

# Environment Secretary calls for action to protect and restore nature at COP27

The Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey has today called for renewed global action on nature as she sets out an ambitious path forward for nature at COP's Biodiversity Day (16 November).

Outlining the importance of next month's vital meeting of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal, she is calling on countries to come together at that summit and agree a robust global plan for tackling nature loss. While significant progress has been made, more action is needed from both the public and private sectors to bridge the reported \$700 billion funding gap needed to stop nature loss.

Our security, livelihoods and productivity depend on the global web of life including our forests and the ocean, with over half of the world's GDP reliant on nature.

Today at Biodiversity Day, the UK Government continues to drive global efforts to embrace nature to help lower global temperatures and build a sustainable future. It will:

- Commit £30 million of seed finance into the Big Nature Impact Fund – a new public-private fund for nature in the UK which will unlock significant private investment into nature projects, such as new tree planting or restoring peatlands. Managed by Federated Hermes and Finance Earth, these habitat creation projects will aid small business growth and job creation as well as soak up carbon emissions and support cleaner air and water.
- Pledge an additional £12 million to the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance to protect and restore vulnerable coastal communities and habitats
- Commit a further £6 million to provide capacity building support to developing countries to increase commitments to nature and nature-based solutions under the Paris Agreement, through the UNDP Climate Promise.
- Announce new UK climate finance contribution of £5 million toward the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Multi-Donor Trust Fund for the Amazon. This will help to tackle deforestation through community-led projects harnessing local knowledge to protect the world's most precious forests that the planet relies on, whilst providing sustainable business opportunities to Indigenous People whose livelihoods depend on forests.
- Raise awareness of the incredible importance of mangroves and their role in coastal resilience by endorsing the [Mangrove Breakthrough](#) led by the UNFCCC High-Level Champions and the Global Mangrove Alliance. This vital project aims to secure the future of vital coastal mangrove forests.
- Highlight the climate benefits of blue carbon through continued support for the new Global Ocean Decade Programme for Blue Carbon (GO-BC), which has now launched a new Global Graduate scheme for early career blue carbon researchers.

## **Speaking at Biodiversity Day at COP27, Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey said:**

Over half of the world's GDP reliant on nature, which is why the United Kingdom put nature at the heart of our COP26 Presidency and led calls to protect 30 per cent of land and ocean by 2030.

We continue to demonstrate international leadership through commitments to create a natural world that is richer in plants and wildlife to tackle the climate crisis, and at next month's meeting of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity we will strive for an ambitious agreement that includes a global 30by30 target, a commitment to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, and an increase in resources for the conservation and protection of nature from all sources.

## **Lord Goldsmith, Minister for International Environment, Climate, Forests & Energy, said:**

The fastest route to Net Zero is restoring the world's forests and protecting nature. And the value of forests and other ecosystems goes so much further than climate. The greatest guardians of nature has always been indigenous people, which is why the UK is delighted to support communities in the Amazon in their efforts to protect and restore their environment.

Global momentum is now behind plans to halt nature's decline, with 95 world leaders and over 100 non-state actors having now signed the Leaders' Pledge for Nature which commits to global action to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

This momentum will only continue if the right incentives are in place. The UK, together with Ecuador, Gabon and the Maldives, recently led the creation of a Political Vision: 10 Point Plan for Financing Biodiversity (10PP), launched with 17 early endorsers. At COP27, ministers and representatives from 15 existing signatories and others were drawn together in a [closed door meeting](#) to kick-start next steps on translating this plan into action ahead of CBD-COP15.2 in Montreal.

As outgoing UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) COP Presidents, it is vital that the United Kingdom's level of ambition for nature is continued under future Presidencies to achieve Net Zero goals and halt the damage that climate change is causing to our planet.

Looking ahead to UN CBD, this includes scaling strong investments into nature-based solutions, committing to protecting and restoring critical ecosystems, such as mangroves and peatlands, improving the abundance of species and plants, and halting the decline of biodiversity to create a more

sustainable future and drive economic growth.

ENDS.

### **Further information on the Big Nature Impact Fund**

- The new blended fund is being launched with £30 million of government investment. From the 16 November the fund will start to engage with private investors to help fund green projects around the country, this will include tree planting, peat restoration and water quality improvement projects.
- The £30m seed public investment will drive much greater investment from the private sector to invest in nature projects in England to help tackle climate change.
- Investment generated through the fund will support new woodland creation in England – equivalent to 15-16 million trees of new planting. The fund will also support peatland restoration and habitat creation.
- The Big Nature Impact Fund will boost the economy through new nature recovery projects that will create green jobs, secure existing ones and open up new avenues in UK green finance.
- Projects will generate revenue to provide a financial return for investors by selling high-integrity carbon and biodiversity units to businesses to help them fulfil their net zero commitments and biodiversity net gain obligations.

### **At the UN CBD meeting in Montreal in December, the United Kingdom will:**

- Seek further support for the target to protect at least 30% of the land and of the ocean globally by 2030 ('30by30')
- Continue leading calls for ambitious and meaningful outcomes for the ocean
- Aim to provide a significant increase in the mobilisation of resources from all sources to fund the global effort to halt nature loss.
- Look to strengthen mechanisms for holding countries to account for implementing the framework.
- Work towards agreement on ensuring that benefits arising from the use of biodiversity are shared with the communities that take care of them

### **Forests**

- The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Multi-Donor Trust Fund for the Amazon is a new initiative that will work to promote forest protection and sustainable development across the Amazon. As part of the initiative, the UK will work together with the IDB, Amazon countries and other key regional stakeholders, and partners such as the Netherlands and Germany, to fund innovative projects that improve management of vital forest landscapes, support sustainable, nature-positive livelihoods for indigenous people and local communities, and upscale economic solutions to eliminate deforestation and ecosystem degradation. The initiative will deliver support across eight Amazon countries – Brazil, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Guyana, Venezuela, Ecuador, and

Suriname.

- In addition, we invested over £2 million through the Mobilising Finance for Forests programme in projects to conserve, restore and sustainably manage two million hectares of tropical forest landscapes that will reduce emissions significantly by 2030.
- This year, the UK has also invested through the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) an additional £800,000 in climate security projects tackling the illegal drivers of deforestation in the Amazon region.

### **Mangroves breakthrough:**

- The Mangrove Breakthrough was launched by the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) in conjunction with Nigel Topping and the UNFCCC High-Level Climate Champions (HLCs). They launched at COP27 on 10 November with endorsements from states (including the UK) and non-state actors.
- The Mangrove Breakthrough's aims to catalyse the financial support needed to achieve its target of \$4bn corresponding to 15million hectares of mangroves globally by 2030, through collective action on halting mangrove loss, restoring half of recent losses, doubling protection of mangroves globally, and ensuring sustainable long-term finance for all existing mangroves.
- The ambition aligns with Defra and HMG priorities to champion ocean-climate action and to drive forward a step change in nature-based solutions, including under the Blue Planet Fund, and towards the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests, recognising mangroves as blue forests.

### **GO-BC:**

- Defra provides support for the running of Global Ocean Decade Programme for Blue Carbon (GO-BC), a new research programme within the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. GO-BC It is looking to build blue carbon scientific capability (in part through launching its global graduate scheme) and exploring potential blue carbon research projects it will endorse (one such project where there could be future opportunities for collaboration is the Convex Seascape Survey).

### **Glasgow legacy**

- The Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use is part of the ambitious legacy from COP26. Led by the United Kingdom, 145 countries – representing over 90% of the world's forests – signed a pledge to halt deforestation and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and rural transformation. This commitment will deliver resilient and inclusive growth and accelerate efforts to limit global warming. Countries now need to deliver on their Glasgow commitments and the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership – launched earlier this week – will play a critical part in driving this through providing accountability and space for enhanced cooperation. The declaration was signed by 145 countries at COP26. For more information visit: [Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use – UN Climate Change Conference \(COP26\) at the SEC – Glasgow 2021 \(ukcop26.org\)](https://www.ukcop26.org/declaration)

- COP26 also gave much greater prominence to the ocean's role in climate action. Since Glasgow, the United Kingdom has increased support to developing countries through the flagship £500m Blue Planet Fund to support adaptation to climate change and build sustainable, prosperous coastal communities. The United Kingdom will build on this ambition at COP15, seeking agreement of an ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.
- The 10 Point Plan is a political blueprint that defines a clear pathway for bridging the global nature finance gap and to manage the significant risks of biodiversity loss to the global economy and public health. It was launched at the UN General Assembly (UNGA 77) on 20 September 2022. 17 countries have signed up to the 10 Point Plan, led by Ecuador, Gabon, Maldives and the UK. The plan demonstrates the role that all sources of finance have to play, including domestic, international, public and private. It has a particular focus on how international, public finance can support developing countries to accelerate the transition to become nature positive. [The 10 Point Plan for financing biodiversity – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-10-point-plan-for-financing-biodiversity)

### **Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance:**

- ORRAA is a multi-sector collaboration connecting the international finance and insurance sectors, governments, non-profits, and stakeholders from the Global South to pioneer finance products that incentivise investment into coastal and ocean Nature-based Solutions. The Alliance's goal, by 2030, is to activate at least \$500 million of investment into this space, and in so doing, help build the resilience of at least 250 million climate vulnerable coastal people [Homepage – ORRAA \(oceanriskalliance.org\)](https://oceanriskalliance.org/)