple global renewable energy capacity, double energy efficiency by 2030, and phase out unabated coal generation and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

 LOS AND DAMAGE WIN

One big win, backed by WWF, at COP28 was the green light to operationalize the Loss and Damage Fund, which will provide financial support for countries most affected by the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Although many countries made financial pledges to the fund, much more is needed in the face of mounting climate disasters.

 LINKING CLIMATE AND NATURE ACTION

Protecting nature is critical to combating climate change, and vice versa. WWF has been a key advocate for tackling these twin crises together—and, in 2023, we welcomed moves at COP28 and other events towards better integrating country-level plans on tackling climate change and biodiversity loss.

 SUPPORTING AT-RISK COMMUNITIES

The climate crisis will impact people everywhere, but the most vulnerable communities will continue to be hit the hardest. Through our ongoing partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the world’s largest humanitarian network, we grew our support for at-risk communities so they can adapt to the increasing climate impacts through nature-based solutions.
Our food systems continue to be the primary cause of nature loss and a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. We must urgently implement and scale up sustainable solutions.

THE WAY WE PRODUCE, CONSUME AND WASTE FOOD POSES A WIDESPREAD THREAT TO PEOPLE AND NATURE. WITH POPULATION AND INCOME GROWTH SET TO DOUBLE DEMAND BY 2050, WE MUST CREATE SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS THAT ENSURE FOOD SECURITY AND PROTECT NATURE.

TRANSFORMING FOOD PRODUCTION
Unsustainable food production has caused huge amounts of deforestation and conversion, soil degradation and water pollution. We have been working on the ground and in the water to accelerate the adoption of nature-positive production practices at scale, helping local communities to improve their livelihoods and food security, while also reversing nature loss.

For instance, our work in the Cerrado, Brazil’s largest savannah, has nearly doubled the number of family farms using nature-positive practices to produce indigenous baru nuts, with yields increasing by around 50%. We are directly supporting the restoration of degraded land for agricultural activities in both the Cerrado and Brazilian Atlantic Forest. Across Zambia and Zimbabwe, we have trained and enabled thousands of farmers, the majority of whom are women, to adopt agroecological practices. And in the mountainous northern region of Pakistan, we are working with farmers to introduce energy efficient and natural ways to produce and dry fruit.

FOOD LOSS AND WASTE
WWF is working with a wide range of partners around the world to rapidly slash food loss and waste across supply chains. For example, WWF-US established the Zero Food Waste Coalition with NGO partners and launched both federal and state-level guidance for food waste reduction, while WWF-Colombia developed a new course on waste reduction for restaurants.

HALVING THE FOOTPRINT OF DIETS
We continued to improve consumer choice and knowledge for healthy and sustainable diets. For example, our upgraded Planet-Based Diets Calculator provides consumers with localized data for around 150 countries, enabling them to analyse the impacts of dietary choices on factors such as biodiversity, greenhouse gas emissions, cropland and water use.

INNOVATING TO TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS
As part of our Solving the Great Food Puzzle platform to help countries accelerate national-level food systems transformation, we launched a new Food Systems Innovation Framework to help catalyse the biggest impacts in the shortest amount of time. Our innovative solutions include working with local communities in Paraguay to scale up agroforestry and create new markets for Indigenous foods.
NATURE-RELATED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES

A landmark new framework aims to put nature at the heart of financial decision-making and channel investment toward a nature-positive green economy. The WWF-backed Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) released its recommendations for nature-related risk management and disclosure, along with guidance that supports companies and financial institutions to identify, assess, report and respond to nature-related risks and opportunities. The recommendations align with Target 15 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which commits governments to require all large businesses to publicly report on their nature-related risks and how they depend and impact upon nature.

WWF is a founding partner of TNFD, a market-led initiative supported by national governments, businesses and financial institutions whose members have over US$20 trillion in combined assets. Better disclosure will help investors and regulators to understand the financial implications of nature loss and other environmental risks, as well as opportunities for nature restoration to create business value.

CLIMATE ASSESSMENT TOOL

Investors can now better assess a company’s climate plans thanks to the new Temperature Rating tool co-developed with CDP. The tool, available to 325,000 investors via the Bloomberg Terminal, translates the emissions reduction targets of a company or financial portfolio into a single metric that demonstrates if they align with the UN target of ensuring the global temperature rise is no more than 1.5°C.

ASSESSING THE REGULATORS

In 2023, we launched the SUSREG Tracker, an online tool that evaluates sustainable financial regulations and central bank activities in 44 jurisdictions. This will help central banks and financial supervisors better integrate environmental and social considerations into their practices, helping to redirect financial flows toward a more sustainable economy.

DUTCH FUNDING Boost

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs injected a further €40 million into the Dutch Fund for Climate and Development, which has already mobilized over €1.3 billion into building climate-resilient livelihoods for 16 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America. WWF is a fund partner, developing a portfolio of bankable nature projects that can attract further investment.
GOOD GOVERNANCE IS CRITICAL FOR SECURING CONSERVATION THAT IS JUST, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE. OUR WORK FocusES ON TACKLING CORRUPTION, EXCLUSION, POOR PLANNING, WEAK ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS AND THE SHRINKING OF CIVIC SPACE.

SPeAKING UP FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Campaigning by a coalition of hundreds of civil society groups, including WWF, finally paid off last year when 193 UN member states recognized the universal right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The prestigious 2023 United Nations Human Rights Prize has since been awarded to the coalition in recognition of their efforts. The right fills a long-standing gap in the international human rights framework. It also has potentially wide-ranging positive impacts on nature as it includes rights to clean air, a safe and stable climate, healthy and sustainable food, safe water and adequate sanitation, non-toxic environments and healthy ecosystems.

The resolution is not legally binding on UN member states. But it does provide a powerful tool for citizens across the globe to hold their governments accountable, as witnessed by recent action from young people across several countries who successfully took their governments to court over the failure to protect their right to a healthy environment.

COUNTERING CORRUPTION

We launched the Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum – a partnership with Transparency International, TRAFFIC and the Basel Institute – to bring together conservationists and anti-corruption specialists. The forum has over 500 members, and meets quarterly to identify ways to address corruption linked to environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change.

UKRAINE’S GREEN RECOVERY

A report from WWF-Ukraine brought attention to the risk of corruption in reconstruction finance in the agriculture, forestry and energy sectors, and how this could affect nature in the country. Following on from this, we co-hosted events at the London Ukraine Reconstruction Conference and have been working with international donors, Ukrainian government departments and other partners to support a green recovery.

SUSTAINABLE DECISION MAKING

WWF-Pakistan worked with the wildlife department of Gilgit-Baltistan to carry out the first ever road ecology study in the Hindukush-Karakorum-Himalaya landscape, a key habitat for snow leopards. Building on this work, the Gilgit-Baltistan government asked for our help to identify and design wildlife corridors and crossings for snow leopards and their prey species.
Our Global Work

No Plastics in Nature

Last year’s global agreement to negotiate a UN treaty to end plastic pollution came after years of campaigning by WWF and others. With formal negotiations now underway, we have pushed for ambitious, effective and legally binding measures to make the treaty work. We have made the case with treaty negotiators through reports identifying priority high-risk categories of plastic products and how these should be regulated, as well as highlighting how the current global plastic system is exacerbating global inequity and ways to make the system fairer. In parallel, through the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty, which we established in partnership with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, we have brought together over 160 leading companies around a set of strong and ambitious policy recommendations and the 227,000 people who took part in our global ‘vote’ on the issue.

At the same time, we are supporting practical action to tackle plastic pollution including through the Plastic Smart Cities programme, which is running a range of plastic pollution reduction projects in partnership with 47 cities worldwide.

Deforestation-Free Economies

The landmark EU deforestation regulation (see page 33) will require greater traceability in supply chains of seven key commodities and derived products entering the EU market to ensure they are not from deforested land. Our work with Argentina’s beef industry shows what that looks like in practice, supporting almost 180,000 farms verified as deforestation-free.

Science-Based Targets for Nature

With input from WWF, the Science Based Targets Network launched its first science-based targets for nature, supporting companies to assess and act on their impacts on land and fresh water. The methodology is being tested by 17 pilot companies, including several WWF partners.

Business Action for Nature

More than 330 businesses, including members of the Business for Nature coalition we co-founded, successfully convinced governments last year to require all large businesses to disclose their impacts on nature by 2030 under the UN Global Biodiversity Framework. The #MakeItMandatory campaign continued in 2023 with more businesses joining calls for this target to be translated into ambitious action in national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

For people and nature to thrive together, we must revolutionize our production methods and consumption patterns. WWF supports the urgent global efforts needed to deliver this: intelligent policymaking, ambitious commitments and action by companies, and informed and engaged citizens.

Since pledging its commitment to WWF’s Plastic Smart Cities programme, Philippines’ Manila City has launched seven initiatives as part of efforts to stop plastic waste from leaking into nature. Developed by local innovators and social entrepreneurs, these projects aim to scale up local waste reduction and combat plastic pollution in the country’s capital.
Together

WITH OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

The natural world shows us in so many ways a simple truth: there is safety in numbers. At WWF, we want a world where people and nature thrive — but we’ll only get there if we work together. And together:

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE
WITH GOVERNMENTS SETTING GLOBAL TARGETS ON CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, OUR PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS ARE CRITICAL TO TURNING COMMITMENTS INTO ACTION.

NATURE-BASED RESILIENCE IN PAKISTAN
From record heat to devastating floods, Pakistan is already being hit hard by the climate crisis. WWF-Pakistan has joined the Green Climate Fund, the government of Pakistan, USAID and the Coca-Cola Foundation to launch Recharge Pakistan, which seeks to reduce flood risk and build climate resilience in the country through nature-based solutions. The seven-year, US$77.8 million programme is the largest national investment to date in an ecosystem-based adaptation approach to water management, and will directly benefit more than 680,000 people.

INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ADAPTATION IN AFRICA
Our teams in Africa are promoting nature-based climate solutions in two critical conservation areas, the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) and the Greater Virunga landscapes. We’re working closely with local communities, including promoting gender equity in protected areas management. The three-year project, which began in May 2023, is part of the Climate Adaptation and Protected Areas initiative, funded by the Canadian government, which is supporting protected areas in the Global South to better adapt to climate change.

MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK REFORM
In May, our Director General, Kirsten Schuijt, visited the Asian Development Bank in Manila to celebrate our 20+ year partnership and discuss our future collaboration. The visit was part of our broader engagement this year with multilateral development banks: we’re calling on these banks to align their activities with the UN climate and biodiversity goals and to use their influence to support a net-zero, nature-positive future.

PROMOTING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS
Together with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), we’re supporting communities across Africa and Southeast Asia to stand up for their right to a healthy environment. The “Leading the Change” partnership, which entered its second five-year phase in 2023, is collaborating with local civil society organizations to build their capacity, influence environmental policies, improve livelihoods, and strengthen democracy, human rights and conservation.

Harvesting nature-based solutions for the climate crisis will benefit people and wildlife here in Pakistan.
Business has a crucial role to play in helping people and nature to thrive. In 2023, the launch of the first-ever WWF Network Corporate Engagement Strategy places us in a better position than ever to support businesses around the world.

This aims to maximize our conservation impact and support the private sector in meeting the UN biodiversity and climate targets – an ambition brought to life through global initiatives such as our Forests Forward programme and our innovative new Biodiversity Risk Filter tool (see page 58) that helps companies and financial institutions assess their impact on and dependence on nature. Our wide-ranging work also included:

**Tackling Wildfires**
Forest fires are becoming increasingly frequent and severe as a result of climate change. WWF-India is partnering with Microsoft India to improve forest fire management in three key conservation landscapes. The project uses remote-sensing technology and geospatial data analysis to help predict areas vulnerable to these fires, facilitating proactive preventative measures.

**Forest Conservation**
Five agroforestry cooperatives and a wood production company in Peru will work with us to help reverse Amazon deforestation after becoming the latest participants in WWF’s global Forests Forward programme, which supports ambitious corporate action for forests. Their commitments include restoring areas degraded by mining and illegal logging in Madre de Dios and planting more than 40,000 native trees in over 400 hectares of land.

**Reusable Packaging Pilot**
WWF-Singapore partnered with financial institution UOB to pilot a reusable e-commerce packaging programme with 12 retailers. Some 15,000 orders were processed, with one-third opting to choose reusable packaging for their orders – providing valuable insights on designing an effective scheme that works for businesses and customers.

**Climate and Energy Ambition**
WWF-Sweden joined with Ingka Group, the largest IKEA retailer, and H&M to push the EU to adopt more ambitious climate and energy targets. This included a joint letter to key ministers calling for Sweden to take the lead in securing ambitious targets in the updated EU renewable energy and energy efficiency directives, as well as meetings with members of the European Parliament.

© Marjorie Moreira

Our experience, expertise and credibility in the corporate space led to us being recognized by Globescan, for the eighth year in a row, as the leading NGO in sustainable development.
THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES LIVING CLOSEST TO NATURE, AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WHO FOR GENERATIONS HAVE BEEN ITS RESOLUTE CUSTODIANS, HAVE A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY IN BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET.

WWF supports their efforts to protect and restore their lands and waters, to obtain the appropriate recognition of their rights, and to improve their well-being. We are also urging that their contributions to and leadership in global efforts to restore nature and stabilize our climate are fully recognized. In 2023, our work together included:

UNITING FOR FIJI’S TURTLES
The communities of Fiji’s Nadogo district, representing 22 traditional tribes, united to declare Nukuvadra and Katawaqa islands as community protected areas and turtle sanctuaries. WWF-Pacific and partners supported their efforts to safeguard the islands, which are important nesting sites for critically endangered hawksbill turtles.

RESTORING MYANMAR’S MANGROVES
With over 60% of Myanmar’s mangrove forests lost in the past 20 years, WWF-Myanmar and partners ran a pilot project with 10 villages in the Ayeyarwady Delta to restore 1,500 hectares of mangroves and undertake mangrove-friendly aquaculture. The training and workshops gave communities the knowledge and skills to manage mangrove conservation themselves.

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE AMAZON
Our teams in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru worked with Indigenous organizations and other NGOs to develop a guide that takes an intersectional approach to projects where Indigenous Peoples are involved. This guide helps to implement positive actions against the participation barriers Indigenous Peoples face, and to enable conditions for them to raise their voices in defence of their rights and territories.

PROTECTING CANADA’S COASTAL WATERS
A new action plan to create Canada’s first-ever planned network of marine protected areas (MPAs) in the country’s western coastal waters, known as the Great Bear Sea, has been agreed by 15 First Nations, as well as the national and provincial governments. WWF-Canada participated in and supported stakeholder discussions and is calling for swift action to implement what will become the world’s largest Indigenous-led, collaboratively developed MPA network.

EMBEDDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONSERVATION
In 2020, an Independent Panel published a number of recommendations after reviewing WWF’s response to human rights abuses by some government rangers in Central Africa, India and Nepal. It concluded that we must do more to ensure community voices are heard and respected, as well as advocate for governments to uphold their human rights obligations. We committed to better embed human rights into our conservation activities and established a three-year Action Plan that we have been implementing since 2021 and continue to learn from. We have provided annual updates on the progress we are making, with the third and final implementation update due for publication in early 2024. Visit wwf.panda.org/independent-review to see the Independent Panel recommendations and WWF’s ongoing responses.

The local communities living closest to nature, and Indigenous peoples who for generations have been its resolute custodians, have a vital role to play in building a sustainable future for people and the planet. WWF supports their efforts to protect and restore their lands and waters, to obtain the appropriate recognition of their rights, and to improve their well-being. We are also urging that their contributions to and leadership in global efforts to restore nature and stabilize our climate are fully recognized. In 2023, our work together included:

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TOGETHER POSSIBLE
THE PEOPLE LIVING CLOSEST TO NATURE
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© Israel Vale / WWF-Brazil
Following last year’s landmark global agreement at the UN biodiversity conference in Montreal, philanthropic partnerships have an increasingly pivotal role to realize the world’s commitment to nature. The stories below demonstrate how local actions are already contributing to global impact and highlight how such partnerships are charting a course to a more sustainable future.

There are four ways to engage with WWF International: the Honorary Circle, Conservation Leaders, Conservation Champions and Conservation Partners.

**HONORARY CIRCLE**

In 2023, our partnership with Associação IEP had a substantial impact across three crucial themes. To safeguard coral reefs we initiated ecological monitoring surveys in Alor Marine Protected Area in Indonesia and began to develop a substantial funding proposal to the Green Climate Fund for activities in Fiji; we contributed to the growing support for a ban, pause or moratorium on deep-seabed mining; and to protect the Araguaia River dolphin, we conducted ongoing assessments to determine the species’ distribution and population.

Stiftung Usine has generously supported WWF’s global and strategic conservation priorities. Additionally, support has been dedicated towards our work in Brazil addressing nature loss in the Cerrado. Two important outcomes here included supporting traditional communities to influence deforestation regulations within supply chains to the EU and strengthening community-led fire management initiatives in protected areas in Jalapão territory.

In 2023, with crucial support from the Ocean Foundation, we witnessed the culmination of five years’ worth of work transforming small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean. Successes included the establishment of 26 co-managements supporting more than 1,000 fishers, indications of fish stock improvements, and stronger social, economic and employment benefits for fishers.

**WWF IS EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO ALL OF OUR PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS FOR THEIR GENEROUS AND CONTINUED SUPPORT. IN 2023, PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH WWF SUPPORTED INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION, UNLOCKED ADDITIONAL FUNDING, AND CONTRIBUTED TO RAISING AWARENESS FOR NATURE.**

TOGETHER POSSIBLE

“When Fondation Segré decided to focus its philanthropic action on biodiversity conservation and especially on endangered species, it was all too natural to establish close links with WWF International. The excellent reputation in the conservation community, coupled with its deep understanding of conservation issues at local and global scales, made WWF the right partner for the foundation. I deeply value the collaboration and friendship with WWF as it helps us in identifying the most urgent conservation challenges and is continuously innovating approaches, tools and methods on a variety of themes, from saving endangered species to working with local communities.”

Dr Claudio Segré, Chairman of Fondation Segré

A new project in Democratic Republic of Congo is helping rangers to protect Salonga National Park.

© Theo Webb / naturepl.com
We are proud to announce that a second phase of the project has commenced and the foundation is also generously supporting WWF’s blue forests work in the Mediterranean aiming to reverse seagrass degradation.

In 2023, Stelios Philanthropic Foundation supported our work to secure healthy and thriving whale and dolphin populations in the Pelagos Sanctuary, a marine protected area in the Mediterranean. The efforts of WWF and partners focus on strengthening the governance of the sanctuary, conducting research, enabling effective science-based measures for the protection of cetaceans and mitigating human impacts that may affect them.

Our partnership with Fondation Segré generously supported a new project in Democratic Republic of Congo’s Salonga National Park that is helping rangers better protect the park’s vast tropical forest. In 2023, this support contributed towards the closure of 316 hunting camps and the removal of 13,000 animal traps. Their support is also tackling discarded fishing gear (ghost gear) in biodiversity hotspots in the Mediterranean.

This support has contributed to the use of a WWF ghost gear app that will help in the documentation and retrieval of marine litter.

We would like to express our special thanks to Clarina Hocke Notz and Kirsty Bertarelli for generously hosting a unique event and silent auction in Gland, which successfully raised funds in aid of WWF’s work to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature.

The WWF International philanthropic partners mentioned above support our vitally important work throughout the world. Our grateful thanks also go to other philanthropic partners, who support our activities in other ways.

An overview of WWF International’s income and expense is provided here, with audited statements available on request at commsmarketing@wwfint.org

CONSERVATION LEADERS

- Fondation Audemars-Watkins
  Contributing towards the project ‘Adopt a Beach’.
- Fondation Esse Quam Videri
  Supporting WWF’s strategic and conservation priorities.
- Fondation Philanthropia
  Supporting the Universal Ranger Support Alliance and ivory demand reduction in the Greater Mekong.
- Montagu Foundation
  Addressing plastic pollution caused by ghost gear in Peru.
- Persephone Charitable and Environmental Trust
  Supporting solutions to the plastic pollution caused by ghost gear in Peru.
- Pictet Group Foundation
  Advancing the evidence base and raising awareness of the importance of freshwater biodiversity globally for health, nutrition and food security.
- Anonymous donor
  Global youth engagement and programme.
- Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation
  Strengthening Amur tiger habitats, reducing the demand for shark fin in Asian markets and supporting the recovery of iconic large pelagic species in the Mediterranean.

CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS

- Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz
  Supporting WWF’s strategic and conservation priorities.
- Kirsty Bertarelli and Clarina Hocke Notz
  Contributing towards the project ‘Adopt a Beach’.
- ProTechno Foundation
  Supporting the Universal Ranger Support Alliance and ivory demand reduction in the Greater Mekong.
- Stelios Philanthropic Foundation
  Supporting WWF’s strategic and conservation priorities.
- Fondation Segré
  Strengthening Amur tiger habitats, reducing the demand for shark fin in Asian markets and supporting the recovery of iconic large pelagic species in the Mediterranean.

CONSERVATION PARTNERS

- Sandi Tollman
  Supporting the Global youth engagement and programme.
- IFI Foundation
  The Rada Zocco Foundation

THANK YOU

A special thank you to The 2001: A Nature Trust members and the partners who have chosen to remain anonymous.

We are also incredibly grateful for those who have chosen to support WWF International by leaving a legacy gift in their will. This support strengthens every action WWF makes to bring balance back to nature and people.
WF remains a vitally important positive voice in a disrupted world where many people endure poverty, insecurity and conflict. We are determined to inspire and mobilize individuals everywhere to support the action needed to build a sustainable future.

As one of the world’s largest grassroots environmental movements, WWF’s Earth Hour has a pivotal role in connecting people with this urgent challenge — helping us to celebrate the planet and raise awareness about the threats to all life on Earth. It is more needed than ever, and we need more people than ever to get involved. So, in 2023, we decided to take Earth Hour to the next level and injected a renewed purpose and urgency towards creating the “Biggest Hour for Earth”, with a particular focus on giving hope and direction to those who are uncertain how to play their part in helping people and nature to thrive.

We introduced a new way for people to act, called “Give an hour for Earth”, enabling many more people to participate and do something positive for the planet for 60 minutes. Our target was 60,000 hours – the time left for us to deliver on the 2030 global biodiversity and climate goals. The actual response was an incredible 410,000+ hours – equivalent to 46 years – pledged via our online Hour Bank by people from more than 190 countries and territories.

When the widely successful lights-switch-off moment came on 25 March, a host of global landmarks took part and individuals too were encouraged to switch off from everyday distractions and give an hour for Earth. Earth Hour events and celebrations saw people from all walks of life, including many WWF partners and supporters, come together to celebrate our one shared home. Public figures, including political and business leaders, celebrities and influencers, also strongly supported this year’s Earth Hour.

Not surprisingly, these outstanding contributions from so many led to a record year in terms of media coverage and total reach. But we intend to build on this in coming years and create an even more impactful movement to inspire greater awareness.
TOGETHER POSSIBLE

EDUCATION AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

This year, we developed a new global education and engagement strategy to align our work and drive impact. The ultimate aim is to empower millions of global citizens of all ages to take action for nature and to contribute to global goals on climate, biodiversity and sustainable development leading up to 2030.

Across the WWF Network, the dedicated work of more than 1,300 staff and volunteers directly reached more than 230,000 people, 170,000 of them aged under 18, in 2023.

African Youth Leadership
Our Africa Youth Transformational Leadership programme has worked with pan-African youth networks to help train the leaders of tomorrow in areas such as policy advocacy and green entrepreneurship. The programme has helped strengthen the capacity of almost 2,200 youth civil society organizations, and supported young people to engage in dialogues at local, national and global levels, including UN climate and biodiversity summits.

Peruvian Forest Management
In the Peruvian Amazon, we helped train Indigenous leaders from five ethnic groups so they can teach young people aged 12 to 16 about sustainable forest management. The teaching, which covers issues such as community governance, is delivered in the young people’s own language and in a way that responds to their needs.

Green Education in Nepal
We held workshops with national, state and local government officials in Nepal to support them to deliver their commitments under the Green School Guideline – an initiative we launched in 2018 with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to promote environmental education in Nepal’s schools and engage schoolchildren in conservation. Our education programme in Nepal dates back 30 years, when we launched our first school eco-club.

UK Sustainable Futures
In the UK, we’re providing young people aged 14-18 with critical careers education and opportunities to help them play a significant role in addressing the environmental challenges they have inherited. Launched in November 2022, our Sustainable Futures Programme has already reached over 3,500 students and trained over 400 educators.
WWF NETWORK FINANCIALS

The figures given show combined WWF Network income and expense but do not represent consolidated accounts. The WWF Network includes WWF International, national organizations and country offices. Financial years cover the period 1 July to 30 June.

FY23 saw the WWF Network relatively stable at €1.08 billion in donated income, growing 3% from €1.05 billion in FY22. After adjusting for movement in the value of investments, total available income was €1.13 billion. Main drivers of the growth in donated income were increased contributions from corporates (up 7%), the public sector (up 14%), and trusts and foundations (up 9%).

**Our Global Network is Active Through Local Leadership in Over 100 Countries, Find Country-Level Websites at WWF.org**

WWF-Malaysia senior anti-poaching patrol officer Merapi Mat Razi in Royal Belum State Park, the second largest protected area in Peninsular Malaysia and an important site for our tiger conservation work.
The launch of WWF’s Biodiversity Risk Filter, an online tool that enables companies and financial institutions to find out their impacts on nature and how much they depend on it, as well as helping them to tackle nature-related risks to their operations, value chains and investments. This builds on the long-standing success of the Water Risk Filter, which already supports companies in identifying water-related risks in their operations. The landmark figure of one million sites assessed using the two risk filters was also reached in 2023.

Like many other richly diverse regions, areas have already been degraded by human activities. WWF risk-assessment tools are now available to help reduce the impact of the business and finance sector on the natural world.