



**#InvestInNature**

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**MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY AND WILD ANIMAL  
WELFARE THROUGH THE GLOBAL NATURE  
RECOVERY INVESTMENT INITIATIVE**

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Born Free Foundation and Born Free USA Response to COVID-19



# 1. WHAT IS THE VISION?

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that we develop and implement a Global Nature Recovery Investment Initiative (GNRII). The aim of the GNRII will be to bring about the transformative changes needed to protect people and wildlife, halt and reverse biodiversity loss and wildlife overexploitation, deliver enhanced ecosystem viability and services alongside climate change mitigation, public and animal health, sustainable livelihoods, food and societal security.

# 2. WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE?

A mass extinction event is well under way with one million species threatened with extinction, many within decades. Unprecedented levels of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are severely altering the natural fabric of the Earth's biosphere. Anthropocentric drivers include changes in land and sea use and direct overexploitation of wildlife. These are exacerbated by human population growth; urbanization and associated infrastructure development; increasing demand for wildlife and wildlife products for a multitude of purposes; inadequate legislation and law enforcement; political lethargy and intransigence; and the burden of international debt. The impacts of these drivers and their sub-drivers are jeopardizing ecosystem viability; human security; public health; livelihoods; species survival; and individual animal welfare. They undermine our capacity to address and mitigate climate change and our ability to ensure the sustainability and resilience of life on Earth for future generations. Transformative changes to the way we interact with and steward nature, and how we resource and invest in its protection and recovery, are now a paramount, urgent, global priority.



### 3. WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS?

#### **The Public:**

- Local communities
- Indigenous communities
- Consumers
- Unions
- Youth
- Faith groups
- NGOs.

#### **Funders:**

- Donors (philanthropy, charities, foundations, grant-making bodies)
- Financial institutions including IMF, GEF, ECB, ADB
- Sovereign wealth funds
- Foreign aid
- National budgets
- Managed investment funds, private investors, etc.

#### **Government Agencies:**

- Environment
- Commerce
- Finance
- Education
- Public health
- Animal and plant health authorities
- Justice
- Law enforcement
- International development.

#### **Business:**

- Agriculturalists
- Pastoralists
- Extractive industries
- Utility providers
- Agro-forestry
- Logistics (shipping and other transport)
- Commercial fishing
- Wildlife trade industry
- Tourism sector
- Natural resource-reliant industries.

#### **Intergovernmental and International Bodies:**

- The United Nations, its subsidiary bodies, and relevant UN programs (UNEP, FAO, UNGA)
- Political and economic organizations (G20, G8, EU, AU, CHOGM, Club de Paris)
- MEAs (CBD, CITES, CMS)
- ICCWC member organizations (CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, UNODC, World Bank, WCO)
- Public health and animal health organizations (WHO, OIE)
- Trade organizations (WTO, NAFTA) Transport organizations (IATA).

### 4. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on the interconnectivity of global systems and society. It has created an opportunity to mainstream biodiversity protection and animal welfare across all sectors and government departments, and reform and realign the way it is financed by embedding finance and investment mechanisms to deliver sustainable, healthy, enduring ecosystems and biodiversity for the long term through a Global Nature Recovery Investment Initiative, with clear targets and measurable deliverables by which progress can be evaluated.

## 5. HOW MIGHT THIS BE DELIVERED?

### **At the international level, secure and implement commitments which:**

- Place public health, food and water security, poverty alleviation, biodiversity protection and healthy ecosystems on an equal standing, politically, financially and socially
- Transform the distribution of global resources to fund biodiversity protection
- Halt and reverse biodiversity loss
- Expand and strengthen protected area integrity
- End commercial wildlife exploitation and curb trade
- Develop and deliver alternative livelihoods and food sources for those who currently rely on the exploitation of wild animals and plants for their survival
- Strengthen international and regional wildlife law enforcement
- Incorporate animal welfare considerations into nature recovery programmes.

### **At the country-level, develop and implement actions focused on establishing safe, secure and sustainable ecosystems and ecosystem services for the public good, through:**

- Halting biodiversity loss
- Ecosystem restoration
- Species recovery
- Strengthening and effectively implementing relevant legislation including wildlife laws
- Closure of commercial wildlife markets selling wildlife for any purpose, alive or dead
- Support for local communities
- Incorporate animal welfare considerations into nature recovery programmes
- Reducing demand for wildlife and wildlife products
- Strengthening civil society engagement
- Public participation.





## 6. HOW WILL IT BE PAID FOR?

Nature and all its components are assets that need to be valued appropriately and managed effectively, long-term. The OECD estimates that the annual required cost for safeguarding nature is c.US\$300-400billion. Currently, annual funding allocated to nature recovery programs is c.US\$50billion. Funding for the recovery of nature must urgently be secured by:

### **i) Incorporating Green Priorities in Budget Allocation**

It is critical that governments, businesses and society as a whole look beyond GDP as a narrow measure of success and 'biodiversity-proof' budgets in order to maximize our wealth, health and well-being, and that of future generations.

The bulk of the burden for protecting nature, conserving biodiversity, and securing ecosystem services, often falls on impoverished, debt-ridden developing countries or underfunded agencies within those countries. They already have many pressing priorities, can ill-afford the cost, and are the ones likely to be hit hard by, for example, the dramatic downturn in international wildlife tourism resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, on which they are often overly-dependent. This paradigm needs to change.

The OECD estimates that US\$500billion per year of public finance is spent in support for activities that are potentially harmful to biodiversity. Negative subsidies must be reinvested in activities that benefit nature conservation.

### **ii) Developing Green Revenue Streams**

A range of resource mobilization mechanisms has been identified by the UNDP Biodiversity Finance Initiative, in its Catalogue of Finance Solutions, as well as by the World Economic Forum and the OEDC. Key elements include:

- The linking of development funding to wildlife and biodiversity protection (UNDP BioFin)
- The linking of climate funding to wildlife and biodiversity protection (Green Climate Fund)
- The elimination/phasing out of perverse subsidies and incentivization of measures which conserve biodiversity (eg., redirect/repurpose resources saved by addressing harmful subsidies to this effect – OECD)
- The introduction of green investment incentives and financial disclosure requirements to leverage private sector finance
- National Debt deferral/repayment holidays for developing countries (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on *Financing For Sustainable Development Report 2020*, Club de Paris)
- Debt forgiveness for developing countries, as proposed by the President of France
- Debt for nature schemes (World Bank, Costa Rica (National Park expansion), Seychelles (marine protection))
- The incorporation of action on biodiversity protection and animal welfare into trade deals, for example through formal mechanisms to assess the interaction between Tariff-Rate Quota (TRQ) management and progress on biodiversity protection and welfare improvements, or to manage the allocation of quotas accordingly
- Debt for public health investment, food and water security swaps linked to long-term nature protection initiatives
- The introduction of widespread green taxes (polluter pays and more), blended finance schemes, and the incentivization of finance for nature from private sources (PPP).

### iii) Following Fund Deployment Targets That Enhance Nature Recovery and Public Health

- The adoption of the One Health and One Welfare frameworks in determining funding criteria
- Investment in health care provision (infrastructure, training and delivery) for the world's poorer nations so that the most vulnerable are better protected from any future emerging infectious diseases
- Investment in global security, infrastructure and health resilience measures to ensure we can act quickly and decisively in the event of the emergence of future potential pandemics
- Investment in rural economies, with particular emphasis on women's empowerment.
- Investment in ecological resilience – ensuring ecosystem services are protected through the strengthening of biodiversity protection measures, including the securing and protection of at least 30% of the planet (marine and terrestrial) by 2030 (as advocated by the World Economic Forum) and payment for ecosystem services (eg., UK government *Best Practice Guide and Agriculture Bill Part 1*)
- Food security and water sanitation
- Human behaviour change and sustainable life-skills education
- Improving domestic animal welfare where animals, albeit in reduced numbers, are still sustainably used as part of the human food chain.

The GNRII is a policy initiative, designed to mainstream nature protection and recovery within public and private financing policies. Should it become a fund management process in its own right, it would need to operate under an agreed set of Standards of Operating Practice, managed by a Board of Nominees and executed by an Executive Branch of the highest caliber, reporting to the Board of Nominees and the public at large through a set of open, transparent and audited procedures.

## 7. WHAT ARE WE ASKING FOR?

Actions in the field combined with international commitments to place nature recovery as a central tenet of negotiations for the *Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, and as a key factor in efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Investment in Nature (GNRII) to be placed on an equal footing with other global investment priorities such as development, education and defense.



## 8. HOW WILL WE MEASURE THE OUTCOME?

Use of the monitoring indicators proposed for adoption in the *Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, and the relevant targets and indicators associated with the appropriate Sustainable Development Goals, as follows:

**SDG 15 ‘Life on Land’ is focused on protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of all terrestrial ecosystems. Relevant targets related to the protection of threatened species and illegal wildlife trade are:**

- Target 15.5: Reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species (indicator: Red List Index)
- Target 15.7: End poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products
- Target 15.C: Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities

**SDG 14 ‘Life below water’ is focused on expansion of protected areas for marine biodiversity. Relevant targets include:**

- Target 14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution
- Target 14.2: Sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems
- Target 14.4: Effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices
- Target 14.C: Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law

**Biodiversity and wildlife protection is also highly relevant to or dependent on progress towards achieving a number of the other 15 SDGs, including (but not necessarily limited to):**

- SDG 1: No poverty
- SDG 2: Zero hunger
- SDG 3: Good health and well-being
- SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation
- SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy
- SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13: Climate action.



# We Cannot Return to Business as Usual


## #InvestInNature #PlanetReset



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