

Five crucial steps to reverse our trajectory towards an uninhabitable Earth

August 10 2021, by Tim Knight



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The headlines speak for themselves. The pictures paint a thousand words. Our planet is in flames. Lives and livelihoods are being destroyed. Our cities are under water. The biodiversity and ecosystems

that are central to human survival are being incinerated before our eyes. This is our last chance to put out the fire.

The message in the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is unequivocal: there is no longer any doubt—if there ever was—about the scale of the climate crisis, about humankind's role in driving [climate change](#) and exacerbating extreme weather events, about how much we have changed the planet. And we can say with [absolute certainty](#) that things will continue to get worse unless urgent changes are made.

To stand even the remotest chance of meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement (which aims to limit warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels), we need action to halve emissions by the end of this decade. This report is a timely reminder to the world's leaders, captains of industry, investors and consumers that a radical shift in policy is needed right here, right now.

Crucially, we need to protect and restore nature. Our [old-growth forests](#), our oceans, our peatlands, our mangroves and our seagrass beds are our greatest allies in the epic struggle to avert climate chaos. Fauna & Flora International (FFI) has been banging this drum for longer than we care to remember. Last year, we launched the Our One Home campaign, calling for the protection and restoration of nature to be made a global priority and for an exponential increase in investment in locally led conservation initiatives.

Five breakthroughs for nature

Our five breakthroughs for nature echo and expand upon those same themes, emphasizing the urgent need to transform our relationship to the [natural](#) world on which we ultimately all depend. In a nutshell, here is the handful of headline actions that we are advocating:

- We need to put nature at the heart of decision-making, with governments and the [private sector](#) held accountable for making nature a global priority.
- An annual investment of US\$500 billion to protect and restore nature is a minimum requirement, with funding diverted from environmentally harmful activities into nature-positive initiatives.
- The communities and local organizations working on the front line of conservation are the ones best placed to address the interrelated biodiversity and climate crises through action at local level, but they need far more support.
- Safeguarding nature is crucial to climate stability and human health, and we need to redouble our efforts to halt the destruction and degradation of these vital life-support systems.
- For far too long, advances in technology have worked to the detriment of nature, but they have enormous untapped potential to support its conservation. Technological innovation is not a silver bullet—and needs to go hand in hand with drastic emissions cuts—but it's a vital weapon in our armory.

A narrowing window

This five-act structure is what we think it will take to avert catastrophe in the real-life drama that is unfolding all around us. But at the risk of sounding like a stuck record, the window of opportunity for addressing this global crisis and averting the worst impacts of climate and biodiversity meltdown is rapidly narrowing.

Every fraction of a degree of warming makes our planet more unsafe. The IPCC report warns that until the world has reached net-zero greenhouse gasses the planet will continue to heat up, with dangerous and irreversible impacts locked in for millennia. But the report's findings also remind us that every action taken to limit emissions and warming brings us closer to a safer future.

There is much left to fight for and, with the very future of our one home at stake, there has never before been as much [climate](#) ambition as there is today. But that ambition needs to be articulated in action, not words, starting now. If not now, then when?

More information: IPCC report: [www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-asses ...
ort-working-group-i/](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-i/)

Provided by Fauna & Flora International

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