



SUMMER 2023 QUARTERLY REPORT

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International Conservation and the Global Crisis: The Role of Legislatures in a New Global Financing Pact

In Paris, France, from Wednesday, June 21 to Friday, June 23, 2023, the ICCF Group convened parliamentarians

ABOVE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Hon. Eduardo Murat Hinojosa; Hon. Luis Arturo Alegria García; Hon. Jose Silva Soares; Hon. Ronan Dantec; ICCF President John B. Gantt; Hon. Germán Blanco Alvarez; Hon. Socorro Neri; and Hon. Sam Brooks.



from Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia to increase awareness, promote dialogue,

and find common ground in responding to issues pertaining to international conservation.

MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION INCLUDED:

- Botswanan Member of Parliament Sam Brooks
- Brazilian Members of Congress Socorro Neri and Jose Silva Soares
- Colombian Senator Germán Blanco Alvarez

ABOVE: Peruvian Member of Congress Luis Arturo Alegría García addresses peers at the interparliamentary workshop in the *Assemblée nationale*.

RIGHT: French Senator Ronan Dantec signs declaration following interparliamentary workshop.

- Peruvian Member of Congress Luis Arturo Alegría García
- Mexican Federal Deputy Eduardo Murat Hinojosa
- Zambian Member of Parliament Imanga Wamunyima Jr.

A workshop, “International Conservation and the Global Crisis: The Role of Legislatures in a New Global Financing Pact,” was hosted in the *Assemblée nationale* (France’s lower chamber of the legislature) by French caucus co-founder Député Hubert Julien-Laferrrière, with the support of his counterpart in the *Sénat*, Senator Ronan Dantec.

regional cooperation in the sound management of the world’s natural resources, and advocated for a sustainable future for rainforest, ocean, and wildlife conservation for the French Republic and its allies around the world.

The event brought together policymakers and opinion leaders from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America to address international conservation in the context of the global crisis, and the role of parliaments in a new global financing pact. It also promoted parliamentary leadership and advanced



VOICES FOR CONSERVATION

Every quarter, *VOICES FOR CONSERVATION* features those who work to support the ICCF Group and its mission, advancing conservation in the field of governance and in the spirit of nonpartisanship for the sake of people, wild places & animals, and natural wealth.

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IN INDONESIA

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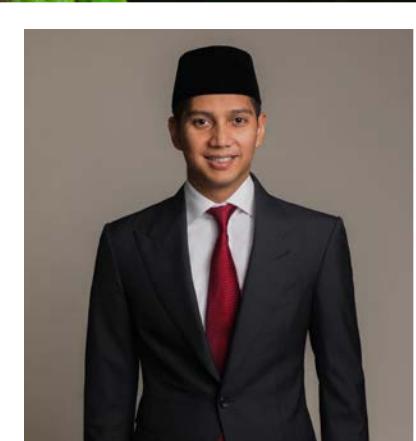


ON U.S. NATIONAL
SECURITY AND
CONSERVATION IN AFRICA

RIGHT: HON. GEOFFREY RUKU, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FROM KENYA, ADDRESSES PARTICIPANTS AT A BREAKFAST BRIEFING HOSTED BY THE ICCF GROUP IN NAIROBI.

**A PHOTO
FOR THE
SEASON**





SPOTLIGHT

CONVERSATION WITH THE HON. G. BUDISATRIO DJIWANDONO, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

The ICCF Group: Please introduce yourself and tell how you first

became interested in public policy and conservation.

AT TOP: The Orangutan lives in the rainforest of East Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Budisatrio Djiwandono: My name is Budisatrio Djiwandono. Currently I serve as Deputy Chairman of Commission IV DPR-RI which oversees Agriculture, Environment, Forestry, and Maritime Affairs. Actually, serving the public has been a calling for a long time; this is a very big honor for me. I hope we can become a model for the world in rehabilitation and reforestation efforts.

The ICCF Group: What relationship do Indonesians have with the archipelago and its abundant resources?

Budisatrio Djiwandono: I think a lot of Indonesians, especially those outside of Java, live around forest areas, around coastal marine ecosystems. So being part of nature is everyday life for the community, including those living around this forest area.

They depend for their livelihoods on the forest, be it for the production of food or to obtain monetary value from forest products, including supporting laws and regulations. So, we want to create a framework, we want to create friendly regulations for businesses to thrive, but at the same time we also have to be careful, we have to consider conservation efforts. We understand that as a nation we need to develop, and of course we want economic growth to continue. But I'm sure, as members of parliament, we have the means and ways to be able to try to influence, so that economic development does not destroy natural ecosystems.

I'm glad you brought this up, because actually currently in Commission IV of the DPR-RI, which I supervise, I am chairing the Special Committee that is drafting the revision of the

Conservation Bill. I think this is a big breakthrough for conservation efforts in Indonesia. We want to uphold, empower, expand conservation areas. We want to empower local indigenous peoples, build around forest areas, as well as efforts to sustain the sea—as I told you earlier, we want to empower them. Give them the means, tools as an effort to be active in preserving this amazing natural habitat. And it has been proven that conserving nature can be very valuable for our current livelihoods and also for future generations. I love being able to make an impact on those issues, and being a member of the House of Representatives on Commission IV allows me to do what's important, what's necessary, and what I love for Indonesia. And I really believe what happens in Indonesia not only has an impact on the Indonesian people, but also has an impact on the global community.

To be part of the ICCF, I think it's an amazing opportunity to be part of a global community, a global family of like-minded individuals, like-minded communities, really caring about what's important in this world, caring for our natural ecosystems regardless of our political background. I am pleased to see all members of the ICCF, as a cross-party community, we do not look at each other in terms of background or political views, but we are here because of our love for the earth, and we want to do what we can in our capacity as senators, as a member of parliament, to make and create impactful change, and the ICCF in Indonesia I think is a success and a tremendous help especially for the various commissions in the Indonesian parliament.

OP-ED

THE U.S. CANNOT ALLOW RUSSIAN MERCENARIES TO CONTINUE RANSACKING THE AFRICAN CONTINENT



By Roy Howell, policy adviser and director of operations of ICCF in Washington, D.C., first published in *The Hill* (July 11, 2023)

Mercenaries in Africa are plundering natural resources for the benefit of Russian influence. To promote peace and security, human rights and good

governance, the United States must take a strong leadership role to conserve Africa's wildlife, forest, water and mineral resources.

ABOVE: Supporters of Capt. Ibrahim Traore wave a Russian flag in the streets of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Oct. 2, 2022. The Russian mercenary group that briefly rebelled against President Vladimir Putin's authority has for years been a ruthless force-for-hire across Africa, protecting rulers at the expense of the masses. That dynamic is not expected to change now that the group's founder, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has been exiled to Belarus as punishment for the failed rebellion. Neither Russia nor the African leaders dependent on Wagner's fighters have any interest in ending their relationships. (AP Photo/Sophie Garcia, File)

All eyes turned to Moscow when news broke of an uprising against the Kremlin, led by Yevgeny Prigozhin and his Wagner Group of private military contractors. The rebellion, staged in opposition to Russia's tactics in its war in Ukraine, was ultimately short-lived. Despite leading the advance on Moscow, Prigozhin reached a deal, and the Wagner Group stands poised to continue operations stretching from Ukraine and Syria to West and Central Africa.

The Wagner Group, while long advancing Russian interests in conflict regions, has ostensibly maintained a degree of separation from the Kremlin, providing Russian President Vladimir Putin and his government some level of deniability for the atrocities and human rights abuses perpetrated by Wagner forces. Following the uprising, however, Putin has now publicly acknowledged, for the first time, the Kremlin's role in

funding the mercenary group.

Meanwhile, on the back of horrific reports of Wagner's extensive involvement in exploiting Africa's natural resources, including minerals and timber, the U.S. Treasury has unveiled new sanctions tied to Wagner Group activities in Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR), adding two mining companies, among other actors, to the SDN List for a scheme funding Wagner's campaigns through gold and mineral sales.

With this scheme, the Russian-backed mercenaries prove themselves no better than the armed insurgents they've been requisitioned to repel. Reports dating back to 2015 found millions in corrupt payments were made through the timber trade, paid out to competing armed groups in the CAR. And, in the broader landscape spanning parts

of the CAR and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), non-state actors like the Lord's Resistance Army are among the main perpetrators of wildlife trafficking.

While authoritarian leaders build statues to Russia for aiding in armed conflicts, people across the Sahel region, and the natural environment on which they depend to survive, are bearing the burden of resource depletion and land degradation. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization

To be sure, sanctions deliver the message that the U.S. opposes the Wagner Group's exploitation of natural resources, but they will not empower the African people to value, protect and sustainably manage the resources available to them. This requires an investment in Africa's people and places — the protected and conserved areas most critical to safeguarding biodiversity and mitigating climate impacts.

Well-managed protected areas can be the anchor to bring about good governance and inclusive development for the benefit of

reports that 45 percent of Africa is affected by desertification, including 65 percent of productive lands. For the agriculture-dependent region, climate impacts are a force-multiplier for what is already home to one of the poorest populations in the world; prolonged droughts drive increased competition for land and water resources and result in cyclical violence, which extremists can exploit. Now, nearly half of terrorism deaths occur in the Sahel.

people and nature. Consider Chinko in eastern CAR: the largest employer outside of the country's capital, where park officials took

in community members displaced by rebels, helped them rebuild, and built trust and partnerships to secure biodiversity in and around the park. Or take W National Park in Benin, a protected area caught

in the crossfire of conflicts along the borders of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, where rangers are the front-line defense against armed groups seeking staging ground in the remote national park.

America's interests in Africa are clear. Africa is home to the world's fastest growing population and some of the last strongholds for biodiversity. Its potential for economic growth is immense, and its landscapes offer global benefits for climate mitigation. It's a critical arena for countering violent extremism and stemming the tide of international organized crime.

The Wagner Group and Russia's aim in Africa? An anti-Western, anti-democratic "confederation" of African states. To say nothing of China's own ambitions on the continent.

To counter this malign influence, the United States must resolve to better engage the African continent to promote democratic

values and sustainable development. Through continued U.S. leadership in addressing environmental crime, long-term public and private investment in Africa's people and vital wild places, as well as partnerships with Western allies, marginalized communities and local stakeholders, conservation can be a key component in securing U.S. interests in the region.

Read it online: thehill.com/opinion/international/4089266-the-us-cannot-allow-russian-mercenaries-to-continue-ransacking-the-african-continent/

UNITED STATES SENATE EXAMINES OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECURITY AND PROSPERITY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION



A U.S. Senate hearing in May centered around legislation proposed by the Subcommittee's Chair, Senator Chris Coons (D-DE), and Ranking Member, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), to create the U.S. Foundation for International Conservation (USFICA). International conservation directly affects national security, food security, health, and stability. Good natural resource management, particularly in and around protected and conserved areas, can provide economic opportunities and development mechanisms for local communities as well as a range of benefits, including conservation of forests, freshwater, and biodiversity, while sequestering carbon and supporting food and water security, sustainable

ABOVE: Senator Lindsey Graham (left) and Senator Chris Coons (right).

agriculture, tourism, and other essential ecosystem services. Yet, many developing countries lack the funding and capacity necessary to effectively manage these resources.

IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT, CHAIRMAN COONS, A CO-CHAIR OF THE SENATE INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION CAUCUS, SAID:

“ We are losing the earth’s most vital spaces, the most remarkable parts of Creation, at an alarming rate because of logging, rapid human population expansion, the demand for agricultural space, for charcoal, for wildfires, because of a changing climate. This is, in part, because the vast majority of gazetted parks, of notionally-protected spaces, are underfunded, leaving lands at risk of degradation and wildlife at risk for poaching. Poaching funds armed groups and global criminal networks that threaten national security, both here and in many countries around the world. . . . We also recognize governments cannot possibly address this problem alone. I’m encouraged, over recent years, we’ve seen significant and growing commitments from philanthropic and private-sector actors to support transnational conservation.”

RANKING MEMBER GRAHAM SAID:

“ These parks are, sort of, sanctuaries of governance and law and order, surrounded by a lot of upheaval, so if it were up to me, I would have a string of parks, conservation parks, all over Africa because that may be the only place that the community can reside with some level of peace and certainty in terms of the rule of law. . . . The goal of [Senator Coons] and myself is to create a public-private relationship, where the private sector leads and puts their money

where their mouth is, collaborating with the United States Government and other people - hopefully other governments - to make sure that these parks are well-managed, that we deal with poaching by force, and that the communities surrounding these parks benefit.”

Expert witnesses testifying before the committee included Gillian Caldwell, Chief Climate Officer and Deputy Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Kaddu Sebunya, President and CEO of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), and Dr. Andrew Steer, President and CEO of the Bezos Earth

Fund. Each of the witnesses voiced support for the proposed foundation, which would be set up to fund public-private partnerships to support local communities around the world in effectively managing protected and conserved areas, and emphasized several keys to its success:

GOVERNMENTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR MUST WORK TOGETHER TO BRIDGE THE FUNDING GAP FOR ESTABLISHED CONSERVATION AREAS TO BE EFFECTIVELY MANAGED AT SCALE.

“ There remains an urgent shortage of funding: addressing this shortage by leveraging public with private finance is one of the best opportunities for the U.S. Government to enhance its leadership in protecting nature and improving security,” said Dr. Steer. “Private philanthropy is willing to commit significant resources to conservation and plays a highly complementary role to public funding. They also like to work in partnership. . . . Both “public” and

“private” can reach different places and influence different actors, and both will be more effective in the presence of the other.”

LOCAL AND INDIGENOUS STAKEHOLDERS MUST BE INTEGRAL PARTNERS IN MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENSURING THAT LOCAL COMMUNITIES REAP THE BENEFITS.

“For this support to be effective, it must be tied to African perspectives, priorities, and aspirations,” said Mr. Sebunya. “It is my conviction that the survival of a healthy ecosystem in Africa hinges largely on one factor: linking Africa’s conservation agenda in meaningful ways to the aspirations and mindsets of African people. . . . I’m certain that conservation must reinforce and complement economic development. Support for conservation shouldn’t be only for animals and their habitats, but for putting in place sustainable economic models that empower people and allow nature to thrive.”

TO BE SUSTAINABLE, THE COMMITMENTS TO THESE AREAS MUST BE LONG TERM.

“We must ensure long-term investment in priority places and habitats,” said Ms. Caldwell. “The importance of long-term investment to specific protected areas and the communities that live in and around them cannot be understated.”

There are many examples where biodiversity is being effectively

conserved through well-managed parks and protected areas, and

sustainable landscapes that support nature, human wellbeing, and economies. Members of the Subcommittee pointed to several, including Gorongosa National Park - managed in partnership with the Gorongosa Restoration Project, community conservancies around Kenya’s Maasai Mara, and several across Africa co-managed by national governments with African Parks (AP). The Senators cited Gorongosa and AP-co-managed W National Park, on the border of Benin, Niger, and Burkina Faso,

as examples where well-managed conservation areas can become pockets of stability in conflict-engulfed regions. And while much of the discussion centered around terrestrial conservation areas in Africa, speakers emphasized the importance of well-managed, protected, and conserved areas in other developing regions and the need to effectively conserve marine areas, which face threats of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and plastic pollution.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

LEADING PHILANTHROPISTS SPEAK TO IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN PROTECTED AREAS

Several leading philanthropists, who are investing private resources in conservation of parks and protected areas around the globe, briefed Members of Congress on April 26th in Washington. Speakers included Frank Mars of Mars Inc.; Dr. Andrew Steer, Executive Director of the Bezos Earth Fund; and Wes Bush, former Chairman and CEO of Northrup Grumman.

Protected and conserved areas are the cornerstone of global efforts to safeguard nature and natural ecosystems. When well managed and designed to respect the needs and rights of indigenous people and local communities, they have been shown to be one of the most

effective conservation tools. Management that protects and restores biodiversity can provide clean air and water, food and medicines, poverty alleviation, sustainable economic development, and regional security, while contributing to our spiritual and emotional health.

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY COUNTRIES LACK THE RESOURCES TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS, AND THE VAST MAJORITY ARE SEVERELY UNDERFUNDED.

As Dr. Steer also pointed out a few days later in a Senate hearing,



Private philanthropy is willing to commit significant resources to conservation and plays a highly complementary role to public funding.”

To leverage these private-sector commitments, Co-Chairs of the International Conservation Caucus in the House and Senate have introduced the U.S. Foundation for International Conservation Act, which aims

to leverage private funding to implement projects around protected and conserved areas in the most vulnerable parts of the world.

This focused effort would further aim to ensure that protected and conserved areas receive the dedicated long-term financial support that is lacking, complementing programs being

implemented by other donor nations and able to augment other successful U.S. Government investments and innovative finance mechanisms.

LOW-CARBON SOLUTIONS

ExxonMobil

EXXONMOBIL HIGHLIGHTS LOW CARBON BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

ExxonMobil Low Carbon Solutions President Dan Ammann briefed Members of Congress at an ICCF-hosted event on April 18th.

ExxonMobil Low Carbon Solutions is focusing on carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, and second-generation biofuels, working to bring lower-emission

technologies to market, and making them accessible to hard-to-decarbonize industries worldwide.

According to Ammann, the Low Carbon business could outgrow ExxonMobil's oil business, telling Reuters,



“ This business is going to look quite a bit different than the base business of Exxon Mobil. It is going to have a much more stable, or less cyclical, profile.”

Dan Ammann took over as President of ExxonMobil Low Carbon Solutions in May 2022. Ammann previously served in several capacities at GM, including as CEO of Cruise and president, CFO, and treasurer of GM. Ammann began his career as an investment banker, starting at

Credit Suisse First Boston in 1994 and moving to Morgan Stanley in 1999, where he was named a managing director in 2005. Ammann received a bachelor's degree in management studies from the University of Waikato in New Zealand.

ABOVE: Dan Ammann, President of ExxonMobil Low Carbon Solutions.

OCEANS CONSERVATION

CAPITOL HILL OCEAN WEEK



Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW), hosted by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF), brings together leaders in the ocean community from across the country in D.C. every June. This year the Oceans Caucus Foundation (OCF) partnered with NMSF on the June 6th CHOW “Hill Day,” which was followed by two days of expert panels, networking events, and the annual Gala.

The CHOW Hill Day cosponsored by OCF consisted of a Congressional Staff Lunch Briefing on Advancements in Ocean Carbon Dioxide Removal (OCDR) with the House Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs and a reception featuring the Senate Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs.

The lunch briefing discussion highlighted the fast-growing landscape around OCDR. OCDR research is advancing rapidly

as part of a global search for effective coastal restoration and climate mitigation actions. Currently, knowledge about OCDR is primarily technical, although a broader range of people with ocean interests will soon need different information about OCDR to help them make decisions about the intersection of ocean use and their activities. The panel discussed current OCDR technologies, the policy landscape, and growing stakeholder interest.

The panel consisted of Dr. Jessica Cross (Oceanography, NOAA), Reggie Paros (Director, Federal Affairs, EDF), and Jordan Breighner (Head of Business Development, Running Tide) and was moderated by Dr. Sarah Cooley (Director, Climate Science, Ocean Conservancy). The conversation focused on the

role OCDR could play in climate mitigation and what rules and regulations need to be in place in order for it to be successful and potentially profitable. There have also been OCDR projects and policy proposals that have been suggested that could prove to be problematic.

Caucus Co-Chairs Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI); H.E. Anniken Krutnes, Norwegian Ambassador to the U.S.; Monica Medina, CEO, WCS; Susie Kondracki and Mark

McDade, Co-chairs, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Board of Trustees; Carolyn Weis, Director, Oceans Caucus Foundation; and Hawkeye 360.

The reception highlighted the importance of the leadership of the Senate Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs in ensuring that oceans issues and policies remain a priority, particularly during these polarizing times.

Speakers featured at the | reception were Senate Oceans

BELOW: OCF panel briefing on ocean legislation passed in the 117th Congress.

OCEANS CONSERVATION

OCEANS LEGISLATION AND THE 117TH CONGRESS

On April 25th, the Oceans Caucus Foundation (OCF) hosted a panel briefing to discuss the numerous pieces of ocean legislation passed in the 117th Congress. The implementing agency for

many of the ocean measures passed is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The House Oceans Caucus and OCF invited 4 NOAA department heads to brief the



Senate and House Oceans Caucus staffers on new mandates and funding included for NOAA in large bills such as NDAA FY2023 and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The panelists were Nicole LeBoeuf, Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS); Rear Admiral Chad Cary, Deputy Director of

NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) and NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps; Dr. Steve Thur, Assistant Administrator of NOAA's Ocean and Atmospheric Research (OAR); and Jim Landon, Director of Law Enforcement for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). It was moderated by Emily Patroliia, CEO and Founder of ESP.

Each panelist presented on the new mandates (both funded and authorized with no additional funding) that impacted their departments; this provided Hill staff with some insight into current policy and funding gaps that can be prioritized for the 118th Congress.

OCEANS CONSERVATION

BIPARTISAN CONVERSATION WITH NOAA ADMINISTRATOR DR. RICK SPINRAD

 In March 29th, the U.S. House Oceans Caucus Co-Chairs Congresswomen Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR) and Suzanne Bonamici (D-RI) hosted Dr. Rick Spinrad, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration

(NOAA) Administrator, to discuss how Congress can better support NOAA's mission as well as the ocean conservation, restoration, and research priorities of the agency for the upcoming year.

CONGRESSWOMEN BONAMICI AND GONZALEZ-COLON OPENED UP THE MEETING BY HIGHLIGHTING THE LEGISLATIVE OCEAN WINS FROM THE END OF 2022 THAT WERE INCLUDED IN THE NDAA FY2023.

These included the Coral Reef Conservation Act, Blue GLOBE, Regional Ocean Partnership, NOPP, and Marine Mammal Act, as well as other amendments. They also included the other policy wins from the last Congress, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) and the



Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), both of which included funding for NOAA to implement coastal resilience and restoration projects and research.

Dr. Spinrad addressed the group of Oceans Caucus members by discussing some of the agency's priorities going forward.

ABOVE: NOAA Administrator Dr. Rick Spinrad.

Dr. Spinrad's first goal is to establish the U.S. as a climate-ready nation, meaning the U.S. will not only be resilient to the impacts of climate but will be able to prosper and benefit.

He sees the implementation of the first-ever Ocean Climate Action Plan as one avenue to achieving this goal. He also emphasized his commitment to improve the equity and diversity in NOAA's workforce and the science community in general.

After Dr. Spinrad spoke, members of the Senate and House Oceans Caucus had the opportunity to ask questions or make comments to the Administrator.

NOAA is an integral part of the U.S.'s ability to identify and implement ocean conservation strategies and on-the-ground projects. It's imperative that Congress and leaders in the agency are coordinating and working together to improve the health and resilience of the marine and coastal environment.

PLASTIC POLLUTION

U.K. PARLIAMENTARIANS COME TOGETHER TO DEMAND AN AMBITIOUS GLOBAL PLASTICS TREATY

The United Nations General Assembly founded World Environment Day in 1972 to increase public awareness of environmental challenges

and encourage action. It has since grown to be the largest global venue for environmental advocacy and is observed every year on June 5th. At its core, this is what the All Party Parliamentary Group on International Conservation (APPG) is about. As Parliamentarians, members wish to expand their knowledge of the issues facing the environment, and then as a group of cross-party legislators take action to mitigate them.

THIS YEAR'S THEME FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY WAS PLASTIC POLLUTION, UNDER THE CAMPAIGN #BEATPLASTICPOLLUTION.

More than 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced every year, half of which is designed to be used only once. Of that, less than 10 percent is recycled. An estimated 19-23 million tonnes end up in lakes, rivers, and seas. Today, plastic clogs up our landfills, leaches into the ocean, and is combusted into toxic smoke, making it one of the gravest threats to the planet. Not only that, what is less known is that microplastics find their way into the food we eat, the water we drink, and even the air we breathe. Many plastic products contain hazardous additives, which may pose a threat to our health.

The APPG explored this trophic transfer of microplastics and bio-accumulation - which is the increasing concentration of toxins within organisms higher up in the food chain - and the impact it is having on marine and bird species

as well as the risk to humans. It also heard from experts who attended the most recent round of negotiations in Paris for a Global Plastics Treaty, which is aimed to be delivered by next year.

Experts from the Zoological Society of London, the Plastics Federation, and the Environmental Investigations Agency noted the risk of microplastics being ingested by marine animals and passing up the food chain, causing toxic harm. What was remarkable was the overall sense of agreement between the scientists, industry, and the NGO community, particularly the opportunities from the Global Plastics Treaty which is being drafted and could

come into force as early as 2024, becoming the first global treaty to curb plastic pollution. 94 of the 180 nations in Paris had agreed that some particularly harmful polymers, chemicals, and plastic products – which might include microplastics and PFAs (“forever chemicals”) – should be banned or phased out. The draft document will be written in the coming months as a ‘springboard’ for ‘granular discussions of the final treaty text.’

UK Parliamentarians and Ministers have pushed for an ambitious and effective treaty to end plastic pollution, including through the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution, which now has over 50 members and seeks to:

- Restrain plastic consumption and production to sustainable levels;
- Enable a circular economy for plastics that protects the environment and human health;
- Achieve environmentally sound management and recycling of plastic waste.

Further negotiations will take place this November, and the UK APPG will push for a robust outcome at the negotiations.



PLASTIC POLLUTION

EAST AFRICAN POLICYMAKERS UNITE IN EFFORTS TO FIND A HARMONIZED REGIONAL APPROACH TO REDUCING PLASTIC POLLUTION

Global levels of plastic pollution are showing no signs of slowing down. Recent figures from the the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) show plastics trade reaching USD 1.2 trillion in 2022.

Despite a surge in public awareness and environmental campaigning, a recent report shows that the world is producing a record amount of single-use plastic waste, generating 139 million metric tons in 2021, 6 million metric tons more than in 2019.

International discourse about plastics has reached a pivotal point. In a historic milestone at UNEA-5 in 2022, UN Member States endorsed a resolution to end plastic pollution by forging an international legally binding agreement by 2024. As of 2023,

175 countries had adopted the resolution "End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument," which addresses the full lifecycle of plastic, including its production, design, and disposal.

Against this backdrop, 21 parliamentarians from across the entire East African Community representing each of the 7 member states (Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) came together to discuss a regional approach and legislative solutions to the problem.

Hosted at ALN House in Nairobi, Kenya, the event was organized by the ICCF Group, ALN Academy, and the Flipflop Project with provisions from UNCTAD. This event was attended by the parliamentarians together with multiple stakeholders including authorities (NEMA, Kenya),

activists, and circular economy experts. Among other topics, the regional caucus explored: the state of legislation across the 7 nation states, possibilities for regional legislation to eliminate certain types of plastics, trade and policy opportunities for plastic substitutes, and the

learnings from Rwanda on what is internationally perceived as being a successful case study for an elimination approach to plastics.

One of the discussion points was a draft bill that has been tabled to ban the manufacture, sale, and importation of specific non-essential single-use plastic items across the EAC. At the conclusion of the caucus event, participants were unanimous in their commitment towards a regional approach to tackle single-use

plastics, a transition to a circular economy, including increased use of material substitutes, and ensuring all East Africans can live in a healthier environment in the future.

Regional cooperation was determined as key to tackling the issue, since plastic pollution knows no borders, especially in shared critical ecosystems like Lake Victoria, and where cross-border trade remains a challenge.

As the Hon. Didier Molisho from the DRC stated:

// The time for collective action has arrived. If action is limited to one country alone, there will always be a problem through borders with countries that do not act."

As a region, Africa is one of the worst performers when it comes to managing solid waste, with the United Nations estimating that only 10% of plastic waste

produced is appropriately managed, and without drastic changes, the total municipal plastic waste generated is projected to increase from 19.2

million tonnes in 2015 to 72 million tonnes per year by 2060. With few current strategies in place to improve it, there is a need to tackle the problem at the source by eliminating more of the most problematic plastics, a view that has gained support on the EAC agenda.

East Africa has been recognised as a leader in taking legislative action against plastic pollution since Rwanda first implemented a strictly enforced plastic bag ban in 2008. Of the 7 member states, all of them have passed legislation

to ban plastic bags and several have enacted laws against certain single-use plastics, although there is little harmonisation between the laws and, in many of the countries, the bans have not been strictly enforced, leading to ineffective outcomes.

The event was made possible through the contributions by all organizing partners, including support by the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution programme, funded by UK Aid and implemented in partnership with UNCTAD.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & NATIONAL PLANNING

PARLIAMENTARY CONSERVATION CAUCUS-KENYA (PCC-K) STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

The conservation and management of natural resources play a critical role in realizing Kenya's Vision 2030 - the country's development blueprint covering the period from 2008 to 2030 - as all developments across the economy rely on natural assets in various ways. However, climate change poses a threat

to the sustainability of these natural resources and their ability to support the economy. In response, the Parliamentary Conservation Caucus-Kenya (PCC-K), with the support of the ICCF Group and its partners, developed a Strategic Plan aimed at fostering innovative approaches to drive economic growth, improve livelihoods, and conserve and preserve the ecosystem services provided by the environment.

ABOVE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Hon. Adan Yussuf, Hon. Rindikiri Mugambi, Sen. Moses Kajwang, Hon. Godfrey Mwangi and Hon. Bernard Kitur from Kenya.



On June 22nd, 2023, the ICCF Group hosted a breakfast meeting in Nairobi, Kenya with members of PCC-K to review and validate the Strategic Plan. The meeting was attended by 29 members of PCC-K and senators from the Parliamentary Caucus on Climate Action (PCCA). The speakers for this briefing included Hon. Charity Kathambi, Co-Chair of the PCC-K; Sen. Moses Kajwang, Chairperson and Convener of the PCCA; Sen. John Methu, Chairperson of the Committee on Land, Environment and Natural Resources; Mr. Mamo Boru,

Director General of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA); and Mr. Philip

Kilonzo, Head of Programs, Policy and Campaigns at the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA).

In her opening remarks, Hon. Charity Kathambi noted that there exists a disconnect between some environmental policies and emphasized the urgent and critical need for harmonization to address this issue.

She also highlighted the importance of planting trees as a way of tackling the climate crisis and urged the legislators to participate in President William Ruto's initiative to plant 15 billion trees by 2032.

Sen. Moses Kajwang applauded the PCC-K members for developing a comprehensive Strategic Plan and expressed his belief that the caucuses share a similar vision. He emphasized the members' commitment to conservation matters and urged them to collaborate where their

mandates allow. Senator Kajwang pointed out the existing obstacles in accessing climate funds, such as the loss and damage fund and funds for capacity building to address climate change issues. He acknowledged President William Ruto's administration for its approach to climate finance conversations and the focus on a climate finance architecture that benefits African countries. Senator Kajwang concluded by urging the members to start thinking about how they can participate meaningfully in conversations around Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

LEFT: Sen. Hamida Kibwana during the review of the Caucus Strategic Plan.

and their role in the African Climate Summit to be hosted in Nairobi in September 2023.

Sen. John Methu noted that capacity building initiatives on conservation and climate change should be complemented by tangible actions. He emphasized

Mr. Mamo Boru Mamo began his presentation by stating that the Kenyan constitution is a green constitution, and the country has an enabling legal and policy framework that addresses environmental and climate change issues.

He mentioned acts such as the Environmental and Coordination Act of 1999 and the recently enacted Sustainable Waste Management Act of 2021, which guarantee the right to a clean and healthy environment as long as there is a shared understanding among the public that enhancing the environment's quality is

Mr. Philip Kilonzo began his presentation by emphasizing that communities should be at the center of any key strategic processes.

the need for legislators to work closely with their constituents to implement specific action points. He also highlighted the importance of both caucuses leading discussions on the role of legislators in addressing climate change during the Africa Climate Summit.

their responsibility. He appealed to the legislators to prioritize the environmental agenda and diligently fulfill their oversight role. Mr. Boru highlighted the increasing number of litigations NEMA faces from the public, which they encourage, as being accountable to the people is their key role.



He highlighted the importance of analyzing the benefits communities receive from these processes. This significance is even more pronounced for legislators, as they serve as representatives of the people. Mr. Kilonzo proposed several

actions to increase the interests of those they represent in climate crisis issues. These actions include strengthening advocacy efforts collectively as legislators, promoting a just transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient development pathways,

ABOVE: Sen. Veronica Maina, Member of the Senate of Kenya.



and enhancing accountability and oversight measures. He urged the legislators not to confine themselves to national laws but to proactively engage with international agreements.

Furthermore, he encouraged them to position themselves as drivers of a global stock-taking process on issues such as reducing carbon emissions.

To conclude the meeting, Ms. Jill Barasa, ICCF Africa Program Director, invited the legislators to share any additional input on the Strategic Plan before its official launch on July 13th, 2023, which will also serve as a public re-introduction of the PCC-K to stakeholders working in Kenya.

ABOVE: Reo Kawamura, Director of Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

MARINE DEBRIS

ICCF-AIPA-UNCTAD JOINT BRIEFING: TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS MARINE DEBRIS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

On July 6, 2023, the ICCF Group, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) co-organized a briefing titled "Technology and Innovation Solutions to Address Marine Debris in Southeast Asia" in Bogor, Indonesia, hybridized through the Zoom platform.

The event facilitated rich

discussions and insights on

the pressing issue of marine debris in Southeast Asia, exploring existing challenges, policy initiatives, and potential solutions. Opening remarks were delivered by Secretary General of AIPA, H.E. Ar. Siti Rozaimeriyanthy Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, and Director of ICCF Asia, Mr. James

Ward. Keynote remarks were delivered by Chairperson of the Committee for Interparliamentary Cooperation of the Indonesian Parliament, Hon. Fadli Zon, and Co-Chair of the Oceans Caucus in the Indonesian House of Representatives, Hon. Bobby Rizaldi.

Mr. Zul Hilmi Saidin, Senior Officer of the Environment Division at the ASEAN Secretariat, discussed the broad range of policy initiatives conducted in ASEAN countries and ASEAN areas to combat marine plastic pollution.

The region has implemented several frameworks and plans like the ASEAN Framework for Circular Economy and the Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris. Partnerships with nations like Japan and Norway, as well as entities like the World Bank and UNOPS, have been established to drive reduction efforts. Despite the progress, challenges persist,

including lack of upstream coordination, consistent policy and practice for the plastic industry and environmental protection, and implementation of action policies at various levels.

Mr. Reo Kawamura, Director of Resource Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris Unit at the

RIGHT: Hon. Putu Supadma Rudana, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation of the Indonesian House of Representatives.



Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), addressed the significant contribution of Southeast Asian countries to plastic waste, exacerbated by imports from developed nations. He discussed the role of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) in formulating global solutions,

acknowledging the pivotal role of waste pickers and the potential of public-private partnerships in waste management. He also shared best practices from Japan and Southeast Asian countries, including the harmonized PET bottle design in Japan, bans on single-use plastic in Indonesia, the Philippines' Extended



Producer Responsibility Act,
and Singapore's Deposit Refund

Scheme.

Mr. David Jose Vivas Eugui, Chief of Section a.i. at the Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch of the UNCTAD, presented a detailed exploration into potential strategies to control plastic pollution.

Eugui discussed control measures such as tariffs, bans, quotas, recycling targets, and phasing out fossil fuel subsidies

to reduce plastic usage. He advocated for substitutes like natural fibers, agricultural waste, seaweed, glass, aluminum, and

bioplastics as alternatives to conventional plastic products. Highlighting an international trade imbalance, Eugui noted that synthetic materials are often favored over natural ones due to tariff discrepancies. To aid policymakers, he showcased an online tool for evaluating environmental impacts of materials. He concluded by advocating for the benefits of plastic alternatives and pledging support for Member States transitioning away from harmful plastics.

During the Intervention Session of AIPA Member Parliaments, Hon. Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Awang Haji Suyoi bin Haji Osman from Brunei Darussalam highlighted efforts such as coastal cleanup campaigns, a marine debris cleanup handbook, and a tax on plastic items. Hon. Putu

LEFT: Hon. Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Awang Haji Suyoi bin Haji Osman, Member of the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam.

Supadma Rudana from Indonesia stressed the importance of local wisdom, sustainable alternatives, and a five-point action plan that includes promoting alternatives to plastic and cultivating a recycling culture. Hon. Ravindra Airlangga, also from Indonesia, proposed a green transition resolution, emphasizing reduction of plastic production, behavioral change, enhancing funding mechanisms, and conservation of biodiversity. Hon. Bobby Adhityo Rizaldi posed questions about promoting successful technology and innovation solutions and asked UNCTAD how governments and businesses can collaborate to promote traditional plastic substitutes in developing countries. Finally, Hon. Adm. Chaiwat Iamsamut from Thailand proposed the establishment of a dedicated unit and fund to tackle marine debris in Southeast Asian countries.



CAUCUS-BUILDING

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE: SAINT LUCIA ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF CONSERVATION CAUCUS

The future of the Caribbean region – both socially and economically – depends heavily on the conservation and proper management of the environment. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), in partnership

with the European Union (EU) and the ICCF Group, hosted an Environmental Sustainability Conference at the Bay Gardens Hotel in Saint Lucia from June 13-15, using a hybrid modality. The theme for the conference was, "Position OECS SIDS for Accelerated and Sustainable Transformation."

Dr. Jamie Cavelier, Vice President for Strategic Partnerships at ICCF Group and former Senior Biodiversity Specialist at the Global Environment Facility (GEF), provided keynote remarks, noting:

It is in the interest of governments to realize that funding for nature is an investment, not an expense." He added that if investments in natural capital are not made right now, the social and economic costs increase in the future and will, "disproportionately impact the poor women and children ... Investments made now will reduce resource requirements in the future."

On the final day of the meeting, the ICCF Group hosted the inaugural OECS Regional Conservation Caucus Co-Chairs meeting, during which parliamentarians from four

OECS Member States exchanged dialogue with counterparts from Africa, the UK, the U.S., and Latin America, as well as ICCF leadership, on shared issues and opportunities.

THE CAUCUS MEETING CULMINATED IN THE SIGNING OF THE PROTOCOL TO LAUNCH THE SAINT LUCIA NATIONAL CONSERVATION CAUCUS BY THE FOLLOWING KEY SIGNATORIES:

- Hon. Shawn Edward - Minister for Education, Innovation, Science, Technology,

Vocational Training and Sustainable Development

- Hon. Alfred Prospere - Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development
- Hon. Alvina Reynolds - Senate President
- Hon. Lisa Cassandra Jewahir - Government Senator
- Hon. Allison Jean - Government Senator
- Hon. Kaygianna Toussaint-Charlery - Government Senator
- Hon. Dominic Fedee - Senate Leader of Opposition Business
- Hon. Noorani Azeez - Independent Senator

The Saint Lucia National Conservation Caucus (SLUCC) aims to foster collaboration and coordination among members of parliament to protect and conserve natural resources, while promoting sustainable practices. It signifies the dedication of the signatories to tackle environmental challenges,

protect natural resources, and create a sustainable future for the people of Saint Lucia. Through the collective efforts of the signatories, the country aims to become a global leader in sustainability, driving positive change and inspiring others to follow suit.

RIGHT: President of the Senate of St. Lucia, Hon. Alvina Reynolds, affixed her signature to the protocol establishing the Saint Lucia Conservation Caucus (SLUCC), making it the first for the region. Minister for Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Hon. Shawn Edward, and Government Senator, Hon. Lisa Jawahir, look on.



AMAZON CONSERVATION

BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, AND PERU CAUCUSES SPONSOR AMAZON PARLIAMENT MEETING

Parliamentarians from Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru held an Assembly meeting of the Amazon Parliament (PARLAMAZ) on Tuesday, April 25, made possible with ICCF support. The meeting, held in Belém do Pará, was welcomed by the Governor of the State of Pará, Helder Barbalho, and by

Ambassador Antônio Ricarte, representative of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Participants called attention to the upcoming Summit of Amazon Heads of State in August, also in Belém. It will bring together the eight heads of state from countries that make up the Cooperation Treaty Organization Amazônica (OTCA).

During the April 25th PARLAMAZ Assembly, the representatives of the five Amazonian parliaments present at the meeting agreed to deliver a statement to the heads of state who will be gathered at the summit in August. The document expresses concern over

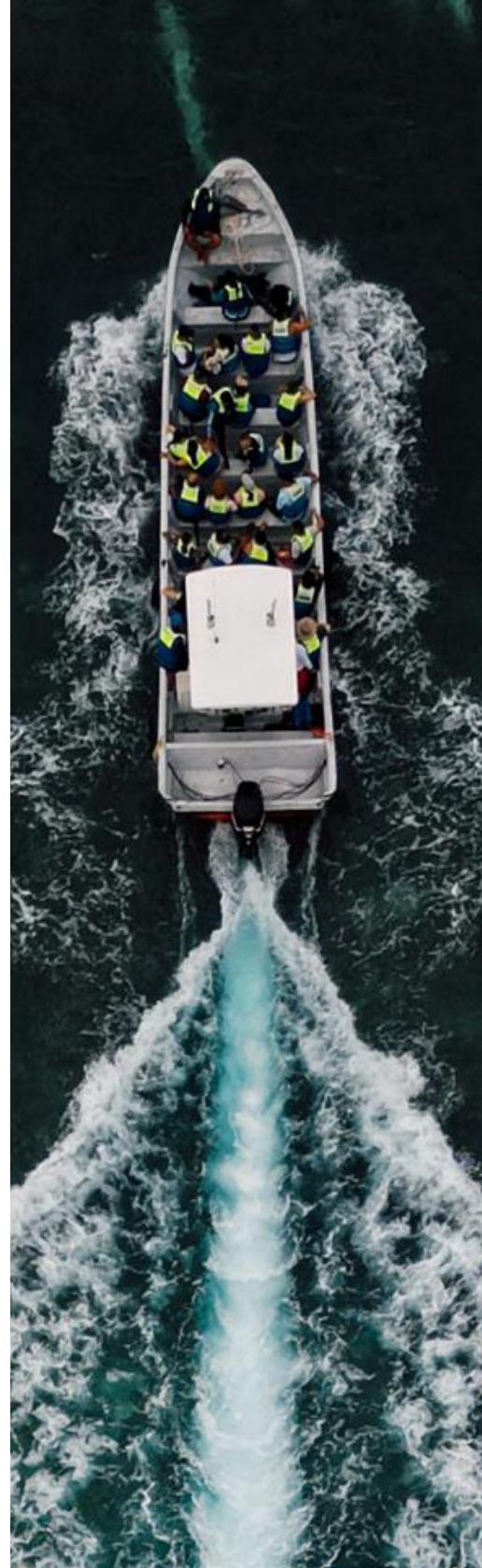
the continued loss of biodiversity in the Amazon and highlights the importance of exchanging legislative proposals among Amazonian countries to improve the coherence of regional public policies to advance conservation and sustainable production.

Rodrigo Agostinho, a founder of the Brazilian Caucus and current President of IBAMA, recalled that the standing forest does not receive the same attention as the planted areas and that it is necessary to create economic alternatives to guarantee the maintenance of the Amazonian biodiversity.



We have the challenge of creating economic alternatives and having a large menu of offers that can guarantee the maintenance of our

RIGHT: Members of Colombia's congressional conservation caucuses visiting the coral restoration project led by the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia.



biodiversity. This includes tourism, it includes the bioeconomy, the energy transition, the carbon market, non-forest concessions, the management of products including non-timber forest products.”

On April 21 Deputados Socorro Neri from the state of Acre in Amazonia, together with Zé Silva Soares of Minas Gerais, traveled to Paris to participate in the ICCF-sponsored Interparliamentary Dialogue at the *Assemblée Nationale*, which focused on The Role of Legislatures in a New Global Financing Pact.

BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

COLOMBIAN CONSERVATION CAUCUS AT THE SECOND STOP OF THE BIODIVERSITY ROUTE IN THE ARCHIPELAGO OF SAN ANDRÉS, PROVIDENCIA AND SANTA CATALINA

Within the framework of the Biodiversity Bill 008 - 2022, "By means of which mechanisms are established to stop and prevent the loss of biodiversity in the national territory," a series of dialogues and public hearings were held with the support of ICCF Colombia and the active participation of the members of the Colombian Oceans Caucus in the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, a territory with environmental richness that requires special attention for its marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Participants included HS Nicolas Echeverry, Vice President of the House of Representatives Erika Sanchez, HR Astrid Sanchez, HR Elizabeth Jay-Pang, HR Jorge Mendez, HR Yenica Acosta, HR Miguel Polo Polo, along with the

National Planning Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, AUNAP, National Navy, General Maritime Directorate - DIMAR - Colombian Ocean Commission, the Corporation for the Sustainable

Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina (CORALINA),

universities, private sector, international cooperation, and the Raizal community.

This #SOSBiodiversity Route agenda included an 'Intersectoral Dialogue' with participation of the BioTank Corporation and the Healing Coral Foundation, an expert in Innovation for the Blue Economy; a visit to one of the coral nurseries accompanied by the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina - Coralina; and a 'Multicultural Meeting' and gastronomic fair with social, environmental, and cultural organizations of the territory.

BELOW: Inter-sectoral dialogue on the Biodiversity Bill, led by HS Nicolas Echeverry together with members of the Colombia Caucus, national and local government entities, the Raizal community and the island.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

COLOMBIAN CONSERVATION AND OCEANS CAUCUSES: BIRD CONSERVATION TO DRIVE DEVELOPMENT

On June 9, 2023, ICCF Colombia and the Colombian Conservation and Oceans Caucuses (CCC - COC), in collaboration with Audubon Colombia, held in Barranquilla the Parliamentary Meeting for the Conservation of Birds to

promote regional development, with a visit to the Isla Salamanca National Natural Park.

The objective of this field mission was to discuss the importance of the National Strategy for the Conservation of Birds 2030 in the national political scenario and provide legislators and participants with technical and scientific inputs for discussions on environmental and biodiversity policy.

This meeting included a discussion with the presentations of the Bird Tourism Law Project led by HS Soledad Tamayo; Audubon's National Strategy for Bird Conservation; and presentations on how bird conservation drives regional development by the National Natural Parks of Colombia; the Vice Ministry of Tourism of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism; and the Vice Ministry of Environmental Policies and Standardization of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

Among the conclusions, the importance of financing for Protected Areas, the efforts for the conservation of National Parks, and the strengthening of strategies aimed at growing bird tourism in Colombia, especially in corridors where Audubon has advanced programs, were highlighted. Strategies were discussed for development within the framework of bird migration from the north to the south of the continent, as well as the need for international cooperation, both at a technical and financial level, to strengthen this strategic

LEFT: Diana Oviedo, Head of the Planning Advisory Office, National Natural Parks of Colombia.

activity for the development and conservation of ecosystems in Colombia.

Participants included Caucus members HS Mauricio Gomez, HS Ciro Ramirez, HS Soledad Tamayo, Chamber Vice President Erika Tatiana Sanchez, HR Modesto Aguilera, HR Andres David Calle Aguas, HR Victor Tovar Trujillo, HR Armando Zabarain D Arce, HR Yenica Sugein Acosta, HR Carlos Ardila and HR Elizabeth

Jay-Pang Díaz together with representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, National Natural Parks of Colombia, Invemar, Colombian Maritime General Directorate (Dimar), the Autonomous Corporation Regional del Atlántico (CRA), USAID Colombia, National Federation of Oil Palm Growers - Fedepalma, and Peace Corps, among others.

These types of strategies are essential for legislative, regulatory and public policy issues for development in the regions, where bird watching and birds in general are a potential engine of development for Colombia, particularly for rural communities.

BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

FROM AGREEMENT TO ACTION: IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK IN MEXICO

In December 2022, the State Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted a historic agreement that establishes concrete targets and measures to halt and reverse the loss of nature by 2050: the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The adoption of this agreement was an important step, but now the countries – including Mexico – have the great challenge of achieving the implementation of the goals at the national level, which will require close

collaboration between the various levels of government at different territorial scales, as well as civil society, the private sector, academia, communities and indigenous peoples, and other stakeholders.

LEFT: Members of Colombia's congressional conservation caucuses visiting the *Vía Parque Isla de Salamanca* protected area (VIPIS).





On June 14, led by Deputy Karen Castrejon, Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee and Co-Chair of the Mexican Conservation Caucus, the briefing session “From Agreement to Action: First Dialogue with Legislators for the Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” was held at the Congress.

This session was organized by ICCF jointly with Keystone Species Alliance, Reforestamos Mexico, and Mares de Mexico and had the in-presence participation of three legislators and 20

legislators connected via zoom, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment and more than 40 experts from different sectors.

ABOVE: Participants in the briefing session on biodiversity hosted by Hon. Karen Castrejon, Co-Chair of the Mexican Conservation Caucus and ICCF Mexico.

In this session, the work being carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment to identify a roadmap for the implementation of the 30x30 goal in line with the targets established in the GBF was introduced. The importance of acting quickly to build a legal framework that effectively demonstrates the principles and

values of responsibility for life and biodiversity was emphasized.

Speakers highlighted the importance of considering gender perspective and indigenous rights as cross-cutting aspects in all the efforts taken to preserve and promote the sustainable use of biodiversity.

Legislators agreed to have follow-up sessions to analyze in detail the challenges and opportunities that exist around the implementation of each of the 23 goals included in the GBF.

BLUE CARBON ECONOMIES

FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS TO BUILD A LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON BLUE CARBON

During COP27, México announced its commitment to increase its NDC contribution from 22% to 35% in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. To achieve this goal, 44 measures were proposed, including the development and implementation of a Blue Carbon National Strategy aiming to preserve key ecosystems like mangroves and seagrasses.



In order to give legal support to these goals established by the Executive, it is essential to build a legislative framework addressing fundamental aspects ranging from institutional needs to financing mechanisms,

ecosystem conservation and restoration approaches, social safeguards, and awareness strategies.

Led by Dep. Edna Díaz and Dep.

ABOVE: Hon. Edna Díaz, Founder of the Mexican Oceans Caucus, giving opening remarks during the blue carbon roundtable.

Jaime Martínez, Founders of the Mexican Ocean Caucus, a Briefing Session on “Fundamental aspects to develop a legislative framework for blue carbon in Mexico” took place on June 21. This session was organized by ICCF in partnership with the Ocean Foundation and included the participation of more than 40 experts from different sectors including civil society, academia, government, and coastland communities.

The objective of this session was to define a path to promote an ambitious and comprehensive

legislative framework on blue carbon in Mexico, considering existing policies and regulations as well as the initiatives that have been presented by members of the LXV Legislature and the gaps to harmonize the legal frameworks that provide comprehensive solutions to the ocean and the blue carbon ecosystems. Topics included the contribution of scientific knowledge for creating a legal framework for blue carbon, the challenges to regulating a carbon market in Mexico, and legal issues.

It was determined that good practices, such as fair exchange, free consent, gender equality, local governance, and traditional knowledge, can contribute greatly to reducing and eliminating the potential risks of blue carbon projects and maximizing the benefits to communities and biodiversity.

With regard to the gaps, participants identified a lack of regulation of carbon markets, of precise definition of the concepts

of blue carbon ecosystems, and of legislation to create public law instruments, like concessions, licenses, and permits.

Among the follow-up actions, it was agreed to systematize all the inputs obtained to have a document that allows the identification of a critical path of legislative work, and to carry

out field missions to learn from the experiences and needs of the communities that are already implementing projects for the voluntary carbon market.

TERRITORIAL PLANNING

FOLUR PROJECT PROGRESS PRESENTED TO MAYORS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF CHACO'S MUNICIPALITIES

As part of the activities of the Chaco Regional Sustainable Development Platform (Soy-Beef) of the FOLUR Paraguay Project, a series of

meetings were held on May 8 and 10 in localities of the Chaco with mayors and representatives of the municipalities of Boquerón, Mcal. Estigarribia, Fuerte Olimpo, Filadelfia, and Loma Plata, which are involved in the project.

During these meetings, the progress and perspectives of the Urban and Territorial Planning Plans (POUT) of the FOLUR Paraguay Projects to be developed in the municipalities of the intervention area were discussed. Territorial planning allows for the development of a territorial construction policy, which is an instrument of municipal management and governance in which the objectives and strategies for the territory will be defined; that is, how the municipality is to grow and develop. The POUT will be developed with the vision that the municipalities can establish a long-term collaboration between the different users and actors in

the territorial planning to achieve the multiple objectives that are sought from the landscape management. They will also make it possible to keep rural properties delimited and orderly, ensuring farm productivity and improving the relationship between society and rurality in a harmonious and sustainable manner. The municipal representatives present at the meeting expressed their interest in the construction of the POUT in their respective municipalities and confirmed their intention to work on the implementation of the plans, for which they will receive resources and technical assistance from FOLUR Paraguay.



LEFT: FOLUR Paraguay Project Coordinator Enrique Molas, during his presentation at Expo Pioneros 2023.

THE PROJECT PARTICIPATED IN THE MAIN PARAGUAYAN CHACO EXPOSITION.

The FOLUR Paraguay Project was presented at the fourth convening of Expo Pioneros, which took place in Loma Plata (Boquerón) from May 24 to 27. The presentation was given by the project coordinator, Enrique Molas, on the main stage of the Expo Pioneros, where he explained details of the initiative and answered questions from the audience. The FOLUR Paraguay project focuses on the development of national and

local capacities for integrated landscape management in the project's target regions. The objective is to promote landscape integrity and sustainable meat and soy value chains in two key biomes of Paraguay (El Chaco and BAAPA). It also seeks to address the challenges of degradation in livestock, agricultural, and forest areas through ecosystem restoration, best management practices, forest connectivity, resilience, and economic growth

BELOW: Representatives of the Paraguayan Chamber of Oilseed and Grain Processors (CAPPRO) and the FOLUR Paraguay Project.

within the intervention areas. FOLUR Paraguay also participated during Expo Pioneros 2023 in the contest "Future Farmer: Producing food today, thinking of future generations," which involved the participation of sixth-grade students from 16 primary schools in the Chaco region and aimed to help children acquire basic

knowledge about sustainable agricultural production in the Paraguayan Chaco. The purpose of this initiative was to give the children the opportunity to acquire basic knowledge, based on technical and scientific criteria, about agricultural production in the Chaco, with special emphasis on sustainability.

AGRIBUSINESS

MEETING WITH THE PARAGUAYAN CHAMBER OF OILSEED AND GRAIN PROCESSORS (CAPPRO)

Representatives of the Paraguayan Chamber of Oilseed and Grain Processors (CAPPRO) and the FOLUR Paraguay Project met in June to agree on lines of action, define strategies to strengthen the agribusiness sector,



and promote sustainability in Paraguay. One of the objectives was to work on a traceability system for the soybean chain and promote the implementation of GAPs with producers in the area of intervention. During the meeting, which took place at CAPPRO's offices, both parties expressed their enthusiasm for the opportunities that will be opened up through this alliance and reaffirmed their commitment to promoting sustainable development in the soybean production chain in Paraguay.

PARAGUAY IS CURRENTLY THE SIXTH LARGEST SOYBEAN PRODUCER IN THE WORLD, ACCORDING TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA).

The meeting was attended by CAPPRO representatives Sandra Noguera, general manager, Fiorella Gurrieri, in charge of sustainability, and Miguel Chávez, in charge of statistics. Enrique Molas, project coordinator, attended on behalf of FOLUR. The FOLUR Project is led by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADES) with the support of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) as implementing entity and the ICCF Group as executing organization. The FOLUR Project is financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and co-financed by the public and private sectors, international cooperation agencies, and civil society. The main objective of the FOLUR Project is to promote landscape integrity and sustainable value chains in two of the country's main crops, beef and soybeans. In view of the fact that the latter is increasingly becoming a crop in the Chaco, it is intended to give it a sustainable focus from the outset, while restoring degraded soils in the Chaco and other areas of the country by attending to the areas of intervention included in the project.

PERU: LOOKING AHEAD

In June, meetings were held in the Peruvian Congress to discuss upcoming events to be led by the Peruvian Conservation Caucus. The formation of the Amazonian Parliament was highlighted, along with the five participating members from Peru who represented the Amazonian region of Peru in recent Amazon Parliament activities in Colombia and Brazil. ICCF Peru and the Peruvian Conservation Caucus plan to hold events promoting the care of the Amazon's flora and wildlife, as well as events related to the protection and conservation of Natural Protected Areas, including a multi-sector event to be held on August 15 in the Congress of the Republic.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends and colleagues:

In conjunction with the Summit for a New Global Financial Pact hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and his administration, the ICCF Group was honored to host in Paris leaders of the conservation caucuses we support globally. This international program presented opportunities for our delegation to engage in conversations with governments, financial institutions, and other key players at the summit, and highlighted the importance of engaging the legislative branch in global efforts for improved conservation governance. We thank the legislators from France, as well as from Botswana, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, the United Kingdom, and Zambia, for their important contributions to this event.

In the U.S. this quarter, ICCF and caucus leaders

emphasized the link between U.S. national security and international conservation. Senators Chris Coons (D-DE) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) held a Congressional Hearing to examine opportunities for security and prosperity through the creation of a U.S. Foundation for International Conservation. We look forward to continuing our work in Washington, D.C. and to highlighting bipartisan U.S. initiatives that can help bridge the funding gap for established conservation areas to be effectively managed at scale.

Sincerely,



John B. Gantt
President

