

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Christians for Conservation Applaud New Targets for a Nature-Positive Future

*The UN's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP15 concluded this week with an agreement to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030. A Rocha is cautiously hopeful about the adoption of the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for the health of people and places.*

**MONTREAL, CANADA (December 21, 2022)** — After a two-year delay and weeks of intensive talks in Montreal, Canada, the long-awaited Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was successfully adopted at the CBD COP15. The Kunming-Montreal framework aims to reverse nature loss by 2030, providing a global blueprint similar to the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C climate goal.

A Rocha—a worldwide network of Christian organisations for nature conservation, member of the IUCN, and one of the observers in this historical summit—applauds these targets and goals while encouraging prompt and effective implementation.

The GBF targets fulfil four overarching global goals for 2050, which seek to (A) preserve and restore ecosystems and halt human induced extinction of known threatened species, (B) sustainably use biodiversity, (C) fairly and equitably share the benefits of genetic resources, and (D) ensure adequate means of implementing these goals for all parties. A Rocha noted these positive highlights from the GBF targets for 2030:

1. Scale up the conservation of species, the preservation of remaining intact ecosystems and the large-scale restoration of what has already been depleted. Importantly, the species component mandates action to halt extinctions of known threatened species starting now (and a tenfold reduction of extinction risk of all species by 2050). The role of Nature-based Solutions in achieving conservation is emphasised.

2. Protect 30% of Earth's lands, oceans, coastal areas, inland waters, with emphasis on areas of particular importance for biodiversity. This also recognizes indigenous and traditional territories and practices.
3. Reduce harmful government subsidies that destroy biodiversity by at least \$500 billion.
4. Increase biodiversity finance by at least US\$ 200 billion.
5. Reduce to near zero the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity.
6. Cut global food waste in half.
7. Secure at least \$200 billion per year in domestic and international biodiversity finance from all sources – public and private.
8. Take effective measures to ensure international sharing of benefits that arise from the use of genetic sequence information.
9. Reduce the risk posed by pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by half.

Luke Wilson, CEO of A Rocha Canada, commented on the value of attending the event in person:

"We took advantage of a rare opportunity to participate in COP15 because the events were close to home, and a large number of participants from the Canadian nature conservation community. I was grateful to meet people from WWF, Nature Canada, Ducks Unlimited and the UN Environmental Program to name a few.

"I turned from sceptic of global environmental gatherings to evangelist when I realised that these gatherings are much more than government negotiations; they are fertile ground for new relationships, ideas, and partnerships. When I talked with people, every conversation had an element of hope and anticipation."

Prior to the CBD COP15 talks, A Rocha International released a [policy statement](#) outlining 10 priorities for the talks' outcomes. In the statement, A Rocha explains a Christian basis for involvement in discussions on biodiversity:

"For Christians, the basis for caring for the Earth runs much deeper than the imminent crisis facing us. Our first motivation is based on God's concern for life on earth in all its

variety. This concern is woven into the central themes of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Biodiversity is also at the heart of God's plan for redemption and renewal."

A Rocha celebrates this achievement alongside partners in the World Evangelical Alliance Creation Care Network. A more detailed analysis of the framework will be released in January 2023.

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## About the A Rocha Worldwide Family

[A Rocha](#) is a worldwide family of Christian organisations which, inspired by God's love, engages in scientific research, environmental education and community-based conservation projects in more than 20 countries and across six continents.

We respond to the global crisis of biodiversity loss by carrying out community-based conservation projects, through:

- ecological monitoring and research in areas of high value for wildlife;
- practical measures for conserving and restoring habitats and their fauna and flora;
- participation in nature conservation, through environmental education and community outreach;
- providing a forum for understanding the relevance of the Christian faith to environmental issues.

We are present in more than 20 countries around the world, including [Canada](#), the venue of CBD COP15 in December 2022.

Find out more at: <http://arocha.org/>

### Media Contact

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## Links & Attachments

### Our position statement on CBD COP15:

<https://arocha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Policy-Statement-CBD-COP15-web.pdf>

### More about our representation at CBD COP15:

<https://arocha.org/en/cbd/>

## Images

For access to media files, please reach out to our media contact.



Paul Simonin (second from the left), Conservation Science Director of A Rocha Canada, taking part in a panel discussing ocean conservation and protected areas. He shared about the linkages between marine biodiversity, poverty, and climate change in the context of fisheries-based livelihoods.





Sarah French (rightmost), Director of International Operations at A Rocha International, spoke for environmental education at the "Holistic approaches for raising awareness and changing behaviour" side event.



Seth Appiah-Kubi, National Director of A Rocha Ghana, presented on the positive financing of nature-based solutions in the case of the Atewa Forest Reserve. Illegal mining, logging and farming, and government-initiated bauxite mining is threatening the reserve's biodiversity and rich ecosystem services.





The view from the Faith-based Organizations long table at the plenary hall. A wider diversity of "faith-based" organisations was present at this CBD conference compared with previous ones.





A Rocha staff and board in attendance at CBD COP15 from December 7-19, 2022 ([profiles available here](#)). From left to right: Madison Martinez (Executive Assistant, and Ontario's Communications and Administrative Assistant, A Rocha Canada); Dr. María de los Ángeles La Torre Cuadros (Chair, Board of Directors. Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha Peru); Luke Wilson (Chief Executive Officer, A Rocha Canada); Paul Simonin (Conservation Science Director, A Rocha Canada); Sarah French (Head of A Rocha Delegation. Director of International Operations, A Rocha International); Don Buckingham (Chair, National Board of Directors, A Rocha Canada); Avinash Krishnan (Chief Executive Officer, Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha India).



A Rocha staff and board in attendance at CBD COP15 from December 7-19, 2022 ([profiles available here](#)). From left to right: Avinash Krishnan (Chief Executive Officer, Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha India), Sarah French (Head of A Rocha Delegation. Director of International Operations, A Rocha International), Paul Simonin (Conservation Science Director, A Rocha Canada).