



April 29, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

On behalf of our four organizations, we commend you for your leadership in convening last week's Leaders Summit on Climate and for making climate change and nature conservation top priorities of your administration. The climate crisis represents an existential threat to both people and nature. Your early actions to confront this crisis have begun to restore American leadership and will help drive international ambition at the speed and scale needed to meet the gravity of this challenge.

The International Conservation Partnership (ICP) is an informal coalition comprising Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund. Each of our organizations is working on a global scale to protect and conserve the future of nature and the benefits it provides to people.

The next decade is critical for the trajectory of our planet. We need reinvigorated U.S. global leadership and action to address a set of pressing and intertwined challenges—the crisis of global biodiversity and nature loss, the global climate crisis, and the global health and economic crisis we are struggling through due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All of these crises are rooted in humanity's broken relationship with nature. Only by taking urgent and comprehensive steps to fix that relationship can we set ourselves on a more sustainable path for both people and the planet—and we need the U.S. to help lead the way. Over the course of 2021, the international community will be setting commitments for the coming decade on collective action to halt biodiversity loss and confront climate change. U.S. leadership will be critical to ensuring those commitments reflect the ambitious actions that the science requires.

We thank you for taking immediate and bold actions to restore U.S. leadership on efforts to address climate change both at home and internationally including:

- Committing to an ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% below 2005 levels by 2030 and putting the U.S. on track to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050;
- Announcing the first U.S. International Climate Finance Plan;
- Pledging to catalyze \$1 billion globally in public-private partnerships for emissions reductions from tropical and sub-tropical forests through the Lowering Emissions by

Accelerating Forest finance (LEAF) Coalition, and committing to a dialogue with stakeholders; and

- Working to establish a “30x30” process for the U.S. government to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030;

At the same time, we recognize that more needs to be done. As we approach the 26th Conference of the Parties of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), we respectfully urge you to redouble U.S. efforts to address the global biodiversity crisis alongside and as part of your leadership in tackling climate change. The two are intertwined, and nature-based solutions (NBS) to climate change, also known as natural climate solutions (NCS), need to be a central component of the response to climate change in the U.S. and globally.

Recent studies show that nature-based solutions within agriculture, forest, coastal and other land use sectors can provide up to one-third of the action needed by 2030 to keep global temperature rise below 2°C. However, the current global investment in NBS and NCS represents no more than 8% of all climate change and development assistance. These solutions protect landscapes and seascapes vital for both biodiversity and carbon storage while also reducing community vulnerability to new and worsening threats of climate change. In particular, intact forests—forests with high ecological integrity—play a crucial role in mitigating climate change as well as protecting biodiversity, water supply and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We therefore recommend your administration take the following actions:

- Use all efforts to implement the ambitious U.S. NDC announced on Earth Day and continue to encourage other countries to increase their ambition as well;
- Announce a commitment to double U.S. investments in global biodiversity conservation over the next four years and work with other nations to protect and restore natural systems including intact forests, coral reefs, grasslands, wetlands, and other carbon-rich landscapes and seascapes;
- Build upon your “30x30” commitment with a global pledge to lead similar commitments by other countries in a way that respects the rights of local communities and Indigenous Peoples, as well as efforts to end deforestation, forest degradation, and habitat conversion. In addition to increasing support to global conservation programs, the U.S. can also lead by strengthening its efforts to halt the illegal timber trade and address the drivers of forest and habitat loss;
- Sign the Leader’s Pledge for Nature and join the High Ambition Coalition for People and Nature. The U.S. government should prioritize the upcoming UNFCCC and CBD Conferences of the Parties in 2021 to push for ambitious, science-driven global action to safeguard nature, including linkages to strategic U.S. economic and security interests;
- Ensure that investments in NBS and NCS, guided by high quality science-based targets, make up a significant portion of international climate finance commitments announced

by the U.S., and begin a larger effort with donor countries and financial institutions to ensure robust funding is available to implement these solutions, including through new commitments; and

- Ensure that international financing for economic recovery, development, and infrastructure is directed towards nature-positive investments versus those that risk doing environmental harm.

We commend you for your commitment to addressing biodiversity loss and the global climate crisis. Our organizations look forward to working with you and your administration to address both of these challenges and ensure natural climate solutions are central to the U.S. response to climate change.

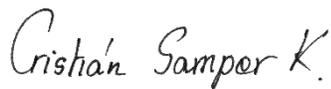
Sincerely,



M. Sanjayan
Conservation International CEO



Jennifer Morris
Chief Executive Officer
The Nature Conservancy



Cristián Samper
WCS President & CEO



Carter Roberts
WWF President & CEO