



FOR
YOUR
WORLD

BRINGING OUR WORLD BACK TO LIFE: WWF UK 2024 MANIFESTO



Right now we are witnessing the widespread destruction of nature around the world. Species and their habitats are being destroyed at an alarming rate, and this destruction is accelerating the climate crisis. Globally, 2023 smashed historic temperature records, driving extreme weather in the UK and around the world.

FOREWORD

Tanya Steele, CEO at WWF

GLOBAL WILDLIFE POPULATION SIZES HAVE DECLINED BY 69% ON AVERAGE SINCE 1970

Here in the UK, we are already one of the most nature-depleted countries on the planet. We are the most nature-depleted country in the G7 and the G20. A further quarter of UK mammals are now at risk of extinction. From puffins to bluebells, bumblebees and mountain hares, UK wildlife is feeling the heat and struggling to adapt.

Globally, a broken food system is driving ill health, poorly rewarding farmers, and is responsible for one third of greenhouse gas emissions - and the majority of biodiversity loss and land degradation.

If they were a country, the emissions financed from the City of London alone would be the 9th largest emitter in the world.

We are in the fight of our lives to fix these broken systems for people and the planet - a race to bring our world back to life.

Our politicians know this, and across political parties they have set legally binding targets to ensure the UK plays its part. They have committed the UK to be a net zero emitter of greenhouse gases by 2050 at the latest, and for nature's vital signs to be in recovery by 2042.

To achieve those targets, we must act now.

By 2030 the UK Government has committed to have cut greenhouse gas emissions by 68% and to have halted the decline of species. And the whole of the UK is committed to deliver similar targets internationally.

The actions of the Westminster government chosen by voters at this year's General Election will determine whether we can achieve those targets.

And we are currently off track.

For too long the promises made on climate and nature have been too easy to break, delay or water down, and successive governments have missed key opportunities to drive forward action. The independent Climate Change Committee and the Office for Environmental Protection have repeatedly expressed concern about the pace of change to meet the 2030 targets.

Enough is enough. From this election forward, we're calling for every promise made to our people and planet to be kept.

A just transition must ensure that the people who are most hard pressed by the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation receive the support they desperately need. Done fairly, and leaving no one behind, we can restore the resilience and stability of our food system, reduce pressure on families struggling with the cost of energy and food, protect communities from flooding, support a just transition to net zero, play a positive role in securing global solutions to the climate and nature crises, and inspire current and future generations to restore our precious planet.

We have a golden opportunity to do things better. This election must see all parties secure a mandate to rebuild our green foundations and take the decisive action we know is needed for our planet. And our people are behind it. From the millions of members of environmental organisations in the UK to the independent People's Plan for Nature, developed through a deliberative citizen's assembly the desire and demand from the public to see change, action, and a government that leads by example is clear.

We need to see positive action, not warm words.

There is not a day to waste to bring our world back to life.

BLUEPRINT TO BRING OUR WORLD BACK TO LIFE

TACKLING THE TRIPLE CHALLENGE

Ensure the UK's land and sea use at home and around the world supports our climate, nature and nutritional security now and in the future - with an enhanced legal framework and dedicated independent oversight and scrutiny of plans.

A 21ST CENTURY FRAMEWORK FOR FINANCE AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

Turbocharge net zero through effective public investment and crowding in private finance

Ensure company plans for climate and nature are in lock step

Develop national and sector-by-sector plans for a nature-positive future

A RESILIENT AND NATURE-RICH FUTURE FOR FOOD AND FARMING

Support farmers to cut emissions and restore nature

Set core environmental standards for trade and food imports

End the UK's contribution to deforestation and land degradation globally



TACKLING THE TRIPLE CHALLENGE ACROSS GOVERNMENT

Our land is finite. Therefore, we need to ensure that how we use our land and seas supports our climate, nature and food security now – and in the future. This is the ‘triple challenge’.

The independent People’s Plan for Nature made clear the public demand and appetite for nature to be considered in decision-making at all levels through stronger, more ambitious legislation, and for a body to take responsibility for balancing social and economic interests in decision-making about nature protection and renewal.

We agree that this is essential if we are to achieve our climate and nature targets, and identify win-wins and better manage trade-offs with food production on land and at sea to ensure the UK’s nutritional security, all without offshoring the UK’s environmental footprint.

WWF is calling on all parties to commit to a new piece of groundbreaking legislation, a Living Planet Act, that for the first time builds the institutional accountability, evidence-

base and scientific rigour applied to climate action by the Committee on Climate Change into decisions on land and sea use to achieve our climate, nature and nutritional needs.

Of course, new legislation is not a replacement for action, and a Living Planet Act must be delivered alongside the policy pledges set out in this manifesto, and more. As a first step, the next UK government should urgently review the Environmental Improvement Plan, Net Zero Strategy, Land Use Framework and Food Strategy to ensure policies add up to delivering the legally binding goals of the Climate Change and Environment Acts, and our international commitments under the Paris Agreement and Global Biodiversity Framework. These actions must then be bolstered through a cross-party commitment to an institutional framework that ensures all departments and all future governments continually improve action and ambition.

A 21ST CENTURY FRAMEWORK FOR FINANCE AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

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We need decisive climate action to protect consumers facing rising energy prices and food insecurity, by rewiring our economy to be nature and climate-positive, from the way we heat our homes and the way we travel to the way we grow and buy our food. To achieve this we call on all parties to:

MAXIMISE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND CROWD IN PRIVATE FINANCE TO TURBOCHARGE THE TRANSITION TO NET ZERO

To ensure that the UK is building a thriving 21st Century economy which creates jobs and slashes energy bills, all parties should commit to introducing a **Net Zero Test for each Budget** and every Spending Review, making sure taxpayers money/government spending is delivering energy security and clean prosperity, not worsening the climate crisis.

Alongside this, they should commit to a **Net Zero Investment Plan to crowd in private investment**. This should combine independent tracking of private and public financial flows towards net zero with financing roadmaps for each sector of the economy, setting out the policies and incentives government will put in place to crowd in the necessary private investment.

ENSURE COMPANY PLANS FOR CLIMATE AND NATURE ARE IN LOCK STEP

To align private capital, all parties should commit to ensuring that businesses play their part, by **mandating transition plans** for all listed and private companies.

Importantly, these plans should include climate *and* nature.

DEVELOP NATIONAL AND SECTOR-BY-SECTOR PLANS FOR A NATURE-POSITIVE FUTURE

All parties should commit to **develop a nature positive strategy for the UK**, similar to and ultimately integrated with the UK's existing net zero strategy, underpinned by specific sector-by-sector roadmaps for action. This would help to incorporate international commitments already made, like the Global Biodiversity Framework, into domestic policy.

Similarly, all parties should utilise the UK's strength as a global financial hub to commit to building the world's first net zero *and nature positive*-aligned financial centre, having positive impact both in the UK and abroad.

FOOD AND FARMING FOR THRIVING PEOPLE, PRODUCERS AND PLANET

We are off track to protect and restore nature by 2030. From tackling pollution in our rivers to growing new forests, restoring carbon-rich peatlands and salt marshes, and protecting precious blue carbon habitats at sea, we are falling behind. Therefore, we call on political parties to:

SUPPORT FARMERS TO CUT EMISSIONS AND RESTORE NATURE

With nature's help we can increase the resilience and stability of the food system in the face of climate change and conflict before it's too late, so that farmers and the public don't end up paying the cost.

Across the UK, governments should put in place the joined-up policy, regulation and investment to drive a regenerative and just food transition, one that puts power back in the hands of farmers and consumers and fairness back into the food system as a whole.

The UK government should **increase the overall farming budget at least in line with inflation** to reflect the needs of farmers in each of the four nations of the UK. Government investment should be targeted at the most impactful outcomes for nature and climate, while private markets for nature and carbon should be designed and regulated to reward nature-friendly production. The next UK government should also **regulate the food supply chain to return more value to food producers** for nutritious and regeneratively produced food.

The UK government has also committed to halve by 2030 the amount of nutrients running off into our rivers or polluting our air as part of the Global Biodiversity Framework. Nitrogen waste is money down the drain for farmers as well as costs to the taxpayer. **A cross-economy plan to halve nitrogen waste**, backed by new nitrogen budgets that operate in a similar way to carbon budgets, would save money as well as save nature and people's lives.

SET CORE ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR TRADE AND FOOD IMPORTS

We are working towards ending the UK's contribution to deforestation overseas, but there is much more to be done. If we also ensured that all imported food is held to equivalent minimum standards as the food we produce at home and supported those exporting countries to adapt, we could drive even more global impact.

All parties should commit to **establish legal minimum environmental standards for food imports** in the same way as we have for food safety and animal welfare, while supporting developing countries that export to the UK if they need to adapt to meet these standards.

END THE UK'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEFORESTATION AND LAND DEGRADATION GLOBALLY

Shoppers don't expect the food on supermarket shelves to be driving deforestation and land conversion overseas.

The next government must **implement due diligence legislation** to deliver UK commitments to ensure businesses no longer import products contributing to illegal deforestation.

Going forward all parties should **widen the scope of due diligence** legislation to cover legal as well as illegal deforestation, include more forest-risk commodities and sectors such as financial services, and end the UK's contribution to all unnecessary deforestation for good. Such action will be key to acting with credibility at upcoming global summits including CBD COP16 in Colombia, and UNFCCC COP30 in Brazil.

If we are to stand a chance of restoring nature, our shared inheritance by 2030, and of limiting climate change to 1.5C of warming, the next government must be prepared to take holistic action on a number of fronts.

WWF, our scientists, business partners, community groups and supporters will be there every step of the way to support, challenge and demand action.

This is the fight of all our lives.

Together, we can bring our world back to life.



**OUR LAND IS FINITE.
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AND SEAS SUPPORTS OUR
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