

# RESTORING THREATENED HABITATS AND SPECIES



We're working to halt the loss of habitats and restore natural life-support systems for people and species in some of the world's most special places.

## 2021-22 TARGET

**In the Amazon, we'll continue to build partnerships and work with community-led initiatives to rehabilitate and restore nature and biodiversity.**

We know if we lose the Amazon, we lose the fight against climate change. So, it's a priority for WWF to support its Indigenous peoples and local communities and help protect this vital region. Our Amazon work spans several countries, including Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

In Colombia, a major success for us this year was the launch of a hugely ambitious initiative – known as Heritage Colombia – an innovative funding mechanism of US\$245 million to expand and improve the nation's protected area system over the next 10 years. Heritage Colombia brings together the private sector, civil society and the Colombian government. We provided WWF-Colombia with the funding to play a pivotal role in its establishment.

In Brazil we've seen worsening attacks and illegal invasion of Indigenous lands. So we've increased our support for partnering with key local organisations and Indigenous communities to support them in monitoring their lands to detect illegal activity and capture evidence. For example, in Rondônia state we've supported a local NGO, Kanindé, to build a remote monitoring system enabling the monitoring of invasions across 6.4 million hectares.

We also supported people from Indigenous organisations to amplify their call on the international stage (at the Glasgow climate summit, COP26) for greater recognition of the roles Indigenous communities play in tackling climate change and conserving forests. Governments, including the UK, pledged in Glasgow to provide £1.25 billion in direct funding to Indigenous peoples.

And with support from our partners Reckitt, WWF-Brazil launched the Mercury Observatory, an online platform that shows the impacts of mercury and gold mining on local people's health and wildlife. It spans more than 40 years and provides in-depth resources to call for an end to illegal gold mining and mercury use.

And in Peru, our partnership with the Climate Group, the Tropical Forest Alliance and local government is working with farmers in Madre de Dios to promote restorative cattle ranching across 4,000 hectares of farmland. Amazonian forest is converted into cattle pasture more than into any other land use. This year, our UK-government funded project has enabled 300 farmers to be trained in regenerative cattle ranching techniques which involve low-tech measures to improve soil, integrate trees into the landscape and protect water flows. This is already increasing productivity, sequestering more carbon and improving biodiversity.

## 2021-22 TARGET

**We'll launch our Land for Life programme across southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, securing wildlife habitats and increasing benefits to local people.**

After last year's record-breaking appeal for our ambitious Land for Life initiative, this year we started working on this four-year project together with local communities and our partners in the region – South Rift Association of Land Owners and Tanzania People & Wildlife. The project focuses on vast community lands, across more than 8,000 sq km of grassland savannahs, forests and freshwater systems. We aim to improve the wellbeing of more than 27,000 people while protecting wildlife such as elephants and lions. The area is under pressure from expanding agriculture, land degradation, poorly planned infrastructure development and a growing human population.



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This year we've worked with local communities to ensure they are involved in designing and leading the work from the outset, and we put environmental and social safeguards in place to ensure people's rights are protected.

We've recruited and trained 46 local people as community scouts in Kenya and 44 in Tanzania as human-wildlife conflict officers, along with 27 livestock guardians to protect community cattle. So far, we've provided each of the scouts with an average of 200 hours of training. In Kenya, this has already enabled more than 8,000 anti-poaching patrol days and the livestock guardians have helped uncover incidents of illegal logging, poaching, livestock predation and more.

We've drafted a set of priority actions for restoration across the project landscape in Kenya and promoted best practice for livestock management. And around 370 people have been involved in uprooting invasive plant species across 560 hectares of grazing land.

And through the project we mounted an emergency response to extreme drought conditions in Kenya, protecting important water sources and springs.

## 2021-22 TARGET

**Through partnerships, we'll continue to build UK-based projects and programmes – both land and sea – that respond to the triple challenge of feeding a growing population, tackling climate change and restoring nature.**

Through our UK work we aim to demonstrate how to transform the use of land and sea to ensure nature can recover, help reach net zero, and produce sustainable food – with the participation of local communities.

We support landscape and seascape projects that demonstrate nature-based solutions that can be scaled up. They show how barriers can be overcome and how to gain social acceptability; we use them as evidence to underpin our advocacy and campaigning to catalyse transformative change.

One is our successful seagrass programme, which we've developed substantially this year. Restoring seagrass meadows stores carbon, helps to increase the resilience of coastal communities and provides habitat for marine life. Scoping phases are almost complete in both north Wales and



the Solent, and we've identified priority sites for seagrass restoration. We've engaged community members and other stakeholders in project design and both are on track to begin delivery this winter. And we've started a third new project in Scotland, with a strong partnership formed with six delivery partners.

Also at sea, we're funding and driving the first full mapping of Europe's 'blue carbon' assets, such as saltmarshes, seagrass and kelp forests. This will highlight hotspots of these vital areas where nature captures carbon, helping make the case for avoiding damaging activities there, such as deep-sea mining.

On land, we've continued to work with the Rivers Trust and The Wildlife Trusts to reduce the impact of agriculture in Norfolk, the Soar, the Wye and Usk, and the Humber. Together, we're supporting a shift to practices that help restore nature and mitigate climate change.

Since January, we've kicked off new projects in Norfolk and the Soar that focus on restoring nature and species and increasing the resilience of local communities, which will scale up our landscape work. This has included a new methodology to identify the most appropriate sites to deliver natural flood management interventions in the River Soar catchment – using data and evidence to ensure resources deliver the maximum benefits for nature, climate and local communities.

## 2021-22 TARGET

**We'll develop plans to scale up work in at least two other international landscapes or seascapes to address nature, climate and sustainable development challenges.**

We've continued to focus on critical landscapes, seascapes and river basins across the globe, which over the coming years will be strongly positioned to deliver climate-resilient nature conservation and restoration, while upholding rights and improving the wellbeing of local communities.

The effects of Covid-19, not least through travel restrictions, continued to prove challenging this year, affecting the potential for impact across programmes globally. But nevertheless, we made progress and in some areas we're already seeing impacts.

Brimming with wildlife, the remaining forests of Sabah in Borneo store vast amounts of carbon. Sg Pinangah Forest Reserve, an important area in Sabah for orangutans, suffered heavy logging in the 1970s and '80s. This year, Sabah's forestry department accepted recommendations from WWF's orangutan field team in Malaysia, which we support, to safeguard important orangutan habitat from being converted. Suitable areas in Sg Pinangah Forest Reserve were identified to be set aside for conservation – these will provide protection for orangutans, and will help to prevent local extinctions.

In Myanmar, we provided financial support to our WWF colleagues to promote mangrove conservation and restoration. Mangroves are important in mitigating climate change, protecting against risks posed by tsunamis and rising sea waters, and supporting the livelihoods of coastal communities. In the Ayeyarwady Delta, where only 28% of mangrove vegetation remains, we're working with a local NGO partner to support two communities to develop a best practice model of community-based sustainable mangrove management. Work we've funded this year has seen improved management and restoration of 970 hectares of mangrove forests; it aims to serve as a demonstration project to other community forests along the Myanmar coastline.

In the Central India Landscape, home to around a quarter of India's wild tigers, forest corridors connecting tiger reserves face various threats including habitat fragmentation, land use change and mining. Our support for WWF-India, working to reduce these threats, led this year to six tiger reserves receiving accreditation to CA|TS – a set of criteria that enables tiger sites to check that their management will lead to successful tiger conservation.

## OUR 2022-23 PRIORITIES INCLUDE

In Brazil, we'll focus on stopping legislation that harms the Amazon and implementing a tool to help tackle illegality in gold mining supply chains, while supporting the rights and territorial protection of Indigenous people and local communities. In Colombia and Peru, we'll facilitate regenerative farming and restoration in deforestation hotspots.

We'll develop an integrated vision for land and seascapes in Pembrokeshire and Norfolk, created with the local communities, that responds to the triple challenge of feeding a growing population, tackling climate change and restoring nature.

In southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, we'll work with local partners, communities and regional decision-makers to facilitate effective governance, cooperation and land-management, the mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, and nature-based livelihoods.

We'll continue to work with governments and local communities to support the recovery of wild tiger populations. We'll ensure governments make meaningful commitments for tiger conservation over the next 12 years, and strengthen international efforts to reduce illegal wildlife trade.