



# INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

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## LEGISLATION

### ► **SAVE OUR SEAS 2.0 ACT SIGNED INTO LAW**

On December 18th, 2020, President Trump signed Save Our Seas Act 2.0 (SOS 2.0) into law. SOS 2.0 is another step in the right direction in elevating our ability to address the marine debris crisis. The bill was introduced by Senate Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) and Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) as well as House Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and Don Young (R-AK).



## SOS 2.0 IS COMPRISED OF THREE MAIN PIECES :

1. *Strengthening the United States' domestic marine debris response capability with a Marine Debris Foundation, a genius prize for innovation, and new research to tackle the issue.*
2. *Enhancing global engagement to combat marine debris, including formalizing U.S. policy on international cooperation, enhancing federal agency outreach to other countries, and exploring the potential for a new international agreement on the challenge.*
3. *Improving domestic infrastructure to prevent marine debris through new grants for and studies of waste management and mitigation.*

SOS 2.0 builds on the success of the Save Our Seas Act, introduced by Senators Sullivan and Whitehouse in the Senate, and Representatives Bonamici and Young in the House, and signed into law by President Trump in October 2018.

OCEANS CAUCUS CO-CHAIRS' THOUGHTS ON THE PASSAGE OF SOS 2.0 ARE BELOW.



*stakeholders in industry and environmental groups, and everyday citizens. SOS 2.0 will improve America's ability to clean up waste, advance international cooperation with nations responsible for the majority of trash entering the oceans, and explore innovative ways to manage and even reuse plastic waste."*

Senator Whitehouse is *"grateful for the bipartisan partnership of Senators Sullivan and Menendez on this issue. We're already hard at work expanding on the laws we've passed to tackle the scourge of plastic waste washing up on shores from coast to coast."*

*"Across the globe, our widespread use of plastics is polluting our ocean and exacerbating the climate crisis,"* said Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici.

Senator Sullivan noted *"This historic accomplishment is the result of so many people who love our oceans: members of Congress who span the country and political spectrum, members of the administration,*

**LEFT:** SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE (D-RI)

**ABOVE:** SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE (D-RI) AND SENATOR DAN SULLIVAN (R-AK)



*"Save Our Seas 2.0 is an important step to strengthen the NOAA Marine Debris Program and invest in infrastructure to prevent the mismanagement of plastic waste, and I am glad it was signed into law. I will continue working with my fellow House and Senate Oceans Caucus colleagues to advance comprehensive action to minimize the production of new plastics, remove waste, reduce pollution, and protect the health of our ocean."*

*"This is a great day for our oceans, marine ecosystems, and the countless communities they support. Our state is home to more coastline than any other, and Alaskans know that healthy oceans are essential to our economy and way of life,"* said Congressman Don Young. *"Serving as House Oceans Caucus Co-Chair has allowed me to stand up and fight for Alaska's waters, and I am very proud of what we were able to accomplish in both the House and Senate. Save Our Seas 2.0 builds on our successes in combating marine debris by bolstering plastics research and providing funding crucial for infrastructure improvements."*



**ABOVE:** REPRESENTATIVE SUZANNE BONAMICI (D-OR)

**BELOW:** REPRESENTATIVE DON YOUNG (R-AK)



# READ MORE

INTERNATIONAL  
CONSERVATION.ORG

SEE WHAT THE OCEANS CAUCUS FOUNDATION HAS DONE IN THE 116TH CONGRESS TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO HELP REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF PLASTIC WASTE ENTERING OUR OCEANS. THERE IS STILL MUCH WORK TO BE DONE THAT THE SENATE AND HOUSE OCEANS CAUCUS CO-CHAIRS WILL BE PRIORITIZING ONCE AGAIN IN THE 117TH.

[INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/PLANT-BASED-MATERIALS-MAKING-THE-ECONOMY-MORE-CIRCULAR](https://INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/PLANT-BASED-MATERIALS-MAKING-THE-ECONOMY-MORE-CIRCULAR)

[INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/REBUILDING-THE-US-ECONOMY-THROUGH-THE-BLUE-ECONOMY](https://INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/REBUILDING-THE-US-ECONOMY-THROUGH-THE-BLUE-ECONOMY)

[INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/ADVANCED-RECYCLING-SOLUTIONS-IN-MANAGING-THE-GLOBAL-PLASTIC-WASTE-PROBLEM](https://INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/ADVANCED-RECYCLING-SOLUTIONS-IN-MANAGING-THE-GLOBAL-PLASTIC-WASTE-PROBLEM)

[INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/OCEANS-CAUCUS-BRIEFING-SERIES-TO-HIGHLIGHT-IMPORTANCE-OF-RECYCLING-INFRASTRUCTURE](https://INTERNATIONALCONSERVATION.ORG/UNITED-STATES/OC/OCEANS-CAUCUS-BRIEFING-SERIES-TO-HIGHLIGHT-IMPORTANCE-OF-RECYCLING-INFRASTRUCTURE)





# ICCF UNITED STATES

## LEGISLATION

### ► CONGRESS DIRECTS USPS TO CONTINUE SELLING TIGER STAMPS TO PROMOTE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

**A**s part of an omnibus package passed in December to fund the U.S. Government in 2021 and provide COVID-19 relief, Congress passed bipartisan legislation, Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act, introduced by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Tom Udall (D-NM), co-chairs of the Senate International

Conservation Caucus, requiring the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to sell off the remaining 45 million Saving Vanishing Species Stamps, continuing a program to fund vital international conservation efforts at no expense to the American taxpayer. President Trump signed the bill into law on December 27, 2020.

FROM A PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY SENATOR PORTMAN'S OFFICE ON DECEMBER 21ST

**“** *We owe it to our future generations to preserve our planet's rich wildlife and natural resources so that they can continue to be enjoyed,” said Portman. “This successful stamp program has raised millions of dollars to fund conservation without any taxpayer money. I'm glad this bipartisan legislation was included in the final FY 2021 bipartisan funding bill and strongly urge the president to sign this legislation into law to ensure that every last stamp is sold.”*

**“** *By giving anyone the chance to easily and voluntarily contribute to a good cause with the simple act of mailing a letter, this stamp program has been a successful way to bolster conservation initiatives that protect iconic wildlife and critical habitat at no cost to taxpayers,” said Udall. “I'm glad to see this provision included in the funding bill, because we must ensure we are taking advantage of every opportunity to preserve the world's treasured natural landscapes and species for generations to come.”*



LEGISLATION

► **SENS. COONS, GRAHAM, WHITEHOUSE, SULLIVAN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO COMBAT OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION AND MARINE LITTER**

SOURCE: [COONS.SENATE.GOV/NEWS/PRESS-RELEASES/SENS-COONS-GRAHAM-WHITEHOUSE-SULLIVAN-INTRODUCE-BIPARTISAN-LEGISLATION-TO-COMBAT-OCEAN-PLASTIC-POLLUTION-AND-MARINE-LITTER](https://www.coons.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/sens-coons-graham-whitehouse-sullivan-introduce-bipartisan-legislation-to-combat-ocean-plastic-pollution-and-marine-litter)

**The UNITE for our Oceans Act would direct the U.S. government to work with the international community to address plastic pollution and marine debris on a global scale.**

U.S. Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), and Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) introduced legislation that would bring the international

community together to address the increasing amount of plastic and trash polluting our oceans and marine environments. The Unify Nations in Trash Elimination (UNITE) for our Oceans Act would direct the U.S. government to work with international partners to finance promising projects that promote the sustainable management of materials and reduce the amount of plastic and other waste polluting the world's oceans.

THE UNIFY NATIONS IN TRASH ELIMINATION (UNITE) FOR OUR OCEANS ACT WOULD :

1. *Direct the Secretary of State to work with U.S. federal agencies, individual countries, and international organizations to establish a 'Trust Fund for Marine Debris and Plastic Pollution' (Trust Fund). The goal of the Trust Fund is to prevent and reduce marine debris and plastic pollution and facilitate the sustainable production and consumption of resources. The Trust Fund would be managed by a Board of Trustees, comprised of representatives of the countries that contribute.*
2. *Specify that the Trust Fund will award grants to national and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and other entities to complete projects that would reduce marine debris and plastic pollution. These projects include efforts to reduce the amount of trash and plastics entering marine environments, encourage the use of sustainable materials, reduce the use and improper disposal of single-use plastics, and promote reduction, reuse, and recycling of materials that pollute marine environments.*
3. *Direct the Secretary of State and the Board of Trustees to appoint an Administrator to manage the Trust Fund, implement standards*



and procedures to monitor the use of funds, and establish criteria to determine how grants will be awarded.

4. Establish an Advisory Board to the Trust Fund to provide guidance in the development and implementation of grant projects and in leveraging contributions to the fund.
5. Require the Secretary of State to submit annual reports to Congress outlining the goals of the Trust Fund and the criteria that has been established to determine the programs and activities that it supports.
6. Authorize \$150 million to be appropriated for U.S. contributions to the Trust Fund each year for two years.

*"We cannot address this problem alone. I am proud to lead this bill with my colleague, Senator Graham, to ensure the United States collaborates with the international community to address this critical issue,"* said Senator Coons.

*"This is a major step forward for the United States. We're going to lead the way with a global fund to aggressively deal with plastics in our oceans,"* said Senator Graham. *"This new initiative is an effort by America to put our money where our mouth is and will be used to leverage other nations to contribute so we have an all-hands-on-deck approach to dealing with the overwhelming problem presented by plastics in the ocean."*

*"If we don't find answers fast, we'll have more tons of plastic waste in our oceans than living fish by the middle of the century. Solving that problem requires work with other nations on new international solutions,"* said Senator Whitehouse.

*"The UNITE for our Oceans Act is set to build on the groundswell of bipartisan progress we've seen in Congress on tackling the global marine debris crisis,"* said Senator Sullivan. *"Complementing the important initiatives of my Save Our Seas Act and the recently-passed SOS 2.0, our legislation will establish a Marine Debris Trust Fund, increase the grants available around the world to prevent debris from entering the ocean, and encourage the reuse and recycling of plastics and the use of sustainable alternatives."*

LEGISLATION

## ► SENS. BRAUN, COONS INTRODUCE BIPARTISAN CLIMATE LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT GLOBAL TRILLION TREES INITIATIVE & COMBAT DEFORESTATION

**SOURCE:** [HTTPS://WWW.COONS.SENATE.GOV/CLIMATE-SOLUTIONS-CAUCUS/NEWS/SENS-BRAUN-COONS-INTRODUCE-BIPARTISAN-CLIMATE-LEGISLATION-TO-SUPPORT-GLOBAL-TRILLION-TREES-INITIATIVE-AND-COMBAT-DEFORESTATION](https://www.coons.senate.gov/climate-solutions-caucus/news/sens-braun-coons-introduce-bipartisan-climate-legislation-to-support-global-trillion-trees-initiative-and-combat-deforestation)

**T**he Trillion Trees and Natural Carbon Storage Act would boost U.S. and international efforts to capture carbon by promoting healthy forests and other lands.

Climate Solutions Caucus, introduced legislation to support U.S. leadership in reducing carbon in the atmosphere by restoring and conserving forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal habitats. Senators Todd Young (R-Ind.) and Angus King (I-Maine) cosponsored the bill.

DECEMBER 09, 2020 - WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senators Mike Braun (R-Ind.) and Chris Coons (D-Del.), co-chairs of the bipartisan Senate

### THE TRILLION TREES AND NATURAL CARBON STORAGE ACT :

1. Creates the International Forest Foundation, a nonprofit organization, to encourage and accept donations in support of international reforestation, restoration, and deforestation prevention efforts.
2. Authorizes \$10 million for USDA Forest Nursery Revival programs to ensure that the supply of seeds and saplings allows for increased domestic planting.



3. *Engages America’s allies in conservation by authorizing the Secretary of State and USAID to increase their forest management cooperation efforts with other nations in order to better promote reforestation and sustainable land use management abroad.*
4. *Amends existing international conservation programs to explicitly include carbon sequestration and forest management among the list of approved technical assistance categories.*
5. *Makes it easier for private landowners to participate in carbon credit markets by authorizing USDA to provide loan guarantees for related projects.*
6. *Requires that USDA establish objectives for increasing the net carbon stock of American forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal blue carbon habitats.*

*“As a lifelong conservationist, I believe that Trillion Trees is a common sense proposal to help improve our land, water, soil, and air, without imposing onerous Washington regulations,” said Senator Braun. “I am proud to come together with my colleagues on this bipartisan solution to help advance a key objective that President Trump called for in his State of the Union Address.”*

*“The wildfires and severe storms we’ve experienced this year are a devastating reminder of how climate change is impacting our lands – and a clear signal*

*that we need to act now to protect them for future generations,” said Senator Coons. “Removing carbon from the atmosphere is one of the many critical steps we should take to mitigate climate risks. I’m glad to work with this bipartisan group of senators to invest in a solution that will benefit the health of people and ecosystems around the world.”*

In advance of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration from 2021 to 2030, the World Economic Forum launched the global One Trillion Trees initiative, 1t.org.

THE TRILLION TREES AND NATURAL CARBON STORAGE ACT WOULD ALLOW THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN SUPPORTING THIS EFFORT TO STORE CARBON, PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY, AND END DEFORESTATION AT HOME AND ABROAD.



WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

## ► SUCCESSES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN U.S. APPROACH TO COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

**O**n November 20, 2020, ICCF convened a panel of conservation experts to assess success, identify areas for improvement, and consider what more can be done to prevent wildlife trafficking.

Four years ago, the 2016 END Wildlife Trafficking Act was passed unanimously by Congress, with an aim to implement a comprehensive approach to combat wildlife trafficking. Today, in the midst of a global pandemic that experts link to wildlife trade, wildlife trafficking remains a significant threat to global health, security, and prosperity. With provisions of the END Wildlife Trafficking Act set to expire in October 2021 and new State Department reports just released, ICCF convened a panel of conservation experts on November 20th to assess the law’s success, identify areas for improvement, and consider what more can be done to prevent wildlife trafficking.

Leaders of the Senate International Conservation Caucus, Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Chris Coons (D-DE), kicked off the discussion with pre-recorded keynote remarks, highlighting the bipartisan consensus being built around the need to effectively combat wildlife poaching and trafficking. Expert panelists then discussed a range of topics, including the effectiveness of the annual State Department reporting in identifying focus countries and countries of concern and providing resources to address wildlife trafficking in those countries; the impact of inter-agency coordination led by the President’s Task Force on Combating Wildlife Trafficking; programs to build law enforcement and judicial capacity and reduce demand; the utilization of advanced technologies to combat wildlife trafficking; and emerging issues in combating wildlife trafficking like cybercrime and public health.

*“It’s appropriate for the United States to take a leadership role in this issue of combating wildlife trafficking because not only is it a practice threatening the extinction of our most endangered species, but it also threatens our national security and international stability, generally,” said Senator Portman.*

## ▶ PLANT-BASED MATERIALS: MAKING THE ECONOMY MORE CIRCULAR

**T**he Oceans Caucus Foundation (OCF) hosted a virtual briefing with the Plant Based Products Council to serve as an introduction to what bioplastics are and what role they could play in our society.

The OCF has covered the topic of recycling and waste management throughout this Congress, and it is important to discuss the possibility of new materials as part of the solution to some of the plastic and single-use packaging issues. The ocean plastic issue does not have a silver bullet solution. Plastics have a necessary role in our society and product stream, but there is a place for alternative materials and waste streams. For instance, bioplastics are great options for food packaging where food-based contamination is common and makes mechanical recycling difficult.

The panel was made up of Allison Shapiro, Closed Loop Partners; Evan White, University of Georgia; and Hasso von Pogrell, European Bioplastics and was moderated by Chris Miller with AJW.

WHETHER A PLASTIC IS BIO-BASED OR NOT, IT DOES NOT BELONG IN THE ENVIRONMENT.



The panelists focused on what a bioplastic is and how it differs from a petroleum-based plastic, how bioplastics fit into the circular economy, and the investments we need to make in our infrastructure to effectively manage them. As the panelists pointed out, regardless of the material—plastic, paper, food waste, bio-based materials, etc.—it must be effectively managed.

# BILL HENWOOD

## ▶ IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**B**ill Henwood has developed a mantra over the course of his career in international conservation, a career which has spanned fifty years, three continents, and several major biomes: we don't have to manage nature, because nature will take care of itself - we have to manage people's use of nature.

This goal is one that Bill has brought to the International Conservation Corps, which he joined in 2013 on a mission to the Bahamas. That mission resulted in two proposed national parks, and the designation of a third within the impressive span of two years. He later worked with a team of volunteers to complete a management plan for Haiti's largest marine park, working with a completely different set of challenges within the same region. Today, Bill offers his expertise to the ICCF Group's Caribbean program in Antigua & Barbuda and Saint Lucia, working with the national governments on management plans for designated sites and national parks.

Bill has been working closely with a Park Manager in Barbuda's Codrington Lagoon National Park to update its management plan and complete an associated implementation plan. This park was chosen on the advice of Antigua & Barbuda's Department of Environment because it serves as a critical nursery for spiny lobsters and is home to the largest population of magnificent frigate-birds in the entire Caribbean. This seems fitting, as Bill first developed his passion for conservation while birdwatching with his father on the outskirts of

Toronto, where he grew up and witnessed the relentless onslaught of the city's urban encroachment into

once natural spaces, which kindled a lifelong commitment to environmental protection.

Bill's background exemplifies the quality of volunteers in the International Conservation Corps program. Bill worked for thirty years with Parks Canada and twenty years with the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas, where one of his chief accomplishments was developing and leading a task force on grasslands. At the same time, he worked as a Park Planner in Canada, developing marine protected area policies in some of the first real management initiatives for Canada's West Coast marine environments. This was a time when the ocean's resources were largely considered inexhaustible, and in reflecting on that experience, Bill asserts that one of the most powerful ways to support nature is to improve mankind's understanding of its value.

Bill understands that managing people's use of nature comes back to governance, attitudes, and engendering respect for nature, a belief shared by all programs of the ICCF Group. The ICCF Group raises awareness amongst policy-makers, while the International Conservation Corps supports the technical implementation of policy





in protected areas. This hand-in-hand approach is making a splash in the ICCF's growing Caribbean program, which is supporting the establishment of parliamentary conservation caucuses, while also working with ministries and agencies on implementation in designated protected areas. Moving forward, Bill says he would like to see the adoption of a monitoring and surveillance

program for the International Conservation Corps to ensure that the work of its volunteers is maintained sustainably. The ICCF Group hopes that the continued involvement of volunteers like Bill will continue to grow this program as an integral complement of its overall mission to support international conservation.

## THE ICCF GROUP IN LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

OCEANS CONSERVATION

### ► TRANSBOUNDARY MARINE GOVERNANCE PROJECT CONVENES STAKEHOLDERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

**S**takeholder engagement is a central tenet of the ICCF Group model, and it was the focal point of Inception

Workshops for the project "Facilitating Dialogue And Strengthening Transboundary Cooperation With Legislators To Improve

### Marine Governance" held during the week of November 16th, 2020.

Three workshops were held virtually throughout the week to engage with stakeholders from the Latin America & Caribbean, East Africa, and Southeast Asia regions respectively. The project, supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), will leverage the Parliamentary Conservation Caucus architecture to promote enhanced

transboundary marine governance across the three regions, with a focus on the countries of Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Thailand. Throughout the workshops stakeholders learned about the project and Parliamentary Caucus model, then heard from government representatives on their national and regional priorities for marine conservation, and finally engaged in a discussion with panel experts and project staff to share their experiences and perspectives in establishing a baseline for future cooperation through the project.

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE ISSUE OF MARINE POLLUTION WAS IDENTIFIED BY BOTH GOVERNMENT AND STAKEHOLDERS AS A REGIONAL PRIORITY TO ADDRESS THROUGH THE PROJECT.

Maritime security was also identified as a government priority for Indonesia by Hon. Bobby Adhityo Rizaldi (Member of DPR, Co-Chair of Kaukus Kelautan) as an enabling condition for strengthening of blue economy sectors in the country.

In East Africa, government entities including Hon. Rozaah Akinyi Buyu, MP, National Assembly, Parliament of Kenya and Ministry officials from Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania emphasized

the need for greater collaboration amongst the various sectors on management of coastal areas and support for sustainable marine and coastal tourism. Stakeholders called for more accurate and timely data from the region, and a focus on finance schemes to support blue economy initiatives. Synergies were identified with various stakeholders collecting data in



the region that could support science-based policy action through the project.

In Latin America and the Wider Caribbean, a focus on coastal resilience to climate change and natural disasters was driven home by the concurrent impact of Hurricane Iota on the area, as well as the need to clarify and streamline

overlapping strategies and plans, and enhance their implementation in the region. The information shared in each workshop will be incorporated into the planning of activities and events for the ICCF Group's international oceans program moving forward.

#### FIELD MISSION

## ► COLOMBIAN OCEANS CAUCUS MISSION TO SAN ANDRÉS ARCHIPELAGO, PROVIDENCIA AND SANTA CATALINA



ANALYZING THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND THE MARINE-COASTAL ENVIRONMENT, RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC REACTIVATION OF THE COASTS AND SEAS OF COLOMBIA

**T**he mission was led by the President of the House of Representatives, HR Germán Blanco Álvarez, and House Representative Dr. Elizabeth Jay Pang.

ICCF Colombia carried out, between December 3rd and 5th, a Congressional Field Mission to the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina to promote a dialogue between Parliamentarians, national and local entities, and

the ethnic community groups of the region ("raizal community"), with the purpose of generating a multisectoral work scenario for the sustainable development of the island, coasts, and seas of the country, in the framework of the commemoration of the 20 years of the appointment of the SEAFLOWER Biosphere Reserve, framed within the UNESCO "Man and Biosphere Program" and the impact of Hurricane Iota.

WITH A TWO-DAY AGENDA, WORKSHOPS WERE HELD, ALONG WITH VISITS TO THE SPECIFIC COMMAND OF SAN ANDRÉS Y PROVIDENCIA (CESYP) AND PROVIDENCIA ISLAND, WHICH ALLOWED:

1. *Knowing and analyzing the advances in the management, conservation, and sustainable integral protection of the Colombian island territory, within the framework of vulnerability to climate change, which has generated a rise in sea level, acidification, and phenomena such as hurricanes, which have recently affected the Island, especially Providencia Island, and seeing the response and work of government entities, the private sector, and civil society to address the emergency of Hurricane Iota.*
2. *Identifying challenges and opportunities to mitigate climate change through future adaptation based on ecosystems, carbon, and the blue economy that promoted the reconstruction and reactivation of the Colombian coasts, especially the archipelago, through tourism.*
3. *Learning about different initiatives for the conservation of biodiversity, media, and the role of marine ecosystems in the biosphere reserve as a transversal axis for the conservation of the natural wealth of the archipelago, coasts, and seas.*
4. *Discussing and analyzing, from the legislative perspective, policies, political controls, and guidelines for the sustainable development of the island, coasts, and seas of the country; and specific actions to promote a bill on E-commerce and a working group on public policy for the Archipelago.*

**LEFT:** SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE HR GERMAN BLANCO

**BELOW:** CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN THE NATIONAL NAVY COMMAND IN SAN ANDRES



# THE ICCF GROUP IN AFRICA



## CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

### ► ICCF TALKS CONSERVATION WITH THE HON. WERANI CHILENGA, CO-CHAIR OF THE MALAWI CAUCUS

#### WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO LEAD ON CONSERVATION ISSUES IN MALAWI?

The world is facing an unprecedented environmental crisis and we cannot shy away from our need to build resilience and safeguard Malawi's natural capital if we are to secure a prosperous, just, and sustainable future for all Malawians. We must learn to live in harmony with nature. Environmental and social justice have

become, inextricably, one and the same, and as such conservation needs to be 'mainstreamed' into every sector and every aspect of our daily lives. There are many challenges, but I am proud that here in Malawi we have support from the highest of political leadership to support the conservation agenda.

#### WHAT ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ADDRESSING ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE IN MALAWI?

For many years, wildlife criminals were operating with relative impunity here in Malawi, such that Malawi was identified as a regional hub for ivory

trafficking gangs. Malawi has indeed been linked to the biggest seizures of all time. Just five years ago, illegal wildlife trade was overlooked, wildlife

legislation was weak and enforcement poor, and the high and endemic levels of corruption further facilitated the criminal gangs. However, the tide has turned, with new legislation, a progressive investigations and prosecutions model, and increased inter-agency cooperation. Malawi has just this year brought down the notorious Lin-Zhang syndicate, one of Africa's most notorious

wildlife trafficking networks, which is a sign of the government's competencies in combating serious organised crime. The challenge here will be to keep up momentum, and undoubtedly tackling corruption will be at the heart of this. The opportunity is to apply the same progressive model to forest crime. The illegal charcoal trade is the next big frontier.

#### IS THERE A PARTICULAR CURRENT ISSUE YOU ARE CHAMPIONING RIGHT NOW?

Forests. Malawi's fast-growing population, extreme reliance on biomass (fuelwood and charcoal) for cooking energy, poor forest management, weak law enforcement, and high levels of corruption have driven Malawi's deforestation to unsustainable levels. National demand for wood fuels now outstrips sustainable supply. The direct impacts of this forest habitat loss are devastating and go far beyond the current 'energy crisis' to decreased soil fertility, declining agricultural productivity, and decreased resilience to climate shocks and extreme events that will continue to become more frequent as a result of global climate change.

The illegal charcoal markets are increasingly

controlled and organised by transnational trafficking syndicates and facilitated by corrupt officials. What is needed is strengthened legislation, bold, collaborative, intelligence-led investigations and prosecutions that most efficiently and effectively disrupt illegal trade by focusing on the pinch points within the trafficking chain. Supporting the passing of new regulations as well as harnessing political will and inter-agency cooperation are critical for the success of these operations, and thus this is an important priority for MPCC in 2021. Thanks must go to the U.S. Government for their support through the 'Modern Cooking for Healthy Forests' project.

#### WHY IS LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE ON COMBATING ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN MALAWI IMPORTANT AND IMPACTFUL?

Enforcement agencies need the most optimal framework within which to operate if they are to have any chance of success. However, there is no point in having legislation that is not utilised by the relevant authorities. We need deterrent legislation that translates into police arrests and

sentences passed down by the courts. Thus, MPCC is committed to supporting institutional reform across multiple agencies, and in particular rooting out the corrupt officials that are facilitating illicit activities that are decimating our natural resources.

## ZOOONOTIC DISEASE PREVENTION

## ► DISCUSSION BETWEEN JANE GOODALL AND SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

**O**n November 3rd, 2020, ICCF South Africa, in conjunction with the Wilderness Foundation Africa, facilitated a virtual discussion with Members of the South African Parliament and world renowned Dr. Jane Goodall DBE, Founder - the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace.

Led by the Honorable Fikele Xasa, Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Environment, Forestry, and Fisheries, Dr. Goodall gave initial remarks, followed by a discussion and a question and answer session, covering a myriad of conservation issues, allowing the parliamentarians to discuss with Dr. Goodall solutions that government leaders must support to protect South Africa's natural resources.

Through nearly 60 years of groundbreaking work, Dr. Goodall has not only shown us the urgent need to protect chimpanzees from extinction; she has also redefined species conservation to include the needs of local people and the environment. Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, she described it as a tragedy brought on by humans due to a disrespect of nature and animals, which has caused loss of life, loss of jobs and livelihoods, and economic chaos around the world. From animal trafficking to factory farms, the exploitation of animals has created an



environment where it is easy for pathogens and viruses to spillover from an animal host to a human host, producing new diseases - as happened with COVID-19.

With growing human populations, Dr. Goodall pointed out that it is not feasible to have unlimited economic development on a planet with finite natural resources, which we are using faster than nature can replenish them. Political leaders and business leaders must step up to collaborate with one another in order to move towards a sustainable and greener economy. Raised by Honorable Hannah Winkler, conversation looked at how to bridge the chasm with those that believe the preservation of our planet comes at a cost to the economy and jobs, and Honorable Narend Singh spoke of the work needed to be done in rural and farming areas where there is competition between local communities and wildlife. Dr. Goodall was adamant

that as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to move towards a different relationship with the natural world and animals, recognizing the interconnectedness of all living things.

Despite the ongoing pandemic, Dr. Goodall's message of hope for the future was tied to the existence of human intellect, which has brought about the innovation of new technologies that will help us live in greater harmony with nature, and to the resilience of nature, which given time, help, and resources can reclaim spaces and thrive once again. For a long time humans have made decisions based on the now and although the

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

## ► ROUNDTABLE WITH AMBASSADOR MOKAILA OF BOTSWANA

**O**n November 24th, 2020, the ICCF Group hosted a roundtable discussion with His Excellency Onkokame Kitso Mokaila, Ambassador of the Republic of Botswana to the United States of America. The Ambassador has previously held several positions within government, including Member of Parliament from 2004 to 2019 and Minister of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism; Minister of Transport and Communications; and Minister of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources.

Participants in this roundtable included African Parks, African Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, EarthX, the Global Environment Facility, the International Fund for Animal Welfare,

future has been harmed, there is a consensus among scientists that there is a window of time where we can start healing the harm inflicted on the planet. Dr. Goodall emphasized the need to bring together people of different backgrounds and skills who recognize the universal environmental challenges. Her message urged governments to promote and sponsor clean green energy, and find ways to allow people to live in greater harmony with nature while simultaneously protecting biodiversity and the infrastructure of the planet.



National Geographic, Peace Parks Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Wild Foundation, World Wildlife Fund, UN Environment, USAID, Vulcan Inc, and the World Bank.

As the newly appointed Ambassador, His Excellency



spoke of the Botswana government's continued eagerness to embrace partnerships that enhance flora and fauna and which promote the sustainable use of natural resources, allowing local communities to benefit. He embraced open dialogue focused on the necessary next steps to allow the promotion of sustainable conservation, development, and tourism, especially in a post-COVID-19 era, across the Southern Africa region.

The Ambassador spoke of the importance of multilateral collaborations to ensure lessons

learned in Botswana are shared region-wide. He recognized the significance of the KAZA platform being utilized to enable harmonization of policies and to breed better governance and engagements which boost economies regionally through the sustainable use of natural resources. The roundtable was an opportunity for him to build bridges and common understanding with partners working not only in Botswana but across the KAZA region as well.

#### ZAMBIA CONSERVATION

## ► ICCF & ZPCC WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION IN ZAMBIA

**O**n October 29th, 2020, the ICCF Group hosted a briefing supporting the Zambia Parliamentary Conservation Caucus (ZPCC), along with the Government

of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) and conservation partners working in Zambia.

Partners included African Parks (AP), World Wildlife

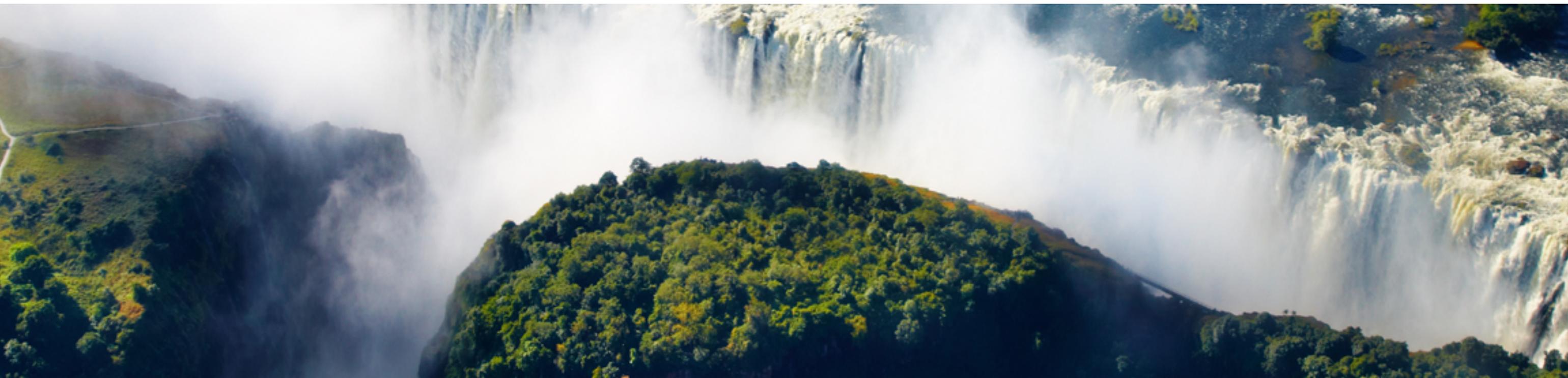
Fund (WWF), International Crane Foundation (ICF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Prospero, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Led by the ZPCC Co-Chairs, Hon. Ephraim Belemu and Hon. Anthony Kasandwe, the workshop was organized to provide Members of Parliament with comprehensive information regarding the importance of the Kafue National Park as a part of the Okavango-Zambezi Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA). The KAZA TFCA is a strategic transboundary resource made up of nearly 40 existing reserves and conservation areas, covering five countries - Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe - with Zambia contributing the Liuwa Plain and Kafue National Parks to the Conservation Area.

During the workshop, Members of Parliament were able to hear from the participating stakeholders regarding the health of the Kafue Ecosystem, and presentations were made on previous findings from conversations with local communities regarding

the perceived threats and opportunities that need to be addressed. Speaking on sustainable models for park management, Mr. James Milanzi detailed AP's continent-wide efforts to revive protected areas and updated the parliamentarians on AP's ongoing negotiations with GRZ regarding the management and conservation of the Kafue National Park. GRZ, through the Ministry of Tourism and Arts and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), intends to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AP with respect to the co-management of Kafue National Park.

Identified next steps include the review of the proposed MoU and further meetings and consultations between ZPCC and GRZ, including the Ministry of Tourism & Arts, Department of National Parks & Wildlife (DNPW), Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, Trade & Industry, and Zambia Development Agency (ZDA), and also between GRZ and conservation partners AP, ICF and the ICCF Group.



# FROM OUR PARTNERS

OP-ED

## ► MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL: THE IMPACT OF COVID ON FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN

WRITTEN BY JACKIE MARKS



**T**here's no question that 2020 has been a difficult year - the COVID-19 pandemic hit every corner of the globe and had an impact on everyone's lives, in one way or another.

That includes the lives of all the people who handle seafood - harvesters, boat captains, processors, and everyone along the supply chain.

It should come as no surprise that in conversations with fishermen and seafood processors in the

US and Canada, the words that came up again and again were uncertainty, rollercoaster, and challenges. But other words that came up repeatedly were optimism and opportunity. With the new year comes hope for a safer and healthier world, but it's important to remember that change does not happen overnight and that for those who catch, sell, process, and ultimately deliver us our favorite fish, there will be long-term impacts.

## THE FISH KEPT SWIMMING, THE OYSTERS NEEDED TO BE HARVESTED

While life on land looked distinctly different overnight with people quarantined at home to prevent the spread of the virus, life below water continued unchanged. Many harvesters experienced delays in getting out on the water due to safety concerns and uncertainty about regional regulations, however many were able to begin harvesting fish within a few weeks of their normal fishing seasons. *"All in all, the fish were there, it was just getting the opportunity to get out,"* said Scott Herbert of Daybrook Fisheries. Raz Halili of Prestige Oyster pointed out that *"oysters continue to grow and need to come out of the water at certain*

*times,"* so in some cases, fishing had to proceed despite challenges.

Following CDC guidelines and safety precautions was paramount to keep workers healthy, however *"it's impossible to social distance when you're on a fishing vessel,"* said Scott of Daybrook. On land, added structure meant added costs, such as installing plexiglass dividers between workers in a processing facility. Asking workers to wear masks in 100 degree Fahrenheit temperatures was challenging, but necessary to keep everyone safe.

UNCERTAINTY WITH THE PANDEMIC WASN'T THE ONLY THING THAT WAS IMPACTING THE ABILITY TO CATCH OR PROCESS FISH THIS YEAR, HOWEVER. HIGH WINDS, TROPICAL WEATHER, AND HURRICANES WERE A SIGNIFICANT BARRIER FOR THE GULF OF MEXICO MENHADEN FISHERY THIS SEASON.

The relative supply of seafood was more stable than demand in 2020. With restaurants closed or at minimum capacity, many fisheries struggled to find buyers for their fish. Conversely, retail sales of seafood increased. Tuna sales were up compared

to the year prior, and in May 2020 the New York Times reported that Americans were cooking more seafood at home. In the pet food sector, *"business went through the roof,"* said Scott at Daybrook, likely due to the pandemic pet adoption boom.

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

While the impacts of the pandemic will continue to be felt into 2021 and beyond, many of the seafood experts expressed hope for the future. Wayne Reichle of Lund's Fisheries said: *"COVID-19 has caused its shares of concerns and troubles, we are sure this will pass in the near future, particularly now that it appears vaccines are close to becoming available."* Vaccines will help get workers back to work safely sooner, as well as make it easier to

supply seafood to retailers and restaurants.

Thinking longer term, even with the devastating impacts of the pandemic and economic concerns, focusing on protecting fish and the ocean is paramount. The majority of American and Canadian seafood consumers



believe that we should only consume fish and shellfish from sustainable sources, so the good news is that COVID is not expected to impact longer term sustainability goals. Raz Halili pointed out that while conversations about selling MSC-certified oysters with retailers were put on pause at the start of the pandemic, those conversations are starting to come back. For him, the impacts they suffered *“won’t change our sustainability goals.”*

Tiare Buoys, a British Columbia halibut fisherman pointed out that *“fishermen are experienced at dealing with uncertainty; the industry is subject to changing weather and political patterns, to fish stock*

*abundance and to market demand.”* COVID-19 is another storm to weather, albeit a big one. With the new year comes promise for hope and change, but it’s important to remember that many of the impacts the seafood sector experienced as a result of the pandemic will have lasting impacts into 2021 and beyond. Wayne Reichle points out that *“US fishermen and processors have worked tirelessly through the pandemic to continue delivering wild caught seafood to US and other global markets.”* Being able to continue to do so sustainably will keep fish stocks healthy, and will ensure people can continue to enjoy seafood they love for generations to come.

TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION

## ► PEACE PARKS: FIVE COUNTRIES UNITE AGAINST WILDLIFE CRIME

**T**he trade of environmental contraband from Africa decimates key species and devastates biodiversity, destabilizing ecosystems and depleting natural resources.

Illegal trade of targeted fauna and flora species, mostly endangered and/or threatened, also impacts the economic viability and attractiveness of conservation areas as tourist destinations. In turn, livelihoods for local communities which depend on tourism are significantly affected. Furthermore, COVID-19 has placed the spotlight on the hidden danger of trade and consumption of exotic species. Zoonotic diseases are now a global concern, adding another motivation for strengthening preventative laws and regulations, coupled with improved disruption along the illegal supply chain.

The KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) is situated in the Kavango and Zambezi river basins

where the borders of the TFCA’s five Partner States - Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe - converge. It spans an area of approximately 520,000 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 36 proclaimed protected areas such as national parks, game reserves, forest reserves, community conservancies and game/wildlife management areas. The TFCA is home to Africa’s largest contiguous elephant population, the largest connected lion population in southern Africa as well as major populations of other at-risk CITES listed flora and fauna. With such an abundance of biodiversity and a multitude of transit routes, it is a prime target of organized wildlife crime groups.

Traffickers exploit vulnerabilities in transportation and customs capability to move illegally sourced natural resources and Africa remains one of the major global source regions. In a cross-border landscape like KAZA, challenges are compounded by differences in permitting systems and



ABOVE: IMUSHO BORDER POST BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND ANGOLA - PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PEACE PARKS

regulations, the species that are protected, and the fines and sentences for different types of offences in each country - all providing potential loopholes for criminal syndicates to exploit. These

variances can also undermine the integrity of the KAZA TFCA as strong penalties in one country may displace the problem of poaching and trafficking to neighbouring countries.

THE FIVE PARTNER STATES HAVE NOW JOINED FORCES IN A SPECIAL PROJECT TO DEFEND THEIR BORDERS AGAINST THOSE WHO SEEK TO DEPRIVE THE REGION OF ITS NATURAL BEAUTY AND RESOURCES.

Working with the KAZA Secretariat, supported by Peace Parks Foundation and the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC), and funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the KAZA Partner States have embarked on an initiative to improve capacity, synergy, and effectiveness of customs and law enforcement agencies responsible for controlling movement of goods through all of the TFCA’s 33 ports of entry and exit. This innovative

project enables the TFCA to make great strides in implementing the South African Development Community’s (SADC) Law Enforcement and Anti-poaching Strategy (LEAP). The SADC LEAP focuses on reducing poaching and illegal trade in fauna and flora species as well as enhancing law enforcement capacity in the SADC Region by 2021.

The governments of KAZA’s five Partner States, in partnership with various non-



profit, private and community stakeholders, work tirelessly to protect and develop the resources on the ground. However, an opportunity was identified a few years ago to strengthen customs officials' capacity to enforce CITES regulations, augmenting the multi-agency and sector approach to fighting illegal trade. Due to their mandate of managing the movement of goods across borders, customs officials, with the right capacity and equipment, can significantly increase the rates of detection and apprehension at border check-points. At the onset of this project, every border post was visited to conduct face-to-face needs assessments with the local officials.

Doug Gillings, Combating Wildlife Crime Manager for Peace Parks commended the collaborative approach of the KAZA Partner States: *"Custom officials are a primary line of defense against the illegal trafficking of our continent's natural treasures. The capacitation and resourcing of customs officials is key to the disruption of trafficking. It is a significant achievement for five countries to come together to strengthen this important link in the law enforcement chain - collectively understanding their shared trafficking landscape, and initiating a process to crack down on illegal natural resource trafficking, together."*

The new collaboration in Combating Natural Resource Trafficking works to address these threats by creating and implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) – common to all 5 countries, developing an accredited training curriculum for customs and other law enforcement

officials, as well as training such officials in the five Partner States. This curriculum has been accredited as a graduate level qualification. It will equip officials to effectively enforce CITES, state action plans, the newly produced common SOPs for application of CITES regulations, as well as engage in the efficient use of technical equipment to enhance efficiency.

Additional training will be provided in species identification to improve the capacity of these officials to respond to the challenges in their areas, effectively implementing CITES and improving the chances of intercepting trafficking. Furthermore, it will institutionalise and entrench procedures into the respective operations.

Hampered by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the project will re-commence as soon as travel restrictions are relaxed and risks have stabilised, with an estimated 200 customs and other law enforcement officials to be trained.

Dr Nyambe Nyambe, Executive Director of the KAZA Secretariat, added: *"This project augments SADC and KAZA aspirations to a multi-agency approach to combatting illegal trade in wildlife species. We are looking forward to the commencement of the training and the unique and strategic role that customs officials bring to the fight against illegal trade."*

SUSTAINABILITY

## ▶ EXXONMOBIL ANNOUNCES EMISSION REDUCTION PLANS; EXPECTS TO MEET 2020 GOALS

**ExxonMobil said it plans further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions over the next five years to support the goals of the Paris Agreement and anticipates meeting year-end 2020 reductions.**

ExxonMobil plans to reduce the intensity of operated upstream greenhouse gas emissions by 15 to 20 percent by 2025, compared to 2016 levels. This will be supported by a 40 to 50 percent decrease in methane intensity, and a 35 to 45 percent decrease in flaring intensity across its global operations. The emission reduction plans, which cover Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions from operated assets, are projected to be consistent

with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The company also plans to align with the World Bank's initiative to eliminate routine flaring by 2030.

"These meaningful near-term emission reductions result from our ongoing business planning process as we work towards industry-leading greenhouse gas performance across all our business lines," said Darren Woods, chairman and chief executive officer of Exxon Mobil Corporation. "We respect and support society's ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and continue to advocate for policies that promote cost-effective, market-based solutions to address the risks of climate change."

EXXONMOBIL'S PLANS WILL LEVERAGE THE CONTINUED APPLICATION OF OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES, AND ONGOING DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF LOWER-EMISSION TECHNOLOGIES.

BELOW: MUSHANGARA BORDER POST BETWEEN ANGOLA AND NAMIBIA  
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PEACE PARKS



## ▶ LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends and colleagues,

For the caucuses that ICCF supports in the United States, these are unprecedented times in both scope and ambition: More conservation-driven legislation has been introduced this past quarter under the sponsorship of our co-chairs than at any point in time since the inception of the caucuses.

A notable example is the signing into law, by President Donald J. Trump on December 18th, of the Save our Seas 2.0 Act. A milestone in oceans conservation, SOS 2.0 is another step in advancing our ability to address the marine debris crisis as a nation. We wish to thank the Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs for their leadership on this important legislation. We also thank them for their continued engagement with our Oceans Caucus Foundation, which played an important educational role in achieving their target objectives.

This exciting legislative announcement goes hand-in-hand with a series of others: the renewal of the MSCF Semipostal Stamp Act and the introduction of the UNITE for our OCEANS Act and the Trillion Trees and Natural Carbon Storage Act. In this edition of our quarterly report, we walk you through what these policies mean, highlighting their

aims at effecting positive change and advancing pro-nature, pro-growth policies.

We're also proud of the work our international team has carried out, working closely with many leaders of the 19 caucuses we now support around the world. Most notably, this quarter saw our stakeholder engagement, a central tenet of our model, taken to new heights with Inception Workshops for our Transboundary Marine Governance project. The workshops saw hundreds of parliamentarians from Latin America & the Caribbean, East Africa, and Southeast Asia convene virtually for dialogue aimed at strengthening transboundary cooperation in view of improving marine governance.

We look forward to continuing to support the conservation agendas of caucus leaders throughout 2021. To this end, we wish to thank our friends and partners for their continued support.

Sincerely,



John B. Gantt  
President

## BECOME AN ICCF PARTNER

For partnerships, please contact Executive Vice President Susan Lylis - [slylis@internationalconservation.org](mailto:slylis@internationalconservation.org) - (202) 471-4222

