

\$12 billion donor support to halt and reverse forest loss and protect land rights

12 countries from around the world will come together in Glasgow today (2 November) to pledge unprecedented levels of public finance for the protection, restoration and sustainable management of forests.

The comprehensive package of funding will help countries to deliver commitments under the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forest and Land Use, also announced today, through which [over 100 leaders have committed to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030](#).

The [Global Forest Finance Pledge \(GFFP\)](#) will support ambitious partnerships in developing countries that tackle the causes of deforestation. It will also scale up sustainable economic opportunities for many of the world's poorest and most climate-vulnerable communities.

The \$12 billion of climate finance will support activities including strengthening forest governance, supporting smallholder farmers to restore degraded land, strengthening land tenure systems, and mobilising private sector investment.

The UK will commit £1.5 billion over five years to support the forests pledge, including £350 million for tropical forests in Indonesia, £200 million for the LEAF Coalition, and up to £300 million intended for the Amazon.

Forests currently absorb around one-third of the global CO₂ released from burning fossil fuels every year but we are losing them at an alarming rate – the equivalent to 27 football pitches every minute.

In addition to this donor support, the event will highlight action on three critical shifts – in flows of private finance away from activities linked to deforestation; in the sustainable trade of forest and agricultural commodities; and in empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

Lord Zac Goldsmith, International Environment Minister, UK said:

Our global forests are absolutely fundamental if we are to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C, which is why this huge public finance commitment by the UK and our donor partners is so important.

The \$12 billion commitment – the largest ever public climate finance pledge of its kind – will protect, restore and deliver

sustainable management for forests, addressing the climate and biodiversity crises, providing targeted support for the regions like the Congo Basin and advancing and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities as forest guardians. It is a critical part of a broad and ambitious package of actions and commitments we are delivering at COP26 for the world's forests.

Jonas Gahr Støre, Prime Minister of Norway said:

We must work for an improved global framework for climate investments. To 'keep 1.5 degrees alive' we have to halt forest loss this decade. Tropical forest countries need more international support and incentives to transform their land use policies. Norway will continue and further develop its International Climate and Forest Initiative at high levels until 2030, and we're excited to be part of a growing coalition of donors and companies mobilizing to reduce deforestation and enable a just rural transition. I am particularly pleased that we are joining forces to secure indigenous peoples' rights and increase the recognition of their role as forest guardians.

Alexander De Croo, Prime Minister of Belgium, said:

Belgium has pledged to be a leader for Nature and is proud to demonstrate its commitment here by joining the Global Forest Finance Pledge. Finding the best, sustainable solutions for the conservation and protection of forests is crucial to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss and to foster human wellbeing, creating jobs and welfare, increasing resilience of vulnerable communities.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said:

Today's €1 billion pledge is a clear sign of the EU's commitment to lead global change to protect our planet, in line with the European Green Deal ambitions. Forests are the green lungs of the earth, protecting them is key in our fight against climate change and the biodiversity crisis. Together we can succeed in fighting forest loss and climate change to deliver a resilient and inclusive post-COVID-19 world.

Meanwhile 11 donor countries and the Bezos Earth Fund will launch a [Joint Statement on supporting the Congo Basin forests](#) including an initial pledge of at least \$1.5 billion (£1.1 billion) of financial support to ambitious efforts in the region.

The Congo Basin is home to the world's second-largest tropical rainforest and the world's largest carbon sink, providing half of all rainfall across Africa. Threats to the forests mean risks to food and water security, undermining the livelihoods of the 80 million people who live in and around the region.

The support announced today, in partnership with Congo Basin countries, will support initiatives such as the Central African Forest Initiative, funding climate mitigation and adaptation and addressing the drivers of forest loss.

Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, said:

There is no need to remind anyone here of the strategic role that the Congo Basin plays in maintaining the world's ecological balance and in the development of our societies.

14 bilateral and philanthropic donors, including the Ford Foundation and members of the Protecting our Planet Challenge, will also [announce a Joint Statement](#) on advancing Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' tenure rights and forest guardianship, with an initial pledge of at least \$1.7 billion (£1.2 billion).

Forests lived in and looked after by Indigenous Peoples and local communities contain almost a quarter of the carbon stored in the world's tropical forests. Deforestation rates are much lower on land under their control. However, while one third of the world's land is thought to be held and managed by these people, they have secure land rights on only 10% of this land.

The pledge will channel support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities to build their capacity to protect forests, and activities that secure their land and resource rights. It will include a commitment to promote the effective participation and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in decision-making on forests.

Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation said:

There is no viable solution to the climate crisis without forest and land management by Indigenous Peoples and local communities who have proven that they are the best guardians of the world's forests. This historic \$1.7 billion pledge is a challenge to all funders to do far more to support and partner with Indigenous Peoples and local communities who hold a key solution to climate change, and have them lead the way.

Andrew Steer, President & CEO, Bezos Earth Fund, on behalf of the Protecting our Planet Challenge, said:

Indigenous Peoples and local communities depend on nature and have been stewards on land and sea for centuries. Securing their territorial rights is one of most important and effective ways to ensure the protection of 30% of the planet by 2030. The Bezos Earth Fund is pleased to join forces with eight other private donors through the Protecting Our Planet Challenge. Collectively, we plan to invest \$1 billion over the next decade to support territorial rights and the capacity of indigenous people and local communities to manage their territories to protect nature and support their well-being and culture.

Tuntiak Katan, Coordinator of the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities, representing communities from the rain forests of Africa, Latin America and Indonesia, said:

We welcome the announcement at COP of the Joint Statement on Advancing Support for Indigenous Peoples and local communities that has raised to an unprecedented level their visibility as a climate solution.

At the same time, we will be looking for concrete evidence of a transformation in the way funds are invested. If 80 percent of what is proposed is directed to supporting land rights and the proposals of Indigenous and local communities, we will see a dramatic reversal in the current trend that is destroying our natural resources.

Global Forest Finance Pledge

The [\\$12 billion GFFP – online here](#) will help forest countries tackle systemic drivers of forest loss and help to enable the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests through measures such as results-based payments, improvements to forest and land governance, support for community stewardship of forests by indigenous peoples, and the promotion of deforestation-free supply chains.

Donor countries and forest countries will work together to ensure the funding is effective and efficient, ensuring that investment is supported by leadership and ambition by forest countries, such as abolishing perverse subsidies and promoting domestic policies to protect forests and reduce deforestation.

Full list of donors is: the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, the United States, and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union

Congo Basin statement and investment

The Congo Basin statement, supported by at least \$1.5 billion in ring-fenced investment, represents a collective international donor commitment to work in partnership with Central African countries (including DRC, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and Central African Republic) to protect and maintain the Congo Basin tropical forests and peatland areas.

The statement is intended as a clarion call for greatly enhanced international focus on these forests. This is important because the Congo Basin forests:

- are globally the second largest tropical rainforests, while the area's peatlands are the world's largest tropical carbon sink and the largest carbon sink;
- are critical for biodiversity and stability of the global climate;
- supply half of all rainfall across Africa, on which many millions depend for food and water.
- support the livelihoods of 80m – including around 1m indigenous people – who live in the region;
- are critical to the long-term economic development of the region; and
- are threatened by deforestation and degradation and remain underfunded compared to other globally important biomes.

The statement responds to calls from the region (including via the [COMIFAC Declaration](#)) for greater support and cooperation. The pledge will support initiatives such as [CAFI](#) and fund climate mitigation and adaptation, address the drivers of forest loss, and enable the protection and restoration of the Congo Basin. Each participating donor will deliver their own package of support.

Joint statement and investment in support of indigenous peoples and local communities

This is a [collective pledge by public and private donors](#) to advance Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' forest tenure rights and support greater recognition for their role as guardians of forests and nature. The pledge is a collective commitment by 14 bilateral and philanthropic donors, including the Ford Foundation and the Protecting our Planet Challenge, to commit \$1.7 billion of confirmed financing from 2021 to 2025.

This is important because:

- Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land contain almost a quarter of the carbon stored in the world's tropical forests;
- where Indigenous Peoples and local communities hold secure rights to forests, communities provide better protection and management than even legally protected areas, and carbon storage can be increased; and
- around one third of the world's land is estimated to be held by Indigenous Peoples and other local communities but they have secure tenure rights on only 10% of this land.

The \$1.7 billion will channel support to indigenous peoples and local communities through capacity building and financial support for group activities, as well as support to secure, strengthen and protect land and resource rights. This commitment responds to calls from Indigenous Peoples and local communities and signals a commitment to work in partnership with governments, communities and other stakeholders to enable them to maintain and safeguard the vital ecosystem services they provide to the whole planet.

Additional quotes

Steven Guilbeault, Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change, said:

Forests act as the lungs of the earth and are essential to help the world tackle the interconnected crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. Trees are a nature-based solution to address climate change as they absorb carbon.

As a major forest country, Canada is proud to sign on and contribute to the Global Forest Finance Pledge to help unleash the potential of tropical forests and sustainable land use, and to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030.

Embracing the power of nature is a critical part of Canada's plan to address climate change, which is why we recently doubled our climate finance commitment to \$5.3 billion to help support nature-based solutions abroad. We are also planting two billion trees, conserving and restoring forests, wetlands, peatlands and grasslands here at home.

Jochen Flasbarth, Germany's State Secretary at the Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, said:

Forests around the world are of central importance not only for the mitigation of climate change and the adaptation to global warming but also for the protection of biodiversity. We continue to be a reliable partner for forest countries in the global south in their efforts to end deforestation by 2030 and fully support the Global Forest Finance Pledge. The pledge provides an offer to ambitious international partnerships to jointly make deforestation history.

Mina Setra, Deputy to the Secretary General of AMAN, said:

The commitment announced today to halt forest loss and protect Indigenous Peoples' rights is long overdue. We applaud the governments and donors involved for taking this step to protect our

rights and the global climate. However, we urge them to work directly with us to deliver these funds at the local level. Furthermore, this pledge must not replace the fundamental actions they must take to stop their companies' from bulldozing our ancestral forests. To fulfil their mission and avoid a climate catastrophe, they must stop all deforestation on the lands of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and work with us to protect the world's last remaining tropical forests.