WWF

50 YEARS
OF CONSERVATION

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

for a living planet


for a living planet

Editors: Rob Soutter; Bart Ullstein, Banson; Barney Jeffries, ngo.media;
Emma Duncan; Helen de Mattos, Banson

Design: Banson

Printer: Canon Europe Print Centre,
Canon Giessen GmbH

Published in April 2011 by WWF-World Wide Fund For Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund), Gland, Switzerland.

ISBN:
Hardback: 978-2-940443-29-1
Paperback: 978-2-940443-30-7
E-book: 978-2-940443-31-4

WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

© WWF-CANON / ELMA OKIC

Yolanda Kakabadse
President
WWF International

WWF's 50th anniversary is a moment to pause and celebrate the contributions of the millions of people across more than 100 countries who have and do support our work – through the strength of their efforts, by spreading the word and as a result of their generosity. Whether rangers, scientists, politicians, teachers, industrialists or just concerned people, without their help, enthusiasm and financial support, WWF could not have achieved what it has. This Golden Jubilee is their celebration, too, and they have our sincere thanks.

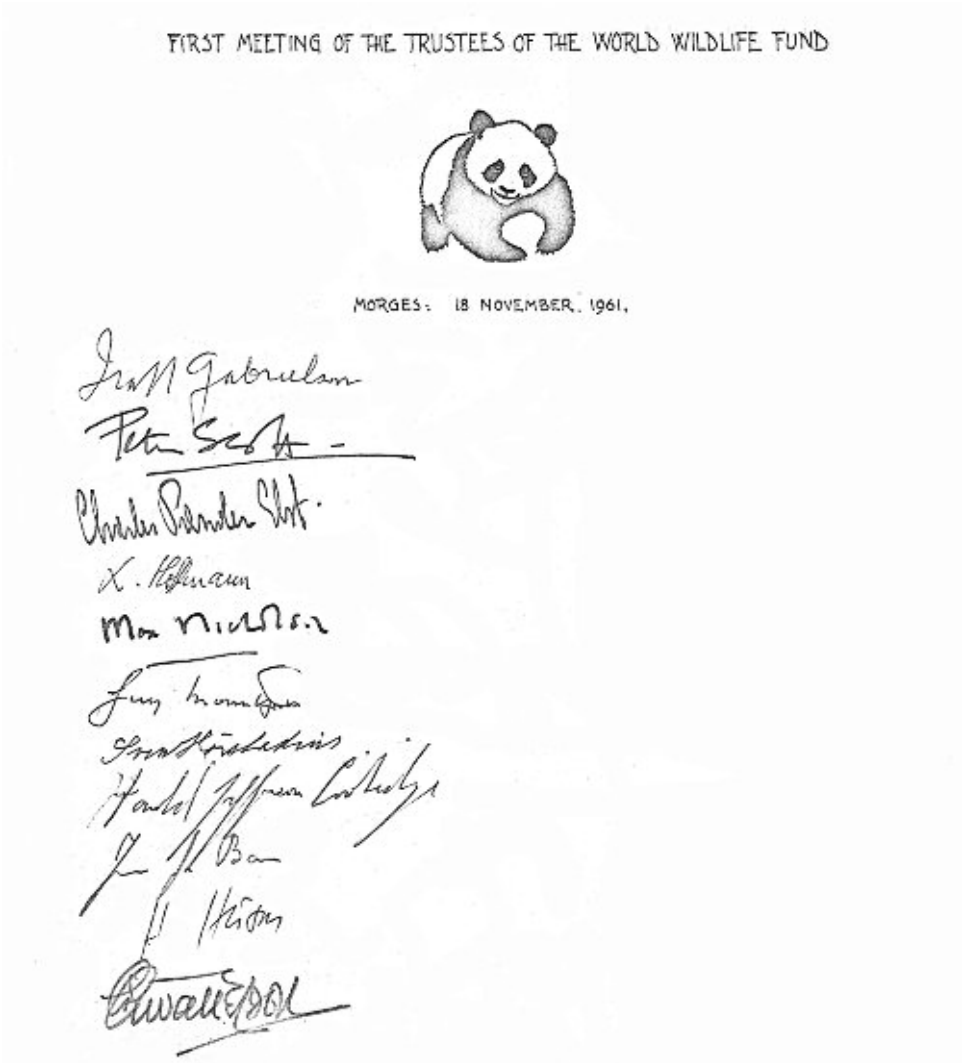
WWF supporters and the dedicated people who make up our network of National Organizations, Programme and Country Offices spanning all continents bring different perspectives and points of view to our work. Together they provide WWF with its unique strength as a truly global conservation organization.

It is this diversity that has, does and will help WWF address the pressing issue of our time: how humanity adjusts to a sustainable way of life. There is no single solution, no silver bullet. Rather there is a range of routes and ways that together can bring about the change we need to live within the resources of our planet. There is immense strength and wisdom in this diversity, which we value and from which we all can learn.

In the time I have had the honour of serving as President of WWF, I have been impressed by the organization's ability to listen, learn and evolve. Although WWF has come a long way in its 50 years, it has never lost sight of the vision of our far-sighted founders, that conservation must be concerned with the future conduct, welfare and happiness of humanity.

This snapshot of some of the conservation challenges WWF has faced over its lifetime is also a description of how the world has developed since 1961. It shows how WWF tackles the evolving challenges of conservation, how determined all who make up WWF are, and how realistic the organization is.

There is much to celebrate, much to thank others for, but there remains much to be done. This book shows that WWF has no illusions about the tasks ahead, how urgent and important they are, and how much help WWF will need. So let us celebrate today, but return rapidly to our vital work of helping to create a world in which people live in harmony with nature.



Signatories to the first meeting of the WWF Board of Trustees, 18 November 1961, Morges, Switzerland: Ira Gabrielson, Peter Scott, Charles Vander Elst, Dr Luc Hoffmann, Max Nicholson, Guy Mountfort, Sven Hörstadius, Harold Coolidge, Jean Baer (Acting President), Hans Hüssy, G. Watterson.

© WWF-CANON / RICHARD STONEHOUSE

Jim Leape
Director General
WWF International

This year, the year of WWF's 50th anniversary, there is much to celebrate. More than a billion hectares protected, species including the giant panda and the great whales brought back from the brink of extinction, forests and fisheries moving towards sustainability, and so much more.

There are the concepts that WWF worked to embed in the world's consciousness – sustainable development, biodiversity and ecological footprint. WWF took these words to a wider world, but more importantly the ideas that lie behind them.

Then there is the recognition of the environment that WWF helped to forge. Back in 1961, we were naturalists, there were no ministers of the environment, no United Nations Environment Programme, no international and precious few national environmental policies or laws.

When WWF set out, it did so on the basis of doing practical conservation, and as it evolved, it became a beacon, demonstrating what could be done and how it could be achieved. Over the years, WWF has more than punched its weight – thanks to the dedicated work of its supporters and partners, governments, the international community and business and industry. And, of course, of its dedicated staff.

This brief account of WWF's conservation work describes some of what has been achieved in the last 50 years. It also charts the evolution of those efforts, the persistent search for new, more potent ways to spur change. Our work in forests illustrates this progression.

Early projects to create individual forest protected areas were followed, in the 1970s, by the first global rainforest campaign, and later by the founding of the Forest Stewardship Council and the Global Forest and Trade Network to ensure that use of forests is sustainable. Governments in the Amazon, the Congo Basin and Borneo were mobilized to protect these green lungs of the world. And now, WWF is working with partners to ensure that forest conservation pays – that communities and governments are rewarded for protecting the forests that provide services on which we all depend – storing carbon, capturing water, and regulating the Earth's climate.

WWF's abiding commitment is to create a world in which people live in harmony with nature. As we enter our second half-century, it is clear we must find even

stronger levers of change. That will mean redoubling our commitment to engaging others in finding the insights and solutions that can help move humanity on to a sustainable path. It will mean demonstrating that success is possible: working with governments and communities to secure lasting conservation of some of the most extraordinary places on Earth – from the Amazon to the Arctic; working with producers and buyers to bring sustainability into global markets. And it will mean enlisting not just millions but billions of people, on every continent, in the urgent cause of building a vibrant, prosperous, sustainable future for their children.

It is a great pleasure for Canon to be able to congratulate its long-standing Conservation Partner, WWF, on its Golden Jubilee. This short book, produced as part of that partnership, provides details of just a few of WWF's conservation achievements. It also demonstrates the determination with which WWF works around the world to generate and integrate actions to promote sustainability.

Canon's environmental commitment is rooted in our corporate philosophy of *Kyosei* or *living and working together for the common good*. Adopted in 1988, *Kyosei* embeds our approach to sustainability across the whole business.

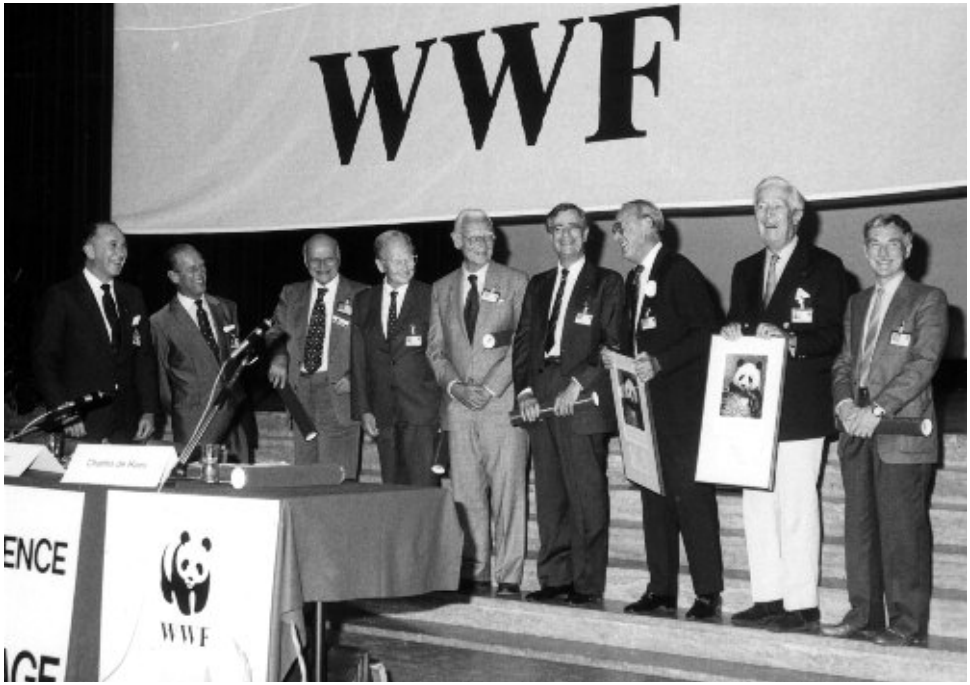
As a pioneer in imaging technologies, we take responsibility for the impacts of our activities on business and on society, and strive to improve our performance in all areas. We aim to reduce our environmental impact throughout the product lifecycle, seeking innovative solutions that enrich our customers' and stakeholders' lives and businesses whilst reducing their environmental impact.

Beyond our own operations, we and WWF have a joint aim to raise awareness of environmental issues and of climate change. One of our partnership projects with WWF has been the launch and digitizing of thousands of images in the WWF photo library. Renamed the WWF-Canon Global Photo Network, this now contains more than 66,000 images, many by world-famous photographers. We understand the power of images to capture the imagination and underline the need for action to preserve the richness and diversity of the natural world.

We also work with WWF to track polar bears in the Arctic and to use the results to help children to learn about climate change. We believe strongly that we must all work together if we are to overcome the environmental challenges our planet and our children face.

We hope this book will inspire you to help build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

Canon



WWF's 20th anniversary, 1981. From left: Charles de Haes, WWF International Director General; HRH Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh, WWF International President; Max E. Nicholson, founder; Sir Peter Scott, founder; Guy Mountfort, founder; Dr Luc Hoffmann, founder; HRH Prince Bernhard, former President; John Loudon, former President; Dr Hans Hüssy, founder.

FIVE DECADES OF CHALLENGE AND ACHIEVEMENT

From its origins in the concerns of a small group of committed naturalists, WWF has grown into one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, supported by over 5 million people and active in more than 100 countries. Over the years, WWF's focus has evolved into an ambitious strategy to preserve biodiversity and achieve sustainable development across the globe. This brief summary illustrates its evolution, made possible by partnerships with a broad range of scientists, park managers, local communities, businesses and, of course, the generosity of our donors. But all at WWF remain aware that in conservation, only failure is permanent, and that our mission to help bring about a world in which people live in harmony with nature demands constant vigilance in the face of ever-changing challenges.

1960s

In its first decade, WWF raised more than US$5.6 million – an enormous sum in the 1960s – through popular fundraising appeals that, for the first time, brought conservation into the public arena. Based on the best available science, this money was distributed as grants to support 356 conservation-related projects around the world – from wildlife surveys through anti-poaching efforts to education. Many of the animals and habitats supported by these early grants went on to become iconic symbols of conservation, and continue to be a focus of WWF's work.

1970s

While it remained focused on species and habitat preservation throughout the 1970s, WWF's approach began to change: instead of providing more-or-less *ad hoc* support to individual projects, it began encouraging more comprehensive conservation efforts for entire biomes as well as species across their entire range. As part of this, WWF stepped up its engagement with governments and international environmental treaties and started to tackle some of the drivers of environmental threats.

1980s

By its 20th anniversary, WWF had helped found protected areas on five continents covering 1 per cent of the Earth's surface and contributed to the continued existence of a number of species. However, WWF realized that parks and crisis-led conservation efforts, while important, were not enough. During the 1980s, with an expanded global presence and starting to run its own projects, WWF began to stress that conservation was in the interest of people and needed to be integrated into development, rather than viewed as in conflict with it – an idea first formulated by WWF's far-sighted founders. This laid the groundwork for what we now know as sustainable development, a concept that permeates conservation, development and corporate strategies today.

1990s

The 1990s saw more widespread acceptance of the global links between the environment, human activities and human welfare – as well as the value of biodiversity and the emerging threat of climate change. These issues were explicitly incorporated in WWF's 1990 Mission Statement, and have framed its work ever since. Continuing the move from country-based projects to a targeted and more unified approach, WWF developed a global conservation strategy that focused efforts on the world's most critical ecoregions and on six key issues – species, forest, marine and freshwater conservation, mitigating climate change and reducing the use of toxic chemicals. In addition to its long-standing relationships with traditional conservation partners, WWF also began to engage more actively with business and other new partners, including the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank, to promote sustainable resource management.

2000s

The turn of the century saw WWF vastly upscale its ambition, aiming for transform - ational changes that lead to lasting conservation, sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles. With twin goals of conserving biodiversity and reducing humanity's ecological footprint, the organization is drawing on the combined strength and expertise of its global network to create innovative partnerships that integrate on-the-ground conservation, high-level policy and advocacy, and strategic private-sector engagement. These efforts are particularly focused on globally important areas and species, including vast regions such as the Amazon and animals and plants important both for their habitats and for people, and tackling global challenges like climate change and the sustainability of global markets.

© CHRIS MARAIS / WWF-CANON

© WWF-CANON

Top left: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan with HE Chief Emeka Anyaoku, WWF International President, at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.
Top right: Frtiz Volmar, Director General of WWF International, HRH Prince Bernhard, President of WWF International and Mrs Volmar, 1971.
Below: In Coto Doñana at WWF's 40th anniversary. Standing: Claude Martin, Director General of WWF International and José A. Valverde. Seated: Max Nicholson, founder, José M. Mayorga and Dr Luc Hoffmann, founder.

© WWF-CANON / ISAAC VEGA

Daily Mirror

SHOCK ISSUE SHOCK ISSUE

DOOMED

—to disappear from the face of the earth due to Man's FOLLY, GREED, NEGLECT

UNLESS ...unless something is done swiftly animals like this rhino and its baby will soon be as dead as the dodo. All because of the thoughtless foolishness of the most superior animal on earth—Man himself. The giant tortoise of the Galapagos Islands, the Asian bactrian camel, the Indian elephant, the North American whooping crane, and even the song birds and butterflies of Britain are among the startling number of creatures on the danger list.

There is only one hope for them—symbolised by the lovable giant panda. HE was saved from extinction because Man acted in time. Now the panda is the emblem of a world crusade to beat the 20th century death flood—the WORLD WILDLIFE FUND.

This crusade needs YOUR support. If you don't want the phrase "dead as the dodo" to be replaced by "dead as the rhino," read on:

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE THREE

SHOCK ISSUE SHOCK ISSUE SHOCK ISSUE

The front-page story in the *Daily Mirror*, published in London on 9 October 1961, appeared shortly after the establishment of the World Wildlife Fund. Then, there were 100,000 rhinos in Africa, today there are around 21,000.

PROTECTING AFRICAN ELEPHANTS AND RHINOS

Once, the forests and savannahs of Africa were home to more than a million rhinos. Less than 100 years ago, as many as 5 million elephants ranged across the continent.

In 1961, newspaper articles highlighting the destruction of Africa's wildlife help launch WWF.

But elephants were killed for their ivory, rhinos for their horns – prized as dagger handles and for their perceived medicinal properties. At the same time, people destroyed large areas of habitat, bringing communities into conflict with wildlife, particularly elephants.

For 50 years, WWF has worked with governments and local people to stop poaching, build strong new breeding populations of rhino, improve laws on elephant and rhino conservation and reduce conflict between wild animals and humans.

In southern Africa, elephant populations are now doing well, though in West and Central Africa they remain especially vulnerable. Between 470,000 and 690,000 African elephants survive in 37 countries. Rhinos are also recovering in many landscapes, thanks to projects and work with communities that WWF helps benefit from conservation schemes. Provoked by a new poaching crisis in the early 1990s, WWF started its African Rhino Programme in six range states, which has almost doubled numbers to 17,400 white and 4,800 black rhinos today.

There is real hope for the future of these animals. But the threats have not gone away. A recent upsurge in poaching jeopardizes what has been achieved – driven by a newly growing demand from Asian consumers, particularly in Vietnam, for medicines containing rhino horn. South Africa lost almost a rhino a day in 2010.

The forest elephants in Central Africa are seriously threatened by illegal killing and the ivory trade. WWF and TRAFFIC are working with partners to protect the elephants in the wild, while helping to ensure that both poachers and ivory traffickers are brought to justice.

The recovery of elephants in southern and East Africa is now posing new conser - vation challenges, as more humans and elephants try to co-exist in close proximity. WWF is working to resolve the conflicts that can occur: in Namibia and Kenya, for example, it is helping people benefit from living alongside elephants and rhinos through wildlife tourism.

STOPPING THE SPIRAL OF EXTINCTION

"Hundreds of thousands of people have bought best-selling books and millions have watched films and television programmes about the world's endangered wildlife. Many of these have felt: 'If only I could do something to help!'"

That is what WWF's founders wrote in 1961, and WWF has been fighting the battle ever since. The current rate of extinction is not natural; by this time tomorrow as many as 200 more species will have become extinct. People are the cause – and the threats to wildlife continue. Protecting species and the places they inhabit was one of the reasons that WWF was established 50 years ago, and remains at the heart of all we do. Pandas, for example, have increased to about 1,600 in the wild thanks to WWF's partnership with the Chinese government, which has led to the creation of 62 reserves. Many of the great whale species have been spared from extinction because the campaigns of WWF and other organizations led to a whaling ban.

In 1962, WWF, working with Fauna and Flora International and Phoenix Zoo, took a breeding herd of Arabian oryx into captivity to increase their numbers and then reintroduced them into the wild in Oman 20 years later. Now there are enough mature animals in Oman, Abu Dhabi, Israel and Saudi Arabia for the Arabian oryx – while still highly threatened – to be less at immediate risk of extinction.

In the seas of Baja California, WWF is working to protect the only existing population of the critically endangered vaquita porpoise, the world's smallest cetacean. They are at risk of extinction from becoming entangled in fishers' gill nets where they drown.

By helping priority species, WWF supports countless other species that share their habitats and face the same threats. Today, WWF focuses on 35 priority species, including:

flagship species like tigers and rhinos – iconic animals that inspire people to support conservation

economically important species – such as tuna and teak

ecologically important species – those that play a crucial role in supporting other species or ecosystems, such as corals, cacti and elephants.

In 1962, WWF, Fauna and Flora International and Phoenix Zoo begin their efforts to increase numbers of Arabian oryx.

Protecting the world's species and the places they inhabit is at the heart of what WWF does, and has been for 50 years. Today, WWF concentrates on 35 priority species including elephants, tigers and rhinos – all of concern back in 1961.

© JORGE SIERRA / WWF-CANON

After discovering Doñana's paradise within a very much transformed Europe in the late 1950s, a group of naturalists led a campaign to buy nearly 10,000 hectares of land in southwest Spain. Among them were several of WWF's founders, including Dr Luc Hoffmann, now Emeritus Vice-President of WWF International. They bought the land in 1963 and Coto Doñana was declared a national park by the Spanish government in 1969.

COTO DOÑANA
THE SKYWAY STOPOVER

One of nature's marvels is the annual migration of millions of birds flying along avian superhighways.

In 1963, WWF buys land in the Coto Doñana, a crucially important stopover wetland for migratory birds.

The migratory birds that make the immense journey along the East Atlantic avian flight path between their nesting grounds in Russia and northern Europe down to overwintering sites in southern Africa rely on safe stopovers such as coastal wetlands. But human development has destroyed 60 per cent of the world's wetlands in the last century.

A group of naturalists, including several of WWF's founders led by Dr Luc Hoffmann, now Emeritus Vice-President of WWF International, knew that Coto Doñana on Spain's southern Atlantic coast was a crucially important stopover for hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. Doñana's wetlands and forests are also home to a wealth of other biodiversity, including two of the world's most endangered species – the Iberian lynx and the Spanish imperial eagle. WWF helped buy the land, and in 1969 Coto Doñana was declared a national park by the Spanish government.

Doñana was declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1980, a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1982, and a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1994. Nevertheless Doñana still faces many risks, including farming competing with the wetland for water, a project to dredge the Guadalquivir River, a possible oil pipeline and the effects of climate change. Today WWF is still working with local people there, determined to ensure that Doñana remains a stopover wetland for migratory birds.

WWF has also helped protect other stopovers along this flyway, including South Africa's West Coast National Park, the Wadden Sea off Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, wetlands on the Baltic and the lower Arctic, and in Guinea Bissau and Namibia. Another priority area is the Banc d'Arguin National Park in Mauritania. Here too, Dr Hoffmann played a leading role in protecting coastal wetlands. WWF has also helped protect similar vital stopovers for birds along migration routes in the Americas and Asia.

But wetlands do not just support birds and provide places of stunning beauty. They also act as water storage and treatment plants that ensure clean water both for nature and for human beings.

EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

Education is a first step in changing attitudes. Training is also essential to build the ability of governments, companies and communities to manage resources such as water and forests sustainably. Throughout the world, WWF offices run education programmes both in schools and colleges, and as part of their outreach activities.

Children see the need to change the careless and wasteful way we treat the world. They are among the first to join and get involved with such campaigns as Earth Hour. Sometimes WWF's education initiatives have been incorporated into the national school curriculum – in China, WWF's education for sustainability programme was carried out in almost 600,000 schools, reaching about 200 million children. Or they are in partnership with others – in 1973, WWF developed a worldwide conservation programme for Scouts. Now 80 per cent of the world's 30 million Scouts work towards the World Conservation Badge.

Around 2,500 of the park rangers and wildlife managers in African protected areas have come through WWF's Mweka Wildlife Management College in Tanzania. Since 1963, students from more than 40 countries have been trained.

WWF also runs scholarships for the conservationists of the future. Since 1991 the Prince Bernhard Scholarships have supported 267 people from the developing world across a range of disciplines – from environmental law, journalism and government, to field studies, development and protected area management. Increasingly, scholars are found in government and resource management agencies putting their knowledge into practice. And since 1994, 1,400 people have benefited from the WWF-US Russell E. Train Scholarships, which fund postgraduate and doctoral conservation studies.

In 1963, WWF sets up Mweka Wildlife Management College to train conservation professionals. Education and training are priorities for the founders and essential to many of WWF's achievements.

Each year WWF mobilizes hundreds of volunteers in schemes operating from China to the Netherlands, as well as at WWF International. These encourage young people to take practical action, showing them how to make a difference – both in WWF's projects and at home.

In the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo more than 800 children from 13 schools are learning to plant and look after trees in a project supported by WWF. Now, WWF is hoping to extend the project to 100 schools, reaching thousands of children, their parents and teachers.

A conservation research student radio-tracking brown hyenas in Makgadikgadi Pans, Botswana. Around 2,500 park rangers have been trained at WWF's Mweka Wildlife Management College in Tanzania.

Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, is truly a wonderland, home to a quarter of the world's primate species including around 100 types of lemur. Here, ring-tailed lemurs move along the ground with their characteristic upright tail carriage.

MADAGASCAR'S WONDERLAND

Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, is truly a wonderland. Nine-tenths of its plants are found nowhere else on Earth. The island is home to a quarter of the world's primate species, including around 100 types of lemur. But as recently as 2003, only 3.2 per cent of this island treasure house was protected. Rich areas of ancient forest were being logged and rare species were falling prey to poachers.

In the early 1960s, Madagascar, rich in endemic species but with severely degraded ecosystems, becomes a WWF priority.

WWF has been committed to Madagascar almost since its foundation, working to increase protection and ensure that the magic of Madagascar endures. It has worked with the government and communities to develop a national system of protected areas. In 2003, the Malagasy government promised to more than triple protected areas – to 6 million hectares – to protect some of its most vulnerable habitats.

Madagascar now has 5.2 million hectares of protected land and sea, and is on track to go beyond its original target. Most of the island's species-rich forests will be protected. Good management of the protected areas, however, is essential, so WWF helped mobilize a conservation fund of US$33 million to provide ongoing income.

Protecting Madagascar's biodiversity is important, but people need livelihoods too. Three-quarters of the island's population depends on natural resources to make a living. WWF has been working to support the island's sustainable development, so that its people and nature can thrive in harmony.

Together with local communities and authorities, WWF works to stem the destruction of forests for charcoal and slash-and-burn cutting for cropland. A long-running education programme promotes the sustainable use of the forests, while other initiatives encourage sustainable alternative livelihoods, such as developing fuelwood plantations.

Madagascar's marine life is amazing too: the Toliara coral reef off its southwestern coast is the third largest coral reef system in the world. WWF is supporting a project that will help people in Madagascar, the Seychelles and Mauritius fish responsibly without depleting irreplaceable natural resources.

PROTECTING TROPICAL OCEANS

The world's coral reefs cover less than 1 per cent of our oceans. But they're home to a quarter of all marine life – scientists estimate there could be as many as 2 million species. Known as the "nurseries of the seas", they are where a quarter of fish species begin their lives.

Coral reefs have huge economic value – the goods and services they provide are worth up to US$30 billion a year. Southeast Asia's coral reef fisheries alone land catches worth around US$2.4 billion annually, while Australia's Great Barrier Reef is worth more than US$1 billion a year in tourism. Reefs also protect coastlines, and the communities they shelter, from powerful, sometimes devastating, tropical storms.

Over the years, WWF has worked with the government of Ecuador to create one of the world's largest marine protected areas, the Galapagos Marine Reserve; successfully campaigned to increase protection for the Great Barrier Reef, a third of which is now fully protected; protected 1.5 million hectares along the coast of Mozambique; and with the government of Fiji is creating a network of protected areas for 30 per cent of its seas.

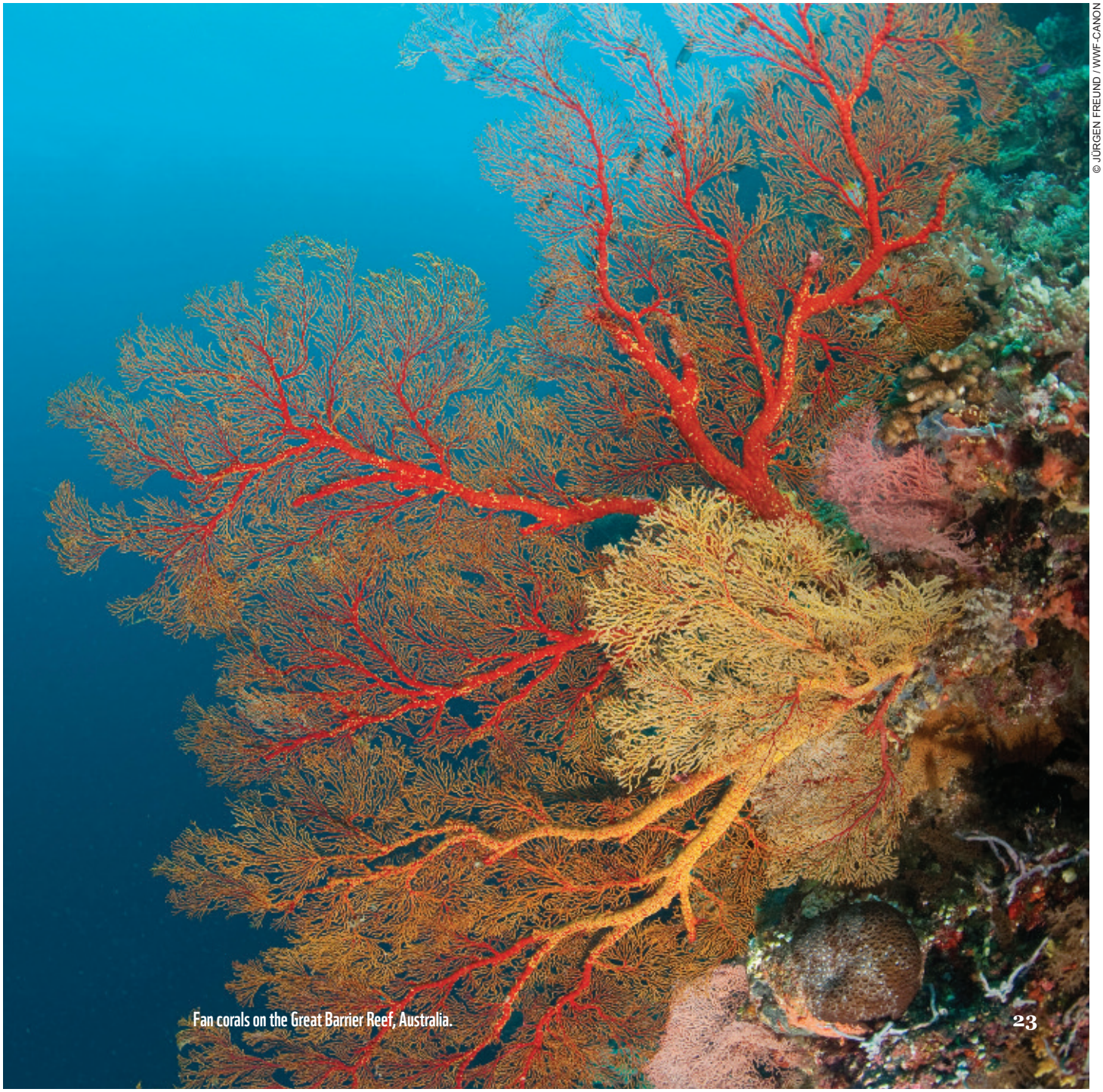
Coral reefs take tens of thousands of years to form, yet we have already lost more than a quarter of them. At the current rate, 60 per cent of the remainder will be destroyed over the next 30 years. In 2010, governments made a commitment to increase protection of the oceans to 10 per cent, though scientists believe we need to protect twice as much to allow marine species to recover. But protected areas alone are not enough. WWF is also addressing the underlying threats facing coral reefs and the life they support by promoting responsible fishing, pushing for action on climate change and helping people make a better living by conserving their natural resources. In particular, WWF is focusing on:

Coastal East Africa – where some of the world's most remarkable coral reefs lie just off the shores of Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya

The Coral Triangle – where WWF is working with the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste to help put ambitious conservation plans into action

West Africa – one of the most productive fishing areas of the world. Keeping the ocean healthy is a priority for fishers and conservationists alike.

In the 1960s, WWF's marine conservation begins with the Galapagos National Park.



Fan corals on the Great Barrier Reef, Australia.

An Indian one-horned rhinoceros, Chitwan National Park, Nepal.

PROTECTING THE TERAI ARC

This landscape of forests and grasslands along the India-Nepal border is home to the most recognizable faces in the animal kingdom: the Bengal tiger, Indian rhino and Asian elephant. Alongside them, nearly two-thirds of the 6.7 million people who live in the Terai Arc own less than a hectare of land, and depend on the forest for food, medicine and fuel.

In 1969, WWF founder Guy Mountfort proposes conservation measures to benefit wildlife and establish new protected areas in Nepal.

With the human population growing rapidly, more forest is being cleared to make way for homes and economic development. But the poorest people suffer, as they lose the natural resources on which they have always relied. At the same time, the animals are seeing their habitat disappear, and are more likely to become targets for poachers. And with habitats shrinking, conflicts between humans and wildlife in this region are increasing.

Since the late 1960s, WWF has helped local communities reduce the impact of their forest dependence and, where possible, shift to livelihoods that do not rely on forest resources. It supported volunteers who plant thousands of trees and patrol to keep poachers away. By providing alternative sources of energy – such as solar cookers, fuel-efficient stoves and biogas – WWF is reducing dependency on firewood. Women say they feel safer now that they do not have to venture into tiger habitat to collect fuel.

People see the benefits in many ways. Some are paid for conserving the forests, or earn money through ecotourism and sustainable community forestry. The health centres, roads and schools WWF helped create and renovate build support for these conservation projects.

Working with authorities and communities, WWF has helped strengthen the management of 11 protected areas joined by special corridors so that wildlife can safely roam between them.

WWF is finding practical solutions to human-wildlife conflict. Mentha hedges are just one example – animals dislike the taste, so farmers grow it around other crops to keep them away. They can also improve their lives by selling the mentha for menthol oil.

With partner communities, WWF is exploring more ways in which everyone can benefit by keeping the Terai Arc's precious forests flourishing.

THE WATERS OF LIFE

Our water supplies are under stress. The rivers and streams, lakes and wetlands we rely on are taking the strain and people are feeling the effects. Currently around 700 million people suffer from water scarcity but, according to the UN, by 2025 1.8 billion people, around two-thirds of the world's population, are likely to be living in areas facing moderate to severe water stress.

Freshwater is renewable, but the amount in the world is finite. Our ever-increasing demands for water from ever more of us – for agriculture, industry, hydropower and household use – are putting rivers, lakes and wetlands under huge pressure. Pollution and the impact of climate change are exacerbating the situation. And all this is having a devastating effect on freshwater wildlife. Species numbers have declined by 35 per cent since 1970 – greater than for those living on land or at sea.

In 1971, led by founder Dr Luc Hoffmann, WWF helped establish the Ramsar Convention, an international agreement to protect wetlands and other fragile freshwater and coastal ecosystems. By 1996, 1,000 wetlands – covering 81 million hectares – had been included on the Ramsar list of Wetlands of International Importance. And WWF's campaigning has helped bring a further 100 million hectares of freshwater areas worldwide under protection – that's an area the size of Egypt.

In 2000 WWF cooperated with the governments of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Moldova to set up a protected green corridor along the lower reaches of the Danube. Ten years on, the scheme covers 1.4 million hectares of wetland – much more than the original target. And in June 2008, the government of the Republic of Congo declared the 5.9-million-hectare Grand Affluents wetland – the world's second largest, at the confluence of four tributaries of the Congo River – protected under the Ramsar Convention.

Now WWF is working to improve the way river basins are managed, focusing on ten of the planet's most important rivers. A big part of this is making agriculture more water efficient, transforming the way thirsty crops such as rice and sugarcane are produced.

In 1971, WWF is instrumental in establishing the Ramsar Convention that protects the world's wetlands.

Climate change will have a big impact on rivers and wetlands, bringing unpredictable rainfall and increased flooding. Our work under the HSBC Climate Partnership is helping four of the world's major rivers – the Amazon, Ganges, Yangtze and Thames – withstand the effects of climate change, making a huge difference to the lives of the hundreds of millions of people who rely on them.

In 2000, WWF cooperated with the governments of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Moldova to set up a green corridor of protected areas along the lower reaches of the Danube. Ten years on, the scheme covers 1.4 million hectares of wetland – much more than the original target.

Once, 100,000 tigers roamed across Asia; as recently as the 1980s, there were 20,000, but today just 3,200 remain in the wild.

KEEPING TIGERS ALIVE

WWF's 1972 Operation Tiger was the first-ever global campaign to save a species across its range. One of its first outcomes was the launching of India's Project Tiger, where a six-year national conservation plan and 15 new tiger reserves saw the country's tiger population increase by 30 per cent in just seven years.

In 1972, WWF launches Operation Tiger. This demonstrates that it is possible to change the fate of a threatened species.

Nonetheless, in the 20th century the world has lost 95 per cent of its tigers. Once, 100,000 roamed across Asia; as recently as the 1980s, there were 20,000, but today perhaps 3,200 remain in the wild. Habitat destruction and poaching have pushed them to the brink of extinction. Tigers have lost more than 90 per cent of their habitat and three of the nine subspecies known to exist in 1900 – the Bali, Javan and Caspian – are now extinct, while a fourth – the South China tiger – hasn't been seen in the wild for more than 20 years. Without urgent and continuing action, this magnificent beast could be virtually extinct in the wild by 2022, the time of the next Chinese Year of the Tiger.

In 2010 WWF helped convene a summit meeting in Russia of the leaders from 13 countries that still have tigers in the wild. Roared on by more than 250,000 WWF supporters online, they agreed to an ambitious plan to reverse the tiger's decline. The leaders, backed by scientists, governments and institutions worldwide, have adopted a goal of doubling tiger numbers by 2022.

The plan to save tigers is based on:

protecting and connecting tiger habitats – WWF is seeking to protect tigers, their prey and habitat across 12 large-scale landscapes

clamping down on poaching and eliminating the illegal tiger trade that drives it – WWF is working with TRAFFIC to halt the trade in tigers and reduce demand for tigers and their body parts

increasing political will, commitment and funding – WWF has already committed to spend US$50 million on tiger conservation over the next five years, with a goal of increasing this to US$85 million.

It has been done before: in the Russian Far East in the late 1940s, only around 40 Amur (Siberian) tigers remained in the wild. But, in part due to WWF action, today there are around 400. That gives us hope.

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Humans and animals are living closer together than ever before – with people expanding ever further into wild spaces. This might mean sharing your back garden with a monkey or, much more dramatically, facing an elephant or tiger.

Some large mammals simply no longer have the space to roam and find food. When this happens, crops and livestock can seem an easy meal. When people and wildlife clash, it can cause injuries, damage property and cost lives on both sides.

Rural communities can lose entire harvests overnight to a herd of elephants – often in poor areas where people can least afford to lose food. WWF has helped communities come up with practical ways to protect their property that harm neither animals nor humans. WWF's work to resolve human-wildlife conflict has ranged from keeping cattle out of protected areas to the use of chilli, mint or tobacco to deter elephants from crops and providing sheep dogs to guard against wolves.

WWF has also created alternative water points for wildlife to stop them using human supplies, used tame elephants to drive their wild counterparts from fields, and introduced the concept of livestock insurance schemes, so people whose animals are killed by wild animals can be compensated from within the community.

Managing these conflicts helps people view wildlife as an asset rather than a threat. In Namibia, for example, WWF has successfully set up community-based wildlife tourism companies, so local people can benefit from living alongside elephants and lions.

In some cases, human-wildlife conflicts are also a symptom of conservation success: for example the numbers of elephant and predators such as lion and cheetah have grown rapidly in southern Africa, meaning they are more likely to come into contact with people. And the problem is likely to increase.

WWF is always seeking new ways to resolve these conflicts, and sharing the techniques that work with communities around the globe. It is a practical way of progressing in WWF's mission to help people live in harmony with nature.

In the early 1970s, WWF's initiatives to prevent human-wildlife conflict include keeping cattle out of protected areas in parts of Asia and Africa.

In Nepal, WWF introduced the idea of mentha (mint) farming in order to reduce human-wildlife conflict: the animals do not like its smell and stay away. It also increased the farmers' income by allowing them to grow crops around the year.

Today, more than 35 million hectares of the Arctic is protected from mining, oil drilling and other threats.

THE ARCTIC

The Arctic is a unique and fragile ecosystem and what happens there directly affects the rest of the planet. That is why WWF has made protecting it, and the animals that make it their home, a priority. As the Earth warms up, the melting of Greenland's ice sheet will lead to rising sea levels. And global warming in the Arctic may release huge reserves of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, potentially speeding up the effects of climate change.

In 1973, WWF is involved in convincing the six Arctic countries to sign a treaty to protect polar bears.

Back in 1973, WWF helped convince the five governments of the region to sign a treaty to protect polar bears. Controls on hunting were so successful that ten years later the number of bears in Norway had doubled. At the same time WWF worked to protect habitats and other wildlife, such as walruses and bowhead whales. Now, more than 35 million hectares of the Arctic is protected from mining, oil drilling and other threats.

Today, climate change, which is more dramatic at the poles, is the biggest threat facing the Arctic and its wildlife. WWF is researching its effects on the Arctic ecosystem, and how it, and the communities living in the region, can adapt and survive. This research is also informing international action on climate change.

"Species like polar bears represent the Arctic ecosystem, which is responsible for moderating global climate," says Geoff York, who co-ordinates WWF's work on polar bears and other Arctic species. "Conserving these species and their habitat helps protect us all from a warming climate. Arctic species are also a critically important aspect of indigenous cultures, essential to the food security of those living in the region.

"Polar bears depend on summer sea ice to hunt seals. But as the world warms and the ice disappears, scientists estimate that two-thirds of polar bears could be wiped out by 2050.

"Recently, WWF successfully lobbied Arctic governments to recognize climate change as the primary threat to the survival of the polar bear. These governments, including the United States of America, are now responsible for taking a lead on reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. They have publicly committed to the conservation of a species that depends on it."

Overall, WWF is working with governments, companies and communities to reduce their impact on the Arctic. Arctic animals need both time and space to adapt.

SAFEGUARDING TURTLES

From being illegally traded to being caught and killed in fishermen's nets, marine turtles – different species of which are found in seas from the tropics to the Arctic Circle – face a variety of threats to their survival. Six of the seven species of marine turtle are considered endangered or critically endangered.

Throughout the world, from Turkey to the Guianas and from East Africa to Australia and the Coral Triangle, WWF works with governments and coastal residents to create protected areas around feeding grounds and nesting beaches. And WWF has played a part in banning the international trade in turtles and reducing turtle deaths in fishing gear.

It started in the 1970s with beach patrols, helping to protect some of the world's most critical nesting sites for olive ridley, green and leatherback turtles in the Guianas, and awareness campaigns. Since then, WWF has helped create protected areas where fishing is banned, and encouraged countries to work together to protect turtles. These efforts have led to encouraging increases in the numbers of some species of marine turtles – although the work is far from done.

More than 250,000 turtles are caught accidentally each year – so WWF is promoting turtle-friendly fishing gear that spares them. In 2009, WWF convinced the Philippines government to convert its entire longline fishing fleet to using these special circle hooks, which will save the lives of thousands of marine turtles every year. And WWF is encouraging other countries to follow Philippines' lead.

WWF is also tackling the illegal trade and overexploitation of turtles for meat, eggs, shell, leather and curios. Turtle eggs are stolen to be eaten, turtle shells used to make handicrafts, and they're hunted for their meat. In Costa Rica, among other places, WWF has been working with local communities to provide opportunities for former egg poachers to become community rangers, dramatically reducing illegal egg collecting. And in the Coral Triangle WWF is targeting the illegal trade in marine turtles, both by improving enforcement of laws and protection of areas where turtles live and by targeting the key trade hubs and markets in Asia.

WWF's work on marine turtles begins in the 1970s in the Guianas, with beach patrols protecting olive ridley, green and leatherback turtle nesting sites.

WWF is also fighting to protect 17 critical nesting sites along the Mediterranean coastline. With its partners, the organization is working to predict how climate change may affect nesting beaches, and to put action plans in place to address this.

Six of the seven species of marine turtles are endangered. So WWF works around the world with governments and coastal residents to create protected areas around turtle feeding grounds and nesting beaches.

The golden lion tamarin was in danger of extinction as a result of its habitat being destroyed. With the help of local communities, WWF has brought it back from the brink, and is now working to restore its native Atlantic forests.

BRAZIL

From the amazing Amazon to sublime savannahs, WWF has worked for nearly 50 years to preserve Brazil's awe-inspiring variety of life. Brazil is developing fast but the needs of its wildlife and ecosystems are often at odds with the country's economic development. The world's largest rainforests, grasslands and wetlands have all come under huge strain over the last few decades.

In 1975, WWF urges the government of Brazil to protect the golden lion tamarin.

WWF is working to ensure that Brazil's economic development does not happen at the expense of its priceless natural resources. A campaign in the 1980s helped bring the golden lion tamarin back from the brink of extinction by drawing attention to the loss of its habitat, the Atlantic Forest.

In the Brazilian Amazon, WWF has helped to more than double the area of rainforest under protection over the last decade, creating more than 25 million hectares of national parks and nature reserves – an area the size of the United Kingdom.

Cattle ranching and the growing of soy are two of the biggest causes of deforestation in the Amazon and other parts of Brazil. Since 2003, WWF has worked with organic cattle ranchers in the Pantanal, the world's largest wetland and home to a staggering variety of plants and other wildlife, and today around 100,000 head of cattle are raised on land that is managed organically.

In the state of Acre, WWF is supporting local efforts to preserve forests and promote sustainable development. It is helping communities make a living from forest resources including rubber and Brazil nuts. People who agree to conserve the forest also receive payments for the ecological services it provides, including the storing of carbon in healthy forests. WWF's aim is to save 1 billion trees and protect around 3 million hectares from deforestation.

The Brazilian government has also agreed to protect the 200-million-hectare Cerrado – an area rich in biodiversity and crucial for freshwater supplies – which is threatened by economic development. Over two years, the government plans to invest US$200 million in this woodland-savannah the size of Greenland. The aim is to develop sustainable land use, reduce forest loss and ensure continuity of ecosystem services such as the provision of freshwater by creating 2.5 million hectares of new protected area and securing 5.8 million hectares of indigenous peoples' territory.

HEALTHY HIMALAYAS

One in five people on Earth depends on the freshwater that flows from the Himalayas. But it is a fragile area. Climate change and environmental damage could put the water supplies of more than a billion people under severe strain. That is one reason why protecting the world's largest mountain range is so important.

Water is not the only important thing found in the Himalayas. The area is a treasure trove of biodiversity, and charismatic endangered species including the tiger, Asian elephant, greater one-horned rhino, red panda and snow leopard call it home. The landscape also carries important spiritual and cultural significance for the region's people.

Since creation of the Sagarmatha National Park in the mid-1970s, WWF has been active in this area, especially in helping local communities develop within the limits of their environment. In the 1980s, the Annapurna Conservation Area Programme was set up to support local people with education and income-generating activities. This helped reduce poaching, illegal plant harvesting and pressure on forests. In 2006, a key development saw the government of Nepal hand over management of the Kangchenjunga Conservation area to a local council, which bodes well for the future as communities take on responsibility for their environment.

Climate change is likely to lead to major changes in freshwater flows, unpredictable rainfall and increasingly severe floods, droughts and other extreme events – with dramatic impacts on biodiversity, people and their livelihoods.

WWF is working with the governments of Bhutan, India and Nepal – as well as local communities – to protect forests, animal habitats and freshwater sources. In 2011, the three governments are expected to pledge to create a 7-million-hectare mosaic of conservation areas across the top of world. Almost half the area is already formally protected, and the plan is to expand and connect these areas. Stretching 1,500km from Nepal across Bhutan to Arunachal Pradesh in northeast India, the complex will help maintain freshwater sources and forest habitats to heal and provide a haven for wildlife. It will also help the region withstand the impacts of climate change.

WWF begins work in the Himalayas in the mid-1970s.

By 2020, WWF wants to see all river systems in the region managed in a way that allows them to adapt to climate change. It is working towards this through projects including the HSBC Climate Partnership in the Ganges and Yangtze river basins.

WWF is working with the governments of Bhutan, India and Nepal – as well as local communities – to protect forests, animal habitats and freshwater sources.

The illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products is a serious threat to the survival of many species including tigers, elephants, gorillas and rhinos.

THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

KILLED ... elephants for their tusks, gorillas as a speciality dish, tigers and rhinos for body parts that are prized for their perceived medicinal value. The illegal trade in threatened species is comparable in value to the illegal drugs trade.

In 1976, WWF and IUCN create TRAFFIC to monitor sales of wild animals, plants and wildlife products.

Right from the start, WWF has worked tirelessly to stop it. Along with habitat destruction, illegal killing is still the biggest threat to the survival of many species – for some animals, such as tigers, perhaps the biggest threat of all. And it is devastating for local communities as the criminal gangs that run the trade are often involved in running guns and dealing drugs.

The legal trade needs to be monitored too. Most animals and plants can be traded legally – but if overexploited their survival could be at risk.

WWF supported the establishment of the first ever international agreement to control the trade in threatened species. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) came into force in 1975. Today it regulates trade of 30,000 different endangered plant and animal species across 175 countries. Perhaps its greatest success has been the trade in crocodile skins. When CITES came into force, trade in wild crocodiles was rampant and many species were endangered. Now the bulk of the trade is in farmed crocodiles.

But regulations need to be enforced, and keeping an eye on trade in far-flung places is a huge challenge. In 1976, together with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), WWF created TRAFFIC, an initiative to monitor sales of wild animals, plants and wildlife products. Today, TRAFFIC operates from more than 20 offices around the world. It has helped reduce the illegal trade in wildlife products ranging from rhino horn, ivory and tiger parts to tropical birds, fish and timber.

With TRAFFIC, WWF is working to strengthen judicial processes in many countries and to ensure that national and international laws keep pace with changing trends in wildlife trade. And WWF uses cutting edge science to inform its recommend - ations to CITES, push for stronger protection where needed, and allow controlled trade when it does not threaten a species' survival.

Everyone can help by asking questions before buying to make sure that jewellery and holiday souvenir purchases do not come from endangered plants or animals.

PROTECTING THE HIGH SEAS

The high seas, the oceans beyond national boundaries, make up half the Earth's surface area. Outside the control of any individual country, they are the responsibility of all states. They host an incredible array of wildlife, much still undiscovered, from the largest animal that has ever lived on Earth – the blue whale – to tiny plankton. Environments include acrid smoking vents and deep-sea coral reefs that are home to some of the strangest creatures imaginable.

WWF's Seas Must Live campaign was the first global initiative to promote marine conservation worldwide. Since then, WWF has played a key role in measures to improve marine conservation and management, to counter pollution, improve shipping practices, promote sensible coastal zone development, stop pirate fishing and establish marine protected areas.

Most recently, in 2010, after four years of campaigning, the world's first protected area on the high seas was created off the South Orkney Islands in the Southern Ocean. Fishing and dumping rubbish from fishing vessels is banned in this new protected area, which covers about 9.4 million hectares, an area slightly larger than Portugal.

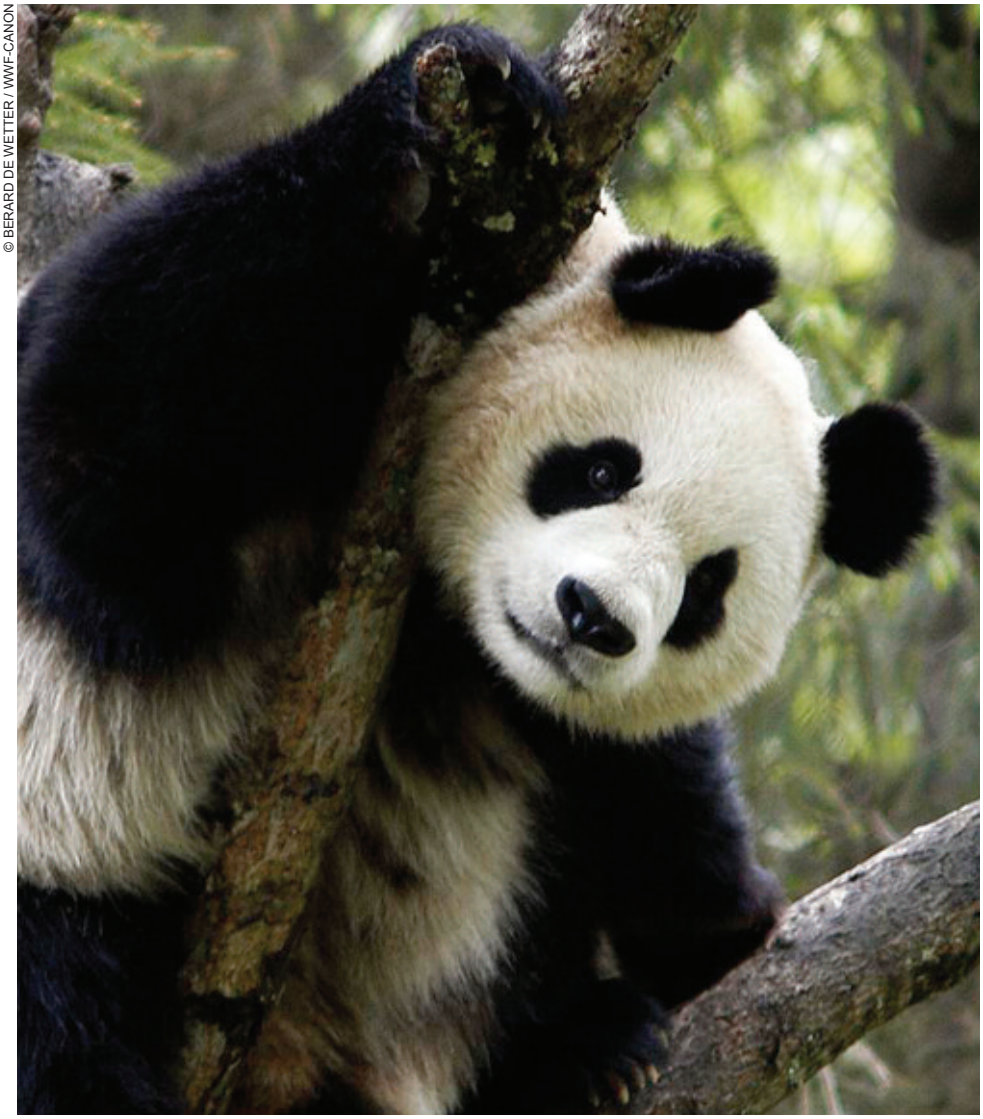
It is a hugely diverse region, with more species than the Galapagos Islands. They include Adelie penguins, many of the great whales and several species previously unknown to science – all of which will now be better protected.

Since then, another five high seas protected areas covering 29 million hectares have been created around the mid-oceanic ridge and seamounts in the Northeast Atlantic. Bottom trawling, which destroys marine habitats such as corals, is banned in these areas.

In 1977, WWF launches the Seas Must Live campaign to raise awareness about threats to the marine environment, and to promote the creation of marine protected areas and the protection of key species including whales.

These new marine protected areas are a huge step forward – but still just a first step towards looking after the high seas. WWF is determined to see much more of the open ocean safeguarded in this way in the years ahead, and with rigorous management of all activities. The world desperately needs a network of well-managed protected areas, covering every type of marine ecosystem, to help safeguard the rich and diverse wildlife of the high seas. This will be a key first step to achieving the effective governance of the high seas, and will help move more than half the planet's surface towards sustainable management.

A wandering albatross flying over the South Atlantic.



Since 1980, the number of giant pandas living in the wild has increased to more than 1,600.

WORKING WITH CHINA

Linked by the iconic giant panda, WWF and China go back a long way. WWF first cooperated with Chinese scientists and governments in 1980 and was the first international conservation organization to work in the country, at a time when the panda's future looked bleak.

Starting in 1980, WWF is the first international conservation organization to work in China.

WWF helped the Chinese government set up protected areas for pandas linked by green corridors. Three out of four pandas now live in these nature reserves and by 2015 there will be 3 million hectares of protected forest for them. Today, there are 1,600 giant pandas in the wild; back in 1980, there were thought to be only 1,000.

The forests where the giant pandas live also play a role in regulating the flow of water and nutrients in the Yangtze River. WWF has been working to restore the Yangtze and manage the whole river basin sustainably – creating a network of nature reserves across 2 million hectares of wetlands, and linking 40 lakes back into the river.

But in a world that already consumes more resources than nature can provide, a crucial question for the whole planet is how the Chinese economy continues to develop while using natural resources wisely and maintaining a healthy environment. "China has the opportunity to lead in a new direction by creating a development model that sustains natural systems, within the country and abroad," says Jim Leape, Director General of WWF International, "and WWF is helping in some key areas."

WWF is continuing large-scale efforts to restore and conserve the unique biodiversity and natural systems of the Yangtze river basin. This includes the vital services – such as drinking water and flood protection – that the ecosystem provides. And WWF research into China's ecological footprint is helping bring sustainability into government policy.

WWF has launched a programme to help Chinese cities put together low-carbon development plans. By 2012, at least 20 cities will be taking part.

Chinese banks play a key role in financing development all over the world. WWF is advising several banks, with assets of more than US$10 trillion, on ways to invest that will help China – and the planet – develop sustainably. WWF is also working with the banks and the government to develop guidelines to reduce the environmental impact of China's imports of raw materials, particularly those from Africa.

FIVE DECADES OF INNOVATION

Today, world leaders make commitments to conserve wildlife, and governments have environmental policies as a matter of course. Corporations devote time and money to reduce their environmental impact and WWF has played a key role over five decades to make this the norm.

Through campaigns and debate, WWF has worked for 50 years to convince the world's governments to take conservation seriously. In 1980, together with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the United Nations Environment Programme, it published the *World Conservation Strategy*, highlighting the importance of using natural resources sustainably and the benefits of conservation for people. The report gave birth to the concept of sustainable development – one that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Ever since, WWF has worked to put this into practice.

Limited funding and competing needs compel the conservation community to prioritize its resources. In 1995, WWF research identified the Global 200 ecoregions, representative examples of all of the world's ecosystems, as well as those areas that contain exceptional concentrations of species and endemism. Effective conservation of these ecoregions would help ensure a future for the most outstanding and representative habitats for biodiversity on the planet. WWF regards these as its last line of defence.

Since 1998, WWF has provided governments, businesses and individuals with biennial indicators of the health of the Earth's biodiversity and humanity's ecological footprint. The *Living Planet Report*, produced with the Zoological Society of London and the Global Footprint Network, demonstrates why WWF is working urgently with governments around the world to promote a green, sustainable economy.

Engaging with industry is essential if the world's natural resources are to be managed sustainably. WWF has set standards to improve operating procedures in key industries – for example, by establishing the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). Now WWF's Market Transformation Initiative is targeting the 100 companies that can have the biggest influence on the way key commodities are produced, particularly in such places as the tropical forests of the Amazon, the Congo Basin and Indonesia.

WWF, together with IUCN and UNEP, launch the *World Conservation Strategy* in 1982. This highlights the benefits of conservation for people.

The *World Conservation Strategy*, published in 1980 by UNEP, then with Dr Mostafa Tolba as Executive Director (left); IUCN, then led by Dr Martin Holgate (centre); and WWF, with Charles de Haes then Director General (right), highlighted the importance of using natural resources sustainably, and stressed the benefits of conservation for people. It also introduced the concept of sustainable development – a principle that has guided WWF ever since.

A Eurasian brown bear in the forests of Suomussalmi, Finland.

ACTION ON BIODIVERSITY

WWF's biodiversity campaigns of the 1980s introduce the concept of the web of life to a popular audience.

WWF has been at the forefront of establishing the need to conserve biodiversity for more than 30 years. Biodiversity matters. The web of life sustains our very existence. We depend on plants and animals, insects and microorganisms for food and shelter, for medicines and fuel, for clean water and a healthy climate, to pollinate our crops and protect us from floods. But biodiversity is diminishing; WWF's Living Planet Index has tracked its global decline of almost 30 per cent since 1970.

WWF ran a series of international campaigns in the 1980s to highlight the importance of biodiversity – ranging from the giant panda of China to tropical forests, plants and wetlands.

WWF helped secure the most important international agreement for protecting life on Earth at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. One hundred and ninety-three countries have ratified the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), all committed to protecting their wildlife and habitats and ensuring that their use of biodiversity is sustainable.

Having a common international agenda for biodiversity makes it easier for WWF to advocate conservation across national boundaries that nature does not recognize. For example, in Eastern Europe, WWF brought governments together to expand and strengthen a network of protected areas across the Carpathian mountains, Europe's last great wilderness. Stretching across seven countries and five times the size of Switzerland, the Carpathians contain half the continent's bears, wolves and lynx, and 4,000 plant species. Similar efforts are under way, too, with the governments of the Congo and Amazon basins, as well as in Borneo and the Coral Triangle.

The CBD had set ambitious targets which – although achieving significant results including transboundary conservation, payments for ecosystem services and high seas marine protected areas – failed in their overall aim of halting the loss of biodiversity by the end of 2010. But at the CBD Conference of the Parties in the International Year of Biodiversity, countries agreed on a roadmap to halt biodiversity loss by 2020. They are now committed to protecting 17 per cent of land and 10 per cent of the seas; eliminating harmful subsidies; and integrating the services biodiversity provides society within national planning and accounting.

WWF will be holding them to their promises, and helping put them into action.

NAMIBIA

The deserts and rocky red mountains of Namibia are a place of stark beauty. Half a century ago, this vast area was rich in charismatic wildlife.

But during the 1970s and 1980s, a huge rise in poaching caused a dramatic fall in wildlife numbers. Drought and military occupation meant the prospects were bleak for the country's people too.

After independence, Namibia passed a law giving communities the right to manage and benefit from their own natural resources. WWF has assisted its Namibian partners to provide training, grants, technical assistance and practical solutions to help communities protect their land and manage it sustainably.

So far, 59 special conservation areas have been created, encompassing 235,000 people while protecting 13.2 million hectares of vital wildlife habitat – effectively doubling the land area under conservation management. And 30 more conservation areas are planned.

In Kunene, elephant numbers have tripled since the early 1980s, while giraffes have increased fivefold. In 1982, Kunene was home to just around 400 gemsbok, 600 springbok and 450 zebra. Now there are some 29,000 gemsbok, 175,000 springbok and 18,800 zebra. The recovery of prey species has led to increases in predator numbers, including lion, leopard and cheetah.

The conservation areas bring in more than US$5.5 million a year, and the communities that manage the land benefit from jobs ranging from services supporting ecotourism to gathering ingredients for upmarket perfumes. And because everyone benefits from preserving the region's amazing animals, poachers are no longer welcome. WWF is taking ideas developed in Namibia to Zambia, Mozambique, and even Mongolia and Nepal to inspire more people to play their part in creating a sustainable future in which everyone is better off.

Success also brings challenges. Increasing numbers of wildlife – especially predators such as lion and destructive animals such as elephant – bring people into conflict with these animals. WWF has developed techniques to help communities live alongside wildlife, to protect their crops, buildings and themselves without having to use harmful methods.

WWF began working with communities to stop poaching in Namibia in the 1980s.

Gemsbok in Namib-Naukluft Park, Namibia.

A recent debt-for-nature swap has released US$85 million for conservation in the Congo Basin.

FINANCING CONSERVATION

Long-term conservation – protecting the species and habitats that make up the natural world, and safeguarding the services and benefits they provide to people all over the planet – is really an investment in a sustainable future. But it involves ongoing cost.

In the 1980s, WWF pioneers debt-for-nature swaps as a means of financing large-scale and long-term conservation efforts.

WWF was created in 1961 to mobilize funds for conservation, and its individual supporters remain critical to its conservation work. More than 5 million people support WWF worldwide, providing more than half WWF's income.

WWF has developed innovative ways of financing long-term conservation. In the 1980s, for example, it developed debt-for-nature swaps – agreements allowing developing countries to redeem foreign debts by investing in conservation. These have funded, for example, conservation in the Amazon and Congo Basin, and the preservation of peat forests in Sumatra, while a recent swap between France and Gabon will provide US$85 million for the management of protected areas in the Congo Basin.

WWF developed the first conservation trust fund in 1991 in Bhutan, and has since led the effort to establish more than 55 funds in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with assets totalling US$1 billion.

WWF welcomed the establishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in 1991, supported by its three implementing agencies: the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme. Since its creation, the GEF has made more than US$9 billion available to protect the global environment and promote sustainable development.

In 1998, WWF formed an important alliance with the World Bank to jointly fund action to achieve targets for the sustainable management of forests and the creation of new protected areas.

WWF has also established a number of long-running partnerships with the majority of the development agencies of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries and the European Union as well as with multilateral institutions including the Asian Development Bank. These partnerships have supplied almost US$2 billion over the course of the last two decades for projects and programmes supporting conservation and sustainable development.

THE MIGHTY MEKONG RIVER

The Mekong is a natural wonder. It is a landscape where tigers roam and where more than 1,000 species new to science have been found in the last decade. At its heart is the river, flowing nearly 5,000km from its source in the heights of the Tibetan plateau in China, passing through Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam before running into the South China Sea.

The Mekong touches the lives of more than 300 million people from over 100 ethnic groups. It is the largest inland fishery on the planet, accounting for around a quarter of the world's freshwater catch – worth more than US$3 billion a year – and providing a livelihood for 60 million people. Four of the planet's six largest freshwater fish are found here, including the biggest of all, the Mekong giant catfish which can weigh up to 300kg. Other species include the threatened Irrawaddy dolphin – fewer than 100 are found on the river in Laos and Cambodia.

WWF has more than 30 years' experience working along the length of the Mekong, addressing the threats of dams, overfishing and climate change. Working with local people, WWF has promoted sustainable fishing to help balance current and future human needs with wildlife. These projects help communities earn a better living by managing their aquatic resources sustainably. WWF is also making use of the knowledge and experience of rural communities in developing national and regional policy and management strategies.

But the river is under threat. Proposed new dams will prevent many migratory fish species from reaching spawning grounds, threatening the fishing industry and a hugely important food source. Changes to water and sediment flows in the Mekong Delta are a long-term threat to both people and biodiversity, too.

WWF is calling for a ten-year delay in making a decision on the dams so that the consequences for the region can be properly examined. To meet immediate energy demands, WWF is promoting sustainable hydropower projects on selected tributaries of the Mekong River, giving priority to those that are already compromised by infrastructure development. This would allow the Mekong countries to meet their energy needs while keeping the Mekong River free-flowing and maintaining the many benefits it provides.

In the 1980s, WWF begins work to conserve the length of the Mekong.

The Mekong river basin is the largest inland fishery on the planet, providing a livelihood for 60 million people. As a source of water and food, it touches the lives of more than 300 million people from over 100 ethnic groups.

In 1994, virtually the whole of the Southern Ocean – a vital whale habitat – was declared a whale sanctuary, thanks to the lobbying efforts of WWF and many other organizations.

THE MAGNIFICENT WHALES

The whale is one of our planet's most magnificent creatures. But over the last two centuries whales were hunted for their meat and oil. By the early 1980s, uncontrolled whaling had pushed several species to the point of extinction. The world's great whales, including blue, fin, sei and humpback, had been almost totally wiped out. WWF founder Peter Scott was determined that the mass extermination had to stop.

In 1986, WWF plays a key role in the Save the Whale campaign, which leads to a global moratorium on commercial whaling.

Save the Whales, in which WWF played a key role, is one of the best-known conservation campaigns. It eventually led to a global moratorium on commercial whaling, which came into effect in 1986. Then, in 1994, thanks to the lobbying efforts of WWF and many other organizations, virtually the whole of the Southern Ocean was declared a whale sanctuary – vital whale habitat that linked up with another whale sanctuary in the Indian Ocean. And in the late 1990s, WWF helped convince the governments of France, Italy and Monaco to create the Ligurian whale sanctuary covering 8 million hectares between the coasts of northern Corsica, northwest Italy and southwest France.

Today, some great whale populations, such as the humpback, are recovering. But six of the 13 great whale species are still classed as endangered or vulnerable. And despite the ban on commercial whaling, some governments allow the killing of whales for scientific research – with the meat from these scientific catches going straight to the supermarket. Around 1,000 whales are killed for scientific research annually. WWF strongly opposes this and is making efforts to ensure the recovery of all whale populations.

These magnificent animals face other dangers, including pollution, entanglement in fishing gear, being hit by ships, suffering depleted food sources due to overfishing, and disruptive noise from oil and gas exploration and development. The impact of climate change on whales and their habitats is complex and not yet fully understood.

WWF is still working with others to ensure a future for whales: in Chile, efforts are ongoing to protect nursery and feeding grounds for blue whales; in Canada, WWF helped change a shipping lane in the Bay of Fundy to protect critically endangered North Atlantic right whales; and in Russia, WWF lobbied to get an oil pipeline rerouted away from the feeding area of western gray whales.

KEEPING THE FAITH

The wonders of creation are an inspiration for billions of people around the world. Looking after creation lies at the heart of all the world's major faiths. Sacred sites are the world's oldest protected areas, and care and compassion for the natural world are an important part of religious teachings and traditions.

Faith is the foundation of personal and cultural identity for billions of people around the globe – many of whom find spiritual inspiration, and answers, in nature. By encouraging religious leaders to use their influence for the good of the environment, WWF is helping to engage a powerful and willing force for sustainability.

On its 25th anniversary in 1986, WWF brought together leaders from five major religions in Assisi, Italy, to explore their understanding of the environment, the threats it faces and how faith informs a notion of stewardship. Each faith developed a statement on its relationship with the environment – the Assisi Declarations. This led to the creation of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), which now includes 11 major faiths.

Over the years, ARC has worked with the faiths to mobilize strong environmental commitments. For example, members are developing international standards for forests owned by religious groups, building on the principles of the Forest Stewardship Council. In Kathmandu in 2000, leaders of the major faiths made further conservation commitments including, for example, Mongolian Buddhist leaders reintroducing a centuries-old ban on hunting snow leopards and saiga antelope, both endangered species; and in Lebanon, Maronite leaders promising to protect the sacred forest of Harissa.

At Windsor Castle in November 2009, in the presence of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and WWF President Emeritus HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, the faiths launched 31 long-term action plans for sustainable living. They include: caring for endangered species; promoting renewable energy; looking at how their investments can help the environment; sourcing organic food; addressing waste; promoting environmental messages in their schools and services; and lobbying governments and companies to take better care of the environment.

As part of its 25th anniversary celebrations in 1986, WWF brings the leaders of five world faiths together in Assisi to explore their understanding of the environment.

At least 20 other faith groups, including the Mongolian Buddhists, the Russian Orthodox Church and 16 Muslim and Christian traditions in sub-Saharan Africa have been inspired by this to create their own far-reaching plans, and WWF and ARC expect this number to increase.

Interfaith banners in the Basilica, Assisi, at WWF's 25th anniversary in September, 1986.

Alberto Mancariapa, president of the Huachipaeri Indian Community, Santa Rosa de Huacaria, Peru, explains the effects and uses of medicinal plants to schoolchildren.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

One of the most significant lessons WWF has learned over its 50 years is that conservation works best when local communities actively participate. Rather than protecting nature from people, WWF looks for practical solutions that allow humans and other species to thrive together.

In 1991, WWF sets up the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) in partnership with the African Wildlife Foundation and Fauna and Flora International.

In 1991, WWF helped set up the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) in partnership with the African Wildlife Foundation and Fauna and Flora International. IGCP helps authorities manage a cross-border network of protected areas, and has helped develop mountain gorilla tourism. This provides jobs for local people as tour guides or park rangers. Some tourist revenues go back into the communities, helping to fund conservation work as well as new infrastructure and enterprises such as tree plantations. And it's not just nearby villages that benefit. As a popular tourist attraction, mountain gorillas boost the whole economy.

All this gives local people a powerful incentive – and the means – to protect the gorillas and their habitat. And it is working: despite severe civil unrest, mountain gorilla numbers have increased in their main refuge in the Virunga National Park along the borders of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda in eastern Central Africa. A 2010 census recorded 480 gorillas in the area, an increase of 100 since 2003.

In Tanzania, WWF has helped coastal communities look after their fish stocks in a sustainable way. Local fishers are now responsible for confiscating fishing equipment that damages the environment and collecting fees for fishing licences – providing them with an extra income while conserving their own livelihoods.

WWF has encouraged ecotourism in Donsol in the Philippines, where visitors flock to see schools of whale sharks. Communities benefit – and so do the fish and other marine species, as local people conserve their largest asset.

Arunachal Pradesh, India, is one of the only regions in India where indigenous people control their own forest regions. WWF has been working with them to create Community Conserved Areas, helping people preserve their way of life, and benefiting species such as red pandas that live in the forest.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is real, it's happening, and all the available science suggests it is going to become more extreme. It threatens WWF's work of the last 50 years and its hopes for the next 50. Plants and animals that have adapted to their environment over thousands of years are vulnerable to even slight changes in temperature and rainfall. Countless species could become extinct and entire ecosystems, such as coral reefs and large areas of tropical rainforest, could disappear.

WWF was one of the first organizations to understand the threat of global warming and to push for action to address it. It fought hard to ensure that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change included the key objective of keeping greenhouse gas levels within limits that "allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change". WWF has also worked with individual countries to push for stronger commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And WWF is working to minimize the impact of industry by promoting renewable energy. Through WWF's Climate Savers programme, 25 leading companies have already saved more than 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, equivalent to the annual emissions of around 2.5 million people.

However, each of us has a part in avoiding climate catastrophe. Earth Hour, for example, encourages people to make changes in their own lives – from buying energy-efficient appliances to understanding the impact of the food we choose.

In negotiations to reach a new climate agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol, WWF is pressing for solutions that will help the world reduce and withstand the impacts of climate change. These include:

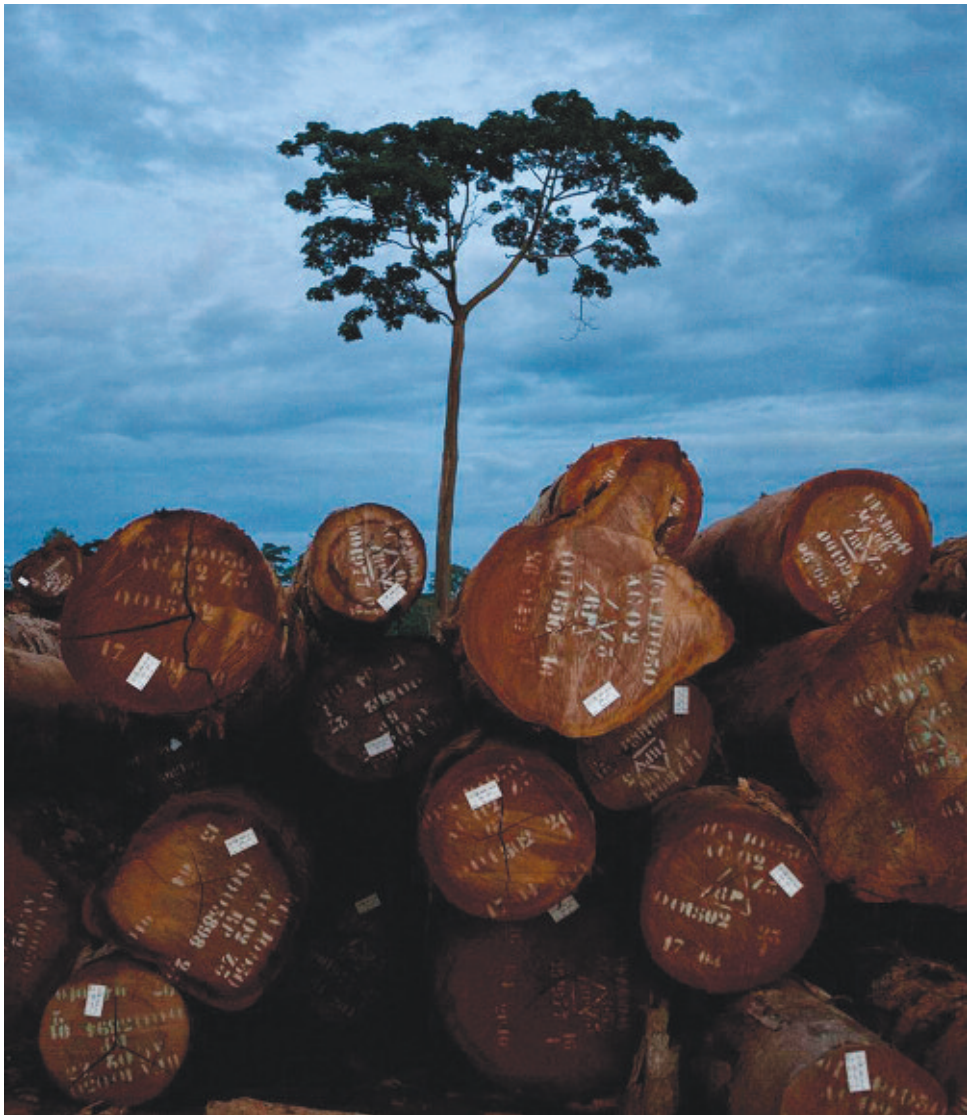
transforming the energy sector – we urgently need to start using energy more efficiently and generating it cleanly. By 2050, WWF is pressing for a world powered entirely by renewable energy – WWF's *Energy Report* shows that this can happen

ending deforestation – clearing forests is responsible for around 15 per cent of global carbon emissions. WWF's goal is for zero net deforestation by 2020

climate adaptation – climate change is already happening and, whatever happens with global emissions, significant further changes are inevitable. WWF is developing strategies to help vulnerable communities, species and natural systems cope.

At the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, WWF lobbies to ensure that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is introduced.

Climate change is real, it's happening now and is most extreme at the poles and in mountain regions. Countless species could become extinct, and even entire ecosystems could disappear.



WWF helped found the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in 1993. Today, 10 per cent of all forest products traded meet FSC standards, which not only assure sustainable forest practices, but also protect the rights of indigenous people and local workers.

USING FORESTS WISELY

Forests are cradles of life. In tropical regions they harbour around four-fifths of all land species, and they help regulate the climate and maintain our soils and water supplies. Forests directly support the livelihoods of around 1.6 billion people and we all rely on them for the air we breathe and the countless products they provide. But we are destroying forests at an alarming rate.

In 1991, WWF begins working with governments, international bodies, trade unions, and other non-governmental organizations to create the Forest Stewardship Council.

In the early 1990s, WWF campaigned to stop the timber industry destroying and degrading the world's forests. "Back then, businesses didn't think the environment was their concern," recalls Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud, who led WWF-UK's work on forests at the time. But in September 1991, British DIY chain B&Q committed to buying only legal, sustainably produced timber, and by the end of that year, 16 other large UK companies had committed to sourcing their timber products from well-managed forests.

But WWF needed a way to turn these commitments into reality. So in 1993, WWF helped form the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to certify timber and wood-based products that meet high environmental and social standards.

For a forest to be FSC certified, independent inspectors check that it meets strict criteria. All trees that are cut down have to be replaced or allowed to re-grow naturally, and parts of the forest must be left untouched. The rights of indigenous people must be respected, and local workers employed on a decent salary. Often, companies support other social services, such as schools and clinics. Now, a tenth of forest products traded globally meet FSC standards.

Today, WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network has grown from B&Q's conservation leadership into a global partnership of 275 retailers, producers, community groups and other organizations within the forest industry supply chain. Members are committed to safeguarding forests and the communities, economies and ecosystems that depend on them.

WWF believes that some areas of forest need to be protected from any commercial logging. It also supports responsible forestry alongside protected areas to help conserve the world's most important forests and the species that inhabit them.

EUROPE'S WILD SPACES

Centuries of development mean that Europe has lost much of its biodiversity. But wild spaces remain that are vital for nature, and for people.

Back in 1992, WWF supported a far-reaching European Union (EU) initiative to protect Europe's wild places. This ambitious project was called Natura 2000. Its aim was to create a network of protected areas across Europe, with all species and natural areas represented to help secure their future survival.

Today, following huge efforts by WWF offices and other non-governmental organizations throughout Europe, 26,000 sites covering close to 100 million hectares across all 27 EU member states are now protected. The project covers almost a fifth of Europe's land area, making it the largest network of protected areas in the world.

But a key challenge is to add outstanding areas still not adequately protected and, above all, to ensure that the EU governments properly manage the areas they have made a commitment to protect.

WWF also wants Natura 2000 to expand to include Europe's marine areas. That way, the creatures that live in Europe's seas can enjoy the same kind of protection as wildlife on land.

Together, Europe's citizens can make sure that its special wild places remain special, and continue to provide the services on which they rely, for years to come.

WWF supports the European Union's 1992 initiative to create a network of protected areas.

Piatra Craiului National Park, Transylvania, Southern Carpathian Mountains, Romania.

Temperate and boreal forests are a source of timber and paper products and home to many species, from trees and flowers to birds and butterflies, wolves and bears.

PROTECTING TEMPERATE FORESTS

In 1992, WWF launches *Forests in Trouble*, drawing attention to the plight of temperate forests across the world.

The temperate and boreal forests of the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania help absorb greenhouse gases, are a source of timber and paper products, and provide jobs for many people. They are also a home for many species, from trees and flowers to birds and butterflies, wolves and bears. But huge areas of temperate forest have been destroyed. And poor management means that many forests no longer support the variety of life they used to harbour.

WWF has worked with governments, timber and paper companies, retailers and consumers to preserve these habitats by ensuring they are managed sustainably. And as well as working for sustainability, WWF protects forests that are important for biodiversity conservation from any development. Russia, for example, now has 68 official forest conservation areas covering more than 43 million hectares – an area larger than Germany.

In Canada, WWF has won permanent protection for 1,000 parks, wilderness areas and nature reserves, doubling the country's safeguarded spaces. Indeed WWF has helped create more conservation sites in a decade than had been established in the previous century. A WWF campaign in the 1990s encouraged Canadian state governments to add 39 million hectares of new protected area, vastly improving the representation of the country's different ecosystems, habitats and species in the national protected area network.

And in forested landscapes between protected areas, Canada now has 40 million hectares certified under the Forest Stewardship Council as well managed – more than any other country and over a quarter of the global total.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MEXICO

To hibernate successfully, monarch butterflies need just the right temperature – not too hot and not too cold – and protection from predators. It is a very fine balance, found only in the oyamel fir forests of Michoacan and Mexico State. The vast majority of monarchs spend the winter in just 10 or 12 sites, but most of these areas are very small, covering less than 1 hectare each.

Outside observers didn't discover the monarch butterfly's Mexican colonies until 1975. By that time, loggers were already moving into the area. Protecting these forests is essential if we want to preserve one of the marvels of nature and improve the livelihoods of the communities living there.

But there's much more to Mexico than butterflies. From deserts and forests to the world's second-largest coral reef, Mexico boasts a vast range of habitats. Scientists estimate it to be home to 10 per cent of the world's plant and animal species. For more than 20 years WWF has worked with the government, local communities and the private sector – led by a partnership with Mexican mobile phone company Telcel – to stop deforestation, restore forest cover and improve the livelihood of local communities.

As deforestation is often the result of economic and social factors, WWF is supporting community projects such as tree nurseries, reforestation and sustainable tourism. WWF also supports the Monarch Butterfly Conservation Trust Fund, which provides incentives for local communities to protect and restore the monarch's winter habitat.

WWF recently joined the government of Mexico and leading businessman Carlos Slim to create the Alianza Mexico, a conservation initiative to protect natural resources and promote sustainable development in six key regions covering a third of the country.

Sustainable water use is another priority for the programme. In a dry landscape, water is vital for survival. When too much is used for farming, it leaves wild plants and animals and local people without an essential lifeline. WWF is collaborating with the government and the main water users, including farmers and the drinks industry, to promote sound water management, securing water for use in the local environment.

In the 1990s, WWF starts conservation of monarch butterfly habitat in Mexico.

Monarch butterflies swarming in the oyamel fir forests of Michoacan, Mexico.

WWF and Unilever established the Marine Stewardship Council in response to the 1990s fisheries crisis.

CHAMPIONING SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

In 1996, WWF and Unilever set up the Marine Stewardship Council to promote sustainable seafood.

The collapse of the Newfoundland cod fishery in the early 1990s, affecting 40,000 Canadians and costing the Canadian government US$3.9 billion in reparations and social assistance, was a wake-up call for the global fishing industry – and fish lovers. It signalled that there are not always more fish in the sea. Today, 85 per cent of the world's fisheries are in danger. As more than a billion people rely on fish as their main source of animal protein as well as for their livelihoods, this is a very serious situation.

WWF responded to this fisheries crisis by cooperating with Unilever, then the world's biggest purchaser of frozen fish, to create the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in 1996. An independent non-profit organization, the MSC is now the world's leading certification and ecolabelling programme for sustainable seafood. It works with fisheries, seafood companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote the best environmental choices in seafood.

Fifteen years on, more than 100 fisheries are MSC-certified – that is, managed in ways that aim to ensure fish are available now and into the future while minimizing damage to the wider environment. This means that today 40 per cent of wild-caught salmon and almost 50 per cent of prime whitefish are fished responsibly. Worldwide, more than 8,000 seafood products bear the blue fish tick MSC ecolabel, meaning they can be traced back to certified sustainable fisheries. The market for MSC-certified seafood is estimated to be worth more than US$2 billion annually. And many more fisheries are working to achieve MSC standards.

As consumers increasingly demand sustainably caught seafood, MSC-certified fisheries can command higher prices and gain larger market shares. This encourages non-MSC fisheries to improve their practices and seek certification, a knock-on effect in favour of sustainability.

In addition to working with the fisheries, WWF is also building consumer demand for sustainable seafood, and helping stop destruction of the marine environment.

NO POACHING

“A rhino horn in the illegal trade is probably worth 100 times the average annual earnings of a villager,” explains Christy Williams who leads WWF’s work on Asian elephants and rhinos. “That makes poaching a real temptation. It’s no longer man against beast. Today poachers are sophisticated and well-organized criminal networks, using helicopters, night-vision equipment, tranquilizers and silencers.”

Poaching is the greatest current threat to tigers, rhinos, elephants, gorillas and other African and Asian species. It’s a crime and it’s driving species to extinction. Tigers and rhinos are particularly vulnerable, their body parts prized for traditional Asian medicine. For 50 years, WWF has fought to stop this slaughter, tackling poaching and the causes of poaching by training patrols, campaigning for stronger action against the illegal wildlife trade, and helping local communities benefit from living alongside endangered species through wildlife tourism.

White and black rhino numbers in southern Africa have nearly doubled since 1997, when WWF launched its African Rhino Programme. But poaching is on the rise once more, driven by increased wealth in Asia and a demand for exotic or rare species, largely for traditional medicine. In 2010, 333 rhinos were illegally killed in South Africa, threatening the huge progress made over the last 15 years. “In some places in both Africa and Asia we are just holding on,” says Williams, “while in others we are making outstanding progress. We are building camps where rangers can stay, and providing them with everything from communications links to drinking water. Without camps, rangers can’t patrol distant spaces, and that leaves them open to poachers. By having security, wildlife occupying remote areas stays alive.”

Similar steps are needed to protect tigers. WWF is fighting to double tiger numbers in the wild by 2022. But despite official bans on the use of tiger parts in traditional Asian medicine, there’s still a booming black market. “It is possible,” reports WWF tiger expert Joseph Vattakaven, “that we can turn the tables for tigers. As a species they have amazing resilience. Saving tigers is a constant battle and if we stop fighting, we’ll lose the battle.”

In 1997, WWF launches its African Rhino Programme in response to a surge in poaching.

Poaching always has the potential to undermine much of the work WWF has done to protect endangered species. But WWF is determined to use its 50 years of experience to make sure this does not happen.

Since its foundation, WWF has tackled poaching and the causes of poaching by training patrols, campaigning for stronger action against the illegal wildlife trade, and helping local communities benefit from living alongside threatened species.

The Cape sugarbird (*Promerops cafer*) is endemic to the Fynbos region and the main pollinator of protea flowers.

THE CAPE FLORAL KINGDOM

Picture over 9,000 different varieties of plant, from popular ones such as the familiar geraniums and freesias to South Africa's national flower, the magnificent king protea. The unique fynbos – low-lying scrub, shrubs and bushes – that covers the mountains, valleys and coastal plains of the Cape is one of the world's six floral kingdoms. Some of the others span entire continents, giving some idea of just how special the Cape is.

In the 1990s, WWF and the World Bank build a conservation fund to protect South Africa's Cape. Table Mountain National Park is proclaimed in 1998.

Although it covers just 0.04 per cent of the world's land surface, the Cape is home to 3 per cent of all terrestrial plant species – hectare for hectare, its plant life is yet richer and more varied than the Amazon. But its beauty has not protected it from the problems that threaten its future.

The region is in danger from overdevelopment as urban zones sprawl into the countryside, uncontrolled fires wipe out large areas of vegetation and invasive species crowd out native plants. Today, 1,736 plant species are at risk of extinction, while 26 have already been lost. WWF is working with local communities and organizations to address these threats.

In the 1990s, WWF and the World Bank built a conservation fund designed to protect the Cape. By 1998, the Table Mountain National Park was in full bloom. Almost 25,000 hectares of this unique landscape, including the Cape of Good Hope and Table Mountain itself, are now protected.

WWF also brought together the government and local communities to form a special organization dedicated to conservation. The organization is helping to develop a biodiversity economy, promoting activities such as sustainable fynbos horticulture and ecotourism. Already, some 300 landowners have agreed to preserve their land – bringing 130,000 hectares under official protection. The success of Cape Action for People and the Environment (CAPE) proves that conservation brings benefits for the plants, animals and people who live on the land.

The Cape is less than one-hundredth of the size of the British Isles, but is home to more than six times as many plant species. WWF continues to work with the people of the Cape to find practical conservation solutions that benefit everyone. Together we are determined that this astonishing diversity will continue to flourish.

MAINTAINING THE MEDITERRANEAN

Rare and wonderful animals like the loggerhead turtle, as well as more familiar species like tuna, have lived in the Mediterranean Sea for millions of years. A quarter of the species that live here exist nowhere else and, without our help, they could be lost forever.

Many of the Mediterranean's most endangered species live far below the sea's surface. To protect them, WWF helped introduce a ban on fishing at depths greater than 1,000 metres, and also helped to create an 80-million-hectare sanctuary in the Ligurian Sea to protect the area's 18 species of whales as well as its dolphins.

WWF has promoted the creation of new conservation areas where activities such as fishing and tourism are strictly regulated to protect the diversity of marine life. Protected areas in the Mediterranean today cover nearly a million hectares – less than 1 per cent of the surface of the Mediterranean Sea – and WWF is campaigning to expand this to protect the sea's biodiversity.

Early in the 21st century, WWF exposed the scandal behind the serious overfishing of bluefin tuna. An extensive policy and communications campaign has made this Mediterranean fish a global headline, seen as one of the most urgent marine conservation challenges of our time. WWF's work has resulted in reduced catches, smaller fishing fleets, and a better respect for rules – illegal fishing is steadily declining. In parallel, a coalition of global businesses is supporting WWF in calling for a halt to trading in the overexploited bluefin tuna until it shows signs of recovery.

WWF is also concerned for the Mediterranean fishing communities that have caught the bluefin tuna for thousands of years. It is working to contribute new scientific knowledge about the fish's biology and migratory behaviour through a pioneering satellite tagging project, which will improve fisheries management.

The Mediterranean whale sanctuary is established in 1999 to protect both whales and dolphins.

WWF's new Mediterranean Initiative aims to revolutionize Mediterranean marine management. It is promoting ecosystem-based management for all marine resources and the creation of a constituency of sustainable fisheries' communities and marine protected areas to give social and economic value to its conservation goal of at least 10 per cent protection.

A coalition of global businesses is supporting WWF in calling for a halt to trading in the overexploited bluefin tuna until its stocks show signs of recovery.

The forests of the Congo Basin are home to rare butterflies, elephants, our nearest relatives the great apes, and a vast array of other wildlife.

THE FORESTS OF THE CONGO BASIN

Africa has a green heart – forests and rivers, rich in wildlife and natural resources. The Congo Basin is the world's second-largest tropical rainforest, covering an area roughly the size of Europe. These forests support wildlife from rare butterflies to great apes, provide food, water and shelter for 75 million people and store a huge amount of carbon.

In March 1999, WWF helps organize the Yaoundé Summit, a meeting of heads of state from six Congo Basin countries at which the leaders promise to conserve their forests - the Green Heart of Africa.

Their destruction is unthinkable and the effects would be catastrophic: many species, including our closest relatives the great apes, could become extinct. People, already extremely poor, would not have the resources to survive. Climate change would accelerate, leading to further destruction all over the world.

A decade ago the unthinkable looked as if it would become a reality. Illegal and unsustainable logging, compounded by weak forest management, resulted in the destruction of more than 9 million hectares of forests between 1990 and 2000. Wildlife poaching was also rife, threatening species such as elephants, rhinos and gorillas.

It was obvious that something had to be done. In 1999, WWF helped organize the Yaoundé Summit, a meeting of heads of state from six Congo Basin countries. This led to the Yaoundé Declaration in which the leaders promised to cooperate to conserve the forests.

In the last ten years, much has been achieved. More than 10 per cent of the forest is now covered by two massive conservation areas. Another 4.5 million hectares are being managed sustainably under Forest Stewardship Council certification. And at a second summit in 2005, the Democratic Republic of the Congo committed to protecting another 15 million hectares.

WWF is determined to ensure that the Green Heart of Africa continues to beat and remain green – benefiting not only its own people and species, but the whole world. WWF is working with the countries to:

expand the area of protected and certified forest

improve protection for flagship species such as great apes and elephants

ensure new infrastructure, such as roads and dams, is developed sustainably.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR THE WORLD

We all need to start using less and cleaner energy – soon. Generating energy is by far the biggest contributor to the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Energy-efficient appliances often use half the energy of standard products. Just think how much energy we could save if we all switched to them. With that in mind, WWF helped launch Topten (www.topten.info), a website which gives people tips on the most energy-efficient products on the market. Supported by the European Commission, Topten is available in most of Europe, has expanded into China and the United States and will soon cover India, too – reaching hundreds of millions of people who together use two-thirds of the world's electricity.

Because cement production worldwide contributes 5 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions, WWF and Lafarge, the world's largest producer, have partnered together since 2000 to reduce Lafarge's emissions and promote energy efficiency. Lafarge is committed to major reductions and has taken leadership in the sector. Lafarge has since co-founded the Cement Sustainability Initiative which comprises 18 companies, representing 30 per cent of global production.

In 2011 WWF, working with Dutch energy experts from Ecofys, released *The Energy Report: 100% Renewable Energy by 2050*. An ambitious analysis of the world's energy needs, it shows that WWF's vision of a fully renewable energy supply for everyone is both practical and possible. The world already has the necessary technology, and it will actually save everyone money in the long run.

But governments, industry and investors will have to make some brave decisions to support energy efficiency, renewable energy and better electricity grids. All of us are going to need to make some changes to our lifestyle – from turning down the heating or cooling in our homes, shops and offices to thinking about how we travel.

In 2000, WWF launches the Topten guide to energy-efficient appliances.

It is not going to be easy. But by influencing governments, working with manufacturers in China and introducing solar cookers and energy-efficient stoves in rural communities in developing countries, WWF is moving the discussion forward by offering practical solutions.

Wind turbines at the Nysted Wind Park, Nysted, Denmark.

The Amazon still faces threats from clearance for cattle ranching and agriculture, dam and road building, logging and climate change. A partnership led by the government of Brazil has doubled the country's area of protected Amazonian forests to 25 million hectares, and is aiming to add almost as much again by 2015.

KEEP THE AMAZON RAINFOREST STANDING

As the world's largest tropical forest, the Amazon plays a crucial role in regulating our climate. It's also home to one in ten species known to science – scarlet macaws, harpy eagles, giant otters, anacondas, jaguars, manatees, river dolphins and piranhas are just some of the species that live there.

In 2002, WWF helps mobilize a partnership to protect 10 per cent of the Brazilian Amazon.

But the Amazon faces huge threats – from cattle ranching and agriculture, dam and road building, logging and climate change. Without protection, huge areas could be wiped out in a generation. The good news is that 80 per cent of the original forest is still standing and rates of destruction have fallen markedly in the past five years, in part thanks to WWF's efforts. Nonetheless, scientists fear that if 10 per cent more were lost, it could push the Amazon forest to degrade into savannah and grassland, releasing vast amounts of carbon and further destabilizing the world's climate.

Back in the 1970s, the first ever tropical rainforest campaign helped alert the world to the perils the Amazon faced. Since then, WWF has been working to increase protection for the forest and reduce the impact of development. In 2002, a partnership was launched, led by the government of Brazil and assisted by WWF, with the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility, the German Development Bank and others, to protect 50 million hectares of the Brazilian Amazon. To date, more than 25 million hectares of rainforest have been brought under protection, greatly increasing the protected area network. And the partnership is aiming to add almost as much again by 2015.

WWF, with the governments of the eight countries and one overseas territory of the Amazon, aims to forge a chain of protected areas across the entire region in the hope that, ultimately, the forest will be managed as one living entity. To this end, WWF supported the creation of the Alto Purús National Park, linking the Amazon of Peru, Brazil and Bolivia and challenging years of illegal logging and poaching that threatened the area's extraordinary biodiversity, as well as the people who live there.

WWF is also working with the industries that have the biggest impact on the Amazon – including timber and paper, mining, beef and soy – to promote sustainable and lower-impact business models. For example, since 2006 WWF has helped persuade companies not to buy soy from recently deforested land in Brazil. As a result, less forest is being cleared while, interestingly, soy yields have actually increased.

DETOXING THE PLANET

Around 300,000 chemicals are currently available, and 2,000 new ones are launched each year, but little is known about the effect they could have on the environment and people. Some are toxic – causing illnesses including cancer, and upsetting hormonal development. Not all chemicals are harmful, but people need to know for sure which are safe.

Many chemicals eventually find their way into the natural world – into rivers, lakes and the atmosphere. They can travel vast distances so that people and wildlife far away eventually absorb them through food and water. In the Arctic, WWF has found animals and humans with especially high levels of harmful man-made chemicals in their bodies.

Africa is also facing threats from around 50,000 tonnes of unused and unwanted pesticides that litter the continent, polluting the soil and water supplies, and damaging the health of wildlife and people.

In 2001, WWF was instrumental in framing the Stockholm Convention, an international treaty that bans or severely restricts the manufacture or use of 12 persistent organic pollutants (POPs). But WWF did not stop there. The convention was recently expanded by 9 further substances to 21 POPs which are to be phased out or restricted.

WWF also worked over many years to achieve a ban on the use of tributyltin (TBT), used particularly as an anti-fouling agent on ships' hulls. TBT is highly toxic to molluscs, and is known to change the sex of dog whelks at concentrations almost too low to measure. WWF persuaded major shipping companies to stop using it and worked with paint companies to develop safer alternatives. TBT was banned by the International Maritime Organization in 2003.

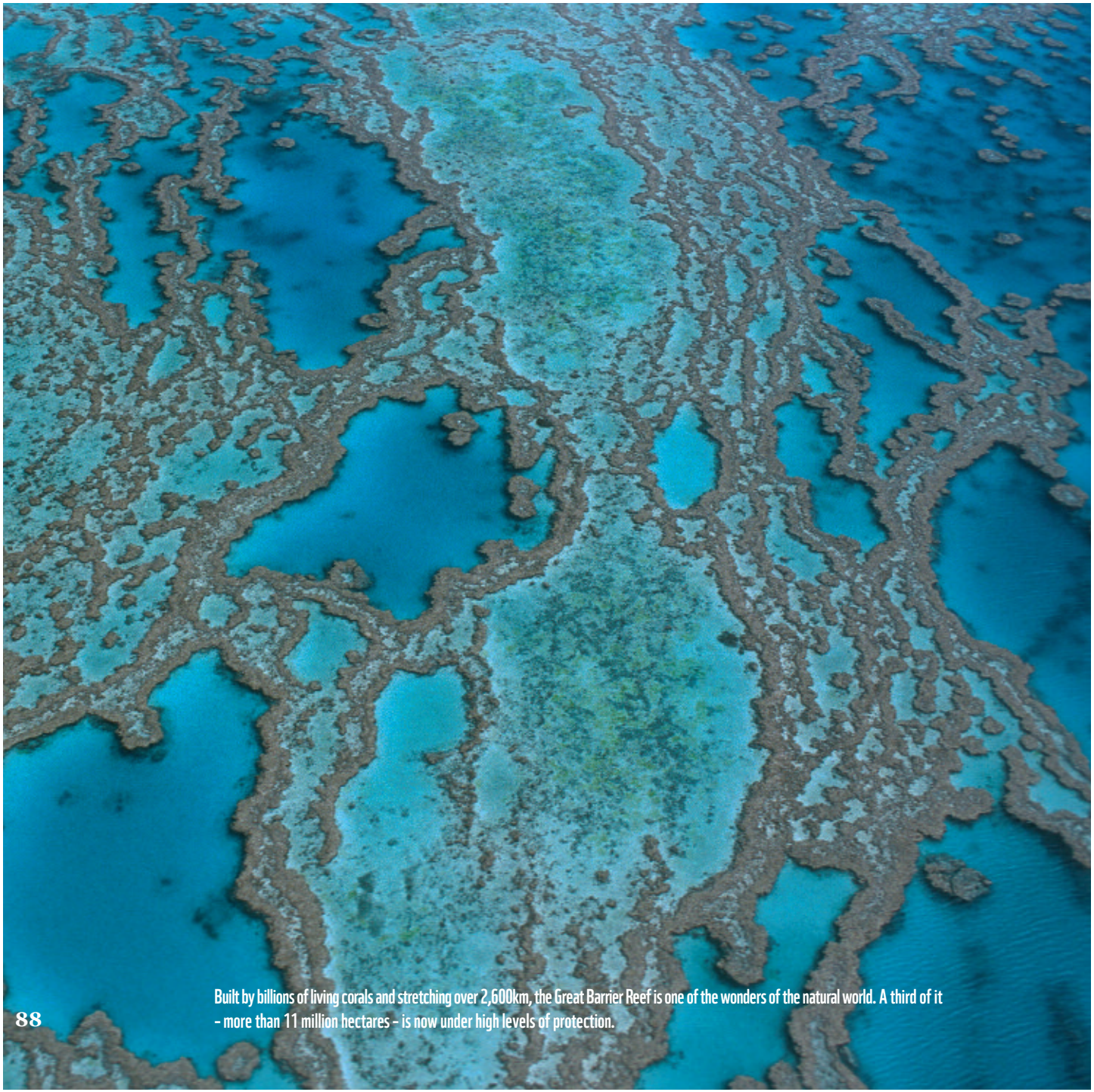
WWF's 2003-2006 DetoX campaign succeeds in making Europeans aware of the lack of safety information on most chemicals that are used in daily life.

WWF's DetoX campaign, which ran from 2003 to 2006, was successful in making European citizens and decision makers aware of a lack of safety information for most chemicals used in daily life. It helped bring about the 2007 EU chemical law, REACH, the strictest law to date regulating chemical substances, which is making global industries clean up their act and influencing chemical legislation globally.

Meanwhile, in Africa, WWF helped set up the African Stockpiles Programme, which aims to clean up stockpiles of at least 50,000 tonnes of obsolete pesticides.

Right: As part of its DetoX campaign, which ran between 2003 and 2006, WWF conducted the first European-wide family blood-testing survey. Blood samples were analysed for man-made hazardous chemicals; the results revealed that every family member was contaminated with a cocktail of at least 18 different man-made chemicals, many found in everyday consumer goods.

Below: Toxic waste barrels dumped in the Aïr-Ténéré Natural Reserve, Niger.



Built by billions of living corals and stretching over 2,600km, the Great Barrier Reef is one of the wonders of the natural world. A third of it – more than 11 million hectares – is now under high levels of protection.

AUSTRALIA'S MARINE MARVELS

Built by billions of living corals and stretching over 2,600km, the Great Barrier Reef is one of the wonders of the natural world that is also hugely important scientifically, culturally and economically. It is a marine paradise, supporting 1,500 species of fish, thousands of molluscs, crustaceans, sponges and sea urchins, six of the world's seven species of threatened marine turtle, more than 30 marine mammals and hundreds of birds. Every year, 2 million tourists come to marvel. And WWF is fighting hard to protect it.

In 2004, WWF's campaigning greatly increases protection for Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

Only a few years ago, less than 5 per cent of the reef was protected. Unsustainable fishing practices, coastal development, pollution and climate change threatened the future of the Great Barrier Reef and marine life in other parts of Australia.

In 2004 WWF led a successful campaign to give the reef the protection it deserves. A third of the Great Barrier Reef – more than 11 million hectares – is now under high levels of protection. It's the world's largest network of highly protected marine reserves, forming part of a larger multiple-use marine park. Already fish numbers are increasing dramatically.

But it is not just what happens at sea that affects the Great Barrier Reef. WWF is currently working to reduce run-off from agriculture and pollution from coastal development that can harm the corals.

Off the coast of Western Australia, WWF has helped to more than triple protected areas on the 260km Ningaloo Reef. Today, more than a third of the reef is highly protected, helping turtles, whale sharks and other marine life. With WWF support, the Ningaloo region was also recently nominated for UNESCO World Heritage listing.

In the Southern Ocean, islands which are vital refuges and breeding grounds for endangered species such as albatrosses have been protected.

WWF is working within Australia, recognized as a global champion of protection of the marine environment, to identify other important areas in need of conservation. One is the Coral Sea outside the Great Barrier Reef itself, a rich marine area that boasts one of the planet's last great concentrations of sharks and rays.

SAVING SUMATRA

The tropical forests of Sumatra are among the richest and most diverse on the planet, sheltering many rare species. They provide livelihoods for millions of people. The peat swamps beneath them are critically important too, storing vast amounts of carbon. But almost half of Sumatra's natural forests have been lost since 1985, for timber and paper and to make room for palm oil plantations. Carbon emissions from this rapid deforestation have also contributed to global climate change.

Sumatra's rhinos, tigers and orang-utans are all critically endangered. As their habitats are destroyed, endangered elephants are forced closer to human settlements. But as they eat crops, people poison and kill them.

Sadly, the illegal wildlife trade is rampant, too. Tigers are hunted for their skins, rhinos killed for their horns, and orang-utan young are taken to sell as pets and entertain tourists.

In 2008, working with national and regional authorities, WWF helped bring about an island-wide commitment to protect the forests. It was an important step to a better way of managing land use, conserving habitats and promoting sustainable forestry.

WWF also helped create the core of the Tesso Nilo National Park to protect critical elephant and tiger habitats, and is now working to expand the protected area.

Much of the palm oil and paper in global markets comes from Sumatra, and huge areas are still being cleared to develop plantations. Through WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network, which links producers, retailers and consumers committed to sustainable forestry, WWF is supporting responsible forest management in Sumatra.

Stopping deforestation is a crucial part of fighting climate change. And that offers hope for Sumatra's wildlife. Indonesia has committed to reducing its emissions from deforestation and degradation. Donors such as the government of Norway are providing funding in exchange for commitments to protect Indonesia's natural forests, including those of Sumatra.

In 2004, WWF helps establish Sumatra's Tesso Nilo National Park.

These schemes have the potential to benefit everyone, slowing climate change, funding Indonesia's development and protecting Sumatra's extraordinary natural riches.

The tropical forests of Sumatra are among the richest and most diverse on the planet, sheltering many rare species including the endangered orang-utan. In 2008, working with national and regional authorities, WWF helped bring about an island-wide commitment to protect the forests.

WWF has published easy-to-use seafood guides to help consumers find out more about the sustainability of the wild and farmed fish they buy.

CUSTOMERS CAN CHOOSE CONSERVATION

When customers ask for sustainably produced seafood, retailers respond by requiring the fishing industry to provide evidence that its catches are sustainable.

In 2004, WWF launches its Sustainable Seafood Initiative in South Africa.

This is why, along with improving fishing practices and stopping the destruction of the marine environment, WWF is building consumer demand for sustainable seafood.

With Unilever, WWF set up the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) to certify sustainable seafood from well-managed fisheries and help consumers make wise choices. But most of the world's fisheries are far from well-managed – 85 per cent of them are in danger – and there is a lack of reliable information, misleading labelling and much ignorance. So WWF has published local fish guides to help. These guides use an easy-to-understand traffic light system:

green – sustainably sourced, recommended
amber – not clearly sustainable, avoid if possible
red – not sustainable, don't buy
no colour – moving towards certification.

Then there is the Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) card and the FishMS service, which lets people text the name of a fish to get information on their mobiles to help make ocean-friendly choices. WWF has received more than 100,000 texts already, with many people using the service when eating in restaurants or buying seafood from the fishmonger. WWF has also seen restaurant chains and retailers getting involved after their customers asked questions. That has encouraged them to source more sustainable seafood.

WWF is particularly concerned about two species – sharks and tuna. Each year, 73 million sharks are killed, mostly for their fins – and this unsustainable demand is growing. WWF campaigns to encourage people to stop buying shark-fin soup and other shark products, and for retailers and restaurants to stop selling them. And, as well as seeking reforms to make tuna fishing sustainable, WWF is encouraging MSC certification for healthy and well-managed tuna populations.

Look out for the MSC ecolabel; buying certified fish means you're doing your bit to support fishers who catch fish sustainably.

RUSSIA'S MAGNIFICENT FORESTS

Russia spans a sixth of the planet's surface – a landscape vast enough for both tigers and polar bears to roam, with subtropical forests and Arctic deserts. There you will find a fifth of the world's forests, and some of the last untouched wilderness left on Earth.

Russia may be famous for its cold climate, but it has got more in common with the world's warmer places than one might think. Just like the Amazon and the Congo Basin, it is home to huge areas of unspoilt forests that teem with life – from tiny insects to wolves, leopards and tigers. Russia's magnificent forests and vast tracts of Arctic tundra also have a vital function beyond their beauty: they absorb and store the carbon dioxide that causes climate change. Letting them be destroyed would be a catastrophe – which is why WWF has worked hard to keep them standing.

For the last two decades, WWF has helped the Russian government safeguard these unique spaces. So far, it has played a part in protecting 68 areas of Russian wilderness covering a total of 43 million hectares – that is an area larger than Japan. In 2005, WWF recognized Russia's achievements as a Gift to the Earth, its highest conservation accolade.

WWF supports sustainable environmental management too. Back in 2000, only 30,000 hectares of Russia's commercial forests were managed with the environment in mind. Today, just ten years on, and thanks in large part to WWF's persistence, about 26 million hectares of forest are certified under the Forest Stewardship Council. That means they are being managed to minimize harm to wildlife and the environment, while maximizing benefits for workers and communities.

Thanks to WWF-supported research, the Russian government recently announced plans for a vast network of protected areas four times the size of Jamaica. Over the next decade, WWF will be working with the government to create nine new national nature reserves and 13 national parks.

In 2005, WWF recognizes Russia's protected area achievements as a Gift to the Earth.

A fifth of the world's forests are in Russia, together with some of the last untouched wilderness left on Earth.

Rivers are wonderful places to relax and reflect. But they also provide precious water for domestic use, farming and industry, help us travel and transport goods over long distances, and are home to everything from dragonflies to dolphins.

LET RIVERS FLOW

Rivers are wonderful places to relax, reflect and gain inspiration. But they also provide precious water for domestic use, farming and industry, help us travel and transport goods over long distances, and are home to everything from dragonflies to dolphins. They are a vital resource for humans and animals alike. WWF is committed to keeping them flowing.

In the 2000s, WWF is pushing for the completion of the UN transboundary river convention.

People are taking more water from rivers than ever before, creating dams, building on banks and floodplains, and polluting them. As the effects of climate change increase, flooding is more likely in some rivers, while others may run dry.

Flowing across northern India and providing a livelihood to over 400 million people, the Ganges is revered by nearly a billion Hindus. WWF has been working towards the sustainable management of the entire river basin to help it withstand threats from hydropower, changing water flows, biodiversity loss, pollution and climate change. The work is now being scaled up and integrated into national plans to restore the river to its former glory.

With WWF's support, some 1.4 million hectares along the lower Danube have been brought under protection, benefiting some of Europe's most outstanding wildlife and the area's 29 million people.

With the governments of China, Russia and Mongolia, WWF has helped to keep the Amur, one of the world's last and longest free-flowing rivers, free of dams and to establish a network of protected wetland areas and conserve forests within the river basin.

WWF has also worked with some of the world's leading companies, including The Coca-Cola Company, HSBC and IKEA, to find ways to reduce the demands industry makes on rivers and to restore river environments.

In 2010 WWF won an agreement to change the water flow through a dam on the Yangtze. Making the flow closer to the river's natural patterns has benefited hundreds of species including the threatened finless porpoise and Yangtze sturgeon.

Twenty-one countries have joined the UN Watercourse Convention that sets standards for sharing waters across international borders. For the treaty to come into force, 35 countries need to ratify it – so WWF is lobbying another 14 countries to come on board.

SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL

Deforestation is never good news, but in biodiversity hotspots such as Borneo and Sumatra it is catastrophic. Species including orang-utans, tigers, elephants and rhinos are losing habitats, threatening their survival. Most palm oil is produced in Malaysia and Indonesia on land that was once rainforest. And as global demand grows, more and more forests are being cleared.

In places like Sumatra the peat soils beneath the rainforest store vast amounts of carbon. But when the forests are felled, this carbon is released into the atmosphere. It is largely because of forest clearance that Indonesia is the world's third highest emitter of greenhouse gas.

Demand for palm oil is likely to double by 2020. WWF has identified non-forest areas where oil palms could be grown, showing that Indonesia has 7-14 million hectares of degraded, abandoned but suitable land – this alone would allow the country to more than double production by 2020. WWF has also identified areas that need to be conserved and is working with governments to strengthen their planning and land-use policies so that palm oil is produced in places where it has the least impact.

In 2004, WWF was one of those who set up the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), an initiative that includes all major links in the global supply chain, to establish international standards for responsible palm-oil production. Producers that show they meet these criteria are able to sell certified sustainable palm oil. That means companies that use it in products as varied as biofuels, lipstick, soap, cooking oil and feedstocks can make the same guarantee to their customers.

China and India are two of the largest emerging markets, and already import around a third of the world's total production. There and around the world, WWF is working with companies that make and sell food, cosmetics and other products containing palm oil, as well as governments, to promote sustainable palm oil, and is encouraging them to:

- become active members of the RSPO
- start buying certified sustainable palm oil immediately
- commit to using 100 per cent certified sustainable palm oil by 2015 at the latest.

In 2004, WWF is one of the founders of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil.

As far as the eye can see, an oil-palm plantation. This was once pristine tropical forest.

A school of blue maomao fish in a marine sanctuary where fishing is banned off the Poor Knights Islands, New Zealand. WWF believes that fishers should take responsibility for the long-term health of the resources from which they benefit.

SAVING THE SEAS

Fishing, especially overfishing, is the single biggest threat to our oceans. Fishing methods such as blasting coral reefs with explosives that damage habitats are still widespread. And each year, millions of tonnes of unwanted, untargeted marine animals are caught in indiscriminate fishing gear. This bycatch – thrown back into the sea dead, dying or damaged – is a huge and unnecessary waste.

In 2005, WWF launches its Smart Gear competition to stop destructive fishing practices and the huge annual losses of small cetaceans and turtles.

More than 250,000 turtles and 300,000 small whales, dolphins and porpoises die each year after becoming entangled in fishing nets – the largest cause of death for these creatures.

WWF's biennial Smart Gear competition challenges the industry to design fishing equipment that is less destructive. A new net design developed for this competition uses the reaction of fish caught in a net to allow juvenile cod to escape, while trapping haddock, the target fish. One United States fishery now mandates the use of this net design to reduce bycatch of juvenile cod.

A hook that is more circular than normal J-shaped ones is being championed by WWF as its use dramatically reduces bycatch of marine turtles. In Latin America 600 vessels now use these circle hooks, and the President of the Philippines has committed the country's longline tuna fishing fleet to using them.

The European Union's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) sets quotas for the amount of fish that may be caught, but it is deeply flawed: because of its regulations, some European fishing fleets discard up to 60 per cent of their catch. The CFP is being reviewed in 2012 and WWF is campaigning for policies and practices that make sure fisheries are managed sustainably.

Another WWF target is illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing – essentially pirate fishing. This is estimated to involve landing 11-26 million tonnes of fish each year, between 10 and 22 per cent of global catches.

WWF also campaigns for a reduction in Atlantic bluefin tuna fishing, at least until stocks recover. For other tuna fisheries, WWF helped set up the International Sustainable Seafood Foundation, which brings together 70 per cent of the world's canned tuna industry to look for ways to make fishing more sustainable.

VIRTUAL WATER IS REAL WATER

Take a cola or a cold beer – only a fraction of the water involved actually goes into the bottle. Most of it is used to grow the sugarcane or barley these drinks are made from. Or that smart phone: from mining the essential minerals to washing microchips, it has a substantial global water footprint. And it could have taken more than 20,000 litres to produce your t-shirt. This is the unseen or virtual water we all consume every day.

The amount of freshwater available is finite, but demands grow year by year. From farmers in Pakistan to CEOs in the United States, WWF is helping people to use water more responsibly. With WWF's support, the Better Cotton Initiative is working with farmers to grow cotton with less water. In Pakistan, WWF has worked with 40,000 cotton farmers who, as a result, have reduced their water use by 38 per cent while increasing their income. They also used 47 per cent less pesticide and 39 per cent less chemical fertilizer.

That is good for them, for other communities downstream, and for the fish, birds and other creatures that depend on rivers and wetlands. Global brands have embraced the scheme: IKEA, for example, plans to switch to 100 per cent Better Cotton by 2015. "By exclusively using Better Cotton, we will save the equivalent of 326 years of Sweden's drinking water each year," says Guido Verijke, IKEA's home business leader.

WWF wants to see farmers and businesses – large or small – become more than just efficient water users. It wants them to help look after entire river basins. That means cooperation between governments, communities, other businesses and WWF to safeguard the ultimate shared resource: water.

WWF supports the Better Sugarcane Initiative – bringing together farmers, retailers, investors and traders to reduce sugar's environmental impact

WWF champions water footprints – measuring the total amount of water used in goods – and is working with leading companies to reduce their footprint

WWF is a trusted voice – in settings such as the World Economic Forum and the United Nations WWF helps ensure that the needs of ecosystems are considered, and encourages governments and companies to put the principles of good water stewardship into practice.

2006 sees the launch of the WWF-IKEA Better Cotton project in India.

Everything we eat, use and drink either contains water, or water has been used in its manufacture. WWF advocates the wise use of water everywhere and is currently developing tools to help improve the ways in which water is managed around the world.

The governments of Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia committed to conserving around 22 million hectares of Borneo's rainforest.

THE HEART OF BORNEO

Borneo has breathtaking biodiversity in its still vast forests. Scientists have discovered an average of three new species there every month for the past 15 years. Orang-utans, pygmy elephants, rhinos and clouded leopards share the forest with more than 600 bird species and 15,000 types of plant. But large swathes of its forests have been cut down for timber and to make way for oil-palm and paper-pulp plantations.

In 2007, with WWF support, Borneo's governments commit to conserving its rainforests, the Heart of Borneo.

WWF's long-lived determination to halt the destruction of Borneo's forests had a major breakthrough in 2007. The island's three governments – Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia – made a joint declaration committing to conserve around 22 million hectares of rainforest, the Heart of Borneo, through a network of protected areas and sustainable forest management.

Since then, plans for the world's largest oil-palm plantation to be carved through the forest's heart have been scrapped, as has a road network that would have destroyed much of the intact forests. Logging has been stopped in 260,000 hectares of forest where endangered orang-utans live, and more commitments are in the pipeline.

In 2011, WWF has been working with the three governments of Borneo and other partners to develop a roadmap towards a green economy. WWF wants to see governments, businesses and communities properly value Borneo's natural resources, work to conserve biodiversity, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and stop deforestation, while at the same time fostering green economic growth.

To support this, WWF is demonstrating that responsible forest management is good for business, as it protects the resources on which businesses rely such as timber and water. In Indonesia's East Kalimantan province in eastern Borneo, WWF is working with companies to promote the use of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) sustainability principles to manage their forest concessions so as to connect important protected areas and safeguard river catchments.

And WWF is not just concerned about the plants and animals threatened by the destruction of Borneo's forests. Nearly a million indigenous people depend on the forest for food and shelter, and WWF is working to help them preserve their ways of life, too.

FOREST CARBON

Forests are home to a wealth of biodiversity, with up to half the world's known species living in tropical rainforests. They are invaluable for people, as a source of livelihoods for more than a billion of the world's poorest and a home to indigenous communities who rely on forests for their well-being. But, crucially, they are also vast repositories of carbon.

It is not only nature and local people that suffer when forests are lost. Their destruction is one of the biggest sources of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change – the third largest source of carbon emissions after the burning of fossil fuels, with deforestation and forest degradation responsible for up to a fifth of the world's greenhouse gas emissions each year. The world urgently needs to reduce emissions to avoid the extreme consequences of climate change – from flooding to drought and food shortages to species extinction. Conserving forests is a crucial part of this.

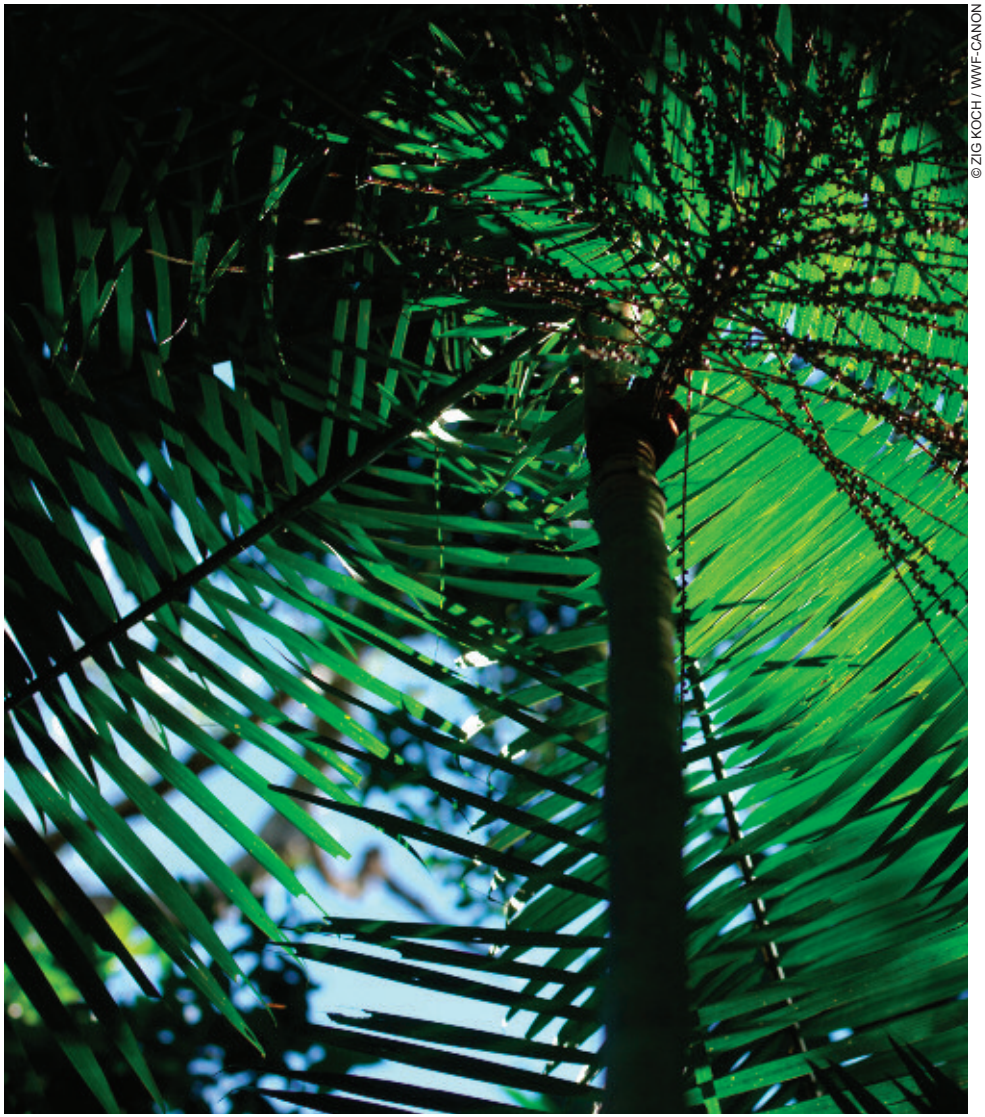
It's all very well saying that forest loss must stop. But for many developing countries, forests are a vital source of income. WWF's goal is to make them worth more standing than cut down. The organization helped develop the REDD+ scheme, an important part of the UN's climate change solutions. It is about giving developing countries financial support to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation, while conserving forest biodiversity and improving livelihoods for local people.

With support from the Norwegian government and other partners, WWF is running REDD+ demonstration activities in places where tackling deforestation is most urgent, including the Amazon, the Congo Basin and Borneo.

WWF's target is to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to zero by 2020. Together with key partners, it is calling on national governments to commit to preserving all remaining natural forests, to ensuring that forests are managed sustainably, and to restoring the most damaged and degraded areas.

So far, 67 countries have committed to zero net deforestation and forest degradation by 2020, including the governments of Brazil and Indonesia.

In 2008, 67 countries agree to WWF's aim of zero net deforestation by 2020.



Brazil and Indonesia have signed a commitment in line with WWF's target to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to zero by 2020.

Overfishing and destructive fishing practices are seriously depleting fish stocks in the Coral Triangle. The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security – agreed to by the six nations of the area – is a far-reaching commitment to conserve coral reefs, stop the decline of sea turtles and other endangered species, and transform fishing practices.

SECURING THE CORAL TRIANGLE

Half the size of the United Sates; more than 120 million people depend on it for their food and livelihoods; with species ranging from tiny corals to gigantic blue whales. That is the Coral Triangle – 600 million hectares of water and the "nursery of the seas", home to three-quarters of all reef-building corals, over a third of coral reef fish and six of the seven species of marine turtle. There is nowhere like it.

In 2009, WWF helps develop a marine conservation strategy to protect the Coral Triangle.

The Coral Triangle is under severe threat. Warming oceans and pollution are destroying its coral reefs. More than 2 million fishers work in the area, but overfishing and destructive fishing practices are seriously depleting fish stocks.

It is also the centre of the global tuna industry. Coral Triangle countries landed more than 1.2 million tonnes of tuna from the Pacific and Indian Oceans in 2009 alone. This is unsustainable, and if not curbed, the whole multi-billion dollar industry could collapse.

Protecting the Coral Triangle is absolutely vital if marine species are to recover and thrive and if the human communities dependent on them are to have a healthy future. In 2009, WWF was part of a successful international campaign for a marine conservation strategy to protect the region. In a ground-breaking show of conservation cooperation, heads of state from Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste reached agreement on the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security, a far-reaching commitment to conserve coral reefs, stop the decline of sea turtles and other endangered species, and transform fishing practices. Hundreds of millions of dollars of international aid are being channelled to support the initiative.

WWF is working with fishing communities, businesses, distributors, retailers and consumers to promote sustainable development – from a responsible tuna and reef fish industry to marine protected areas. One major step will be Marine Stewardship Council certification of a healthy, sustainably managed tuna fishery in the Western Pacific, including Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. This would bring 15 per cent of the world's canned tuna production under certification, helping to guarantee the fishery's future and providing shoppers with the confidence to buy tuna.

LIGHTS OUT FOR THE PLANET

In 2010, two spectacular events united hundreds of millions of people around the world: the World Cup Final and Earth Hour.

It started in Sydney in 2007, with more than a million people switching off their lights for one hour to show they wanted action on climate change. Earth Hour has since grown to encompass 128 countries, involving hundreds of millions of people in more than 4,500 cities and towns across the world and becoming a global phenomenon – WWF's biggest public campaign, and one of the greatest mass participation moments ever seen.

Beijing's Forbidden City, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Sphinx and Pyramids of Giza and Zimbabwe's mighty Victoria Falls are just some of the ever-growing list of global icons that go dark for Earth Hour each year – a spectacular display of global unity and evidence of what we can achieve if we all take responsibility for looking after our planet.

It was all about climate change – emphasizing that it is happening, threatening life as we know it. Up to a quarter of all species could become extinct. Whole ecosystems, like coral reefs and tropical rainforests, could disappear. And hundreds of millions of people will suffer from flooding and extreme weather, food shortages and disease. It's not too late to avoid the worst. But those in power need to take bold, urgent action – and all of us need to be ready to make changes in our own lives. Earth Hour is a universal message of hope and action, a movement driven by the collective will of the world, for the world.

Earth Hour 2011, which took place at 8.30 pm on Saturday 26 March, invited people to go "Beyond the Hour" and beyond climate change, marking a moment when every individual, government and business could make their commitment to environmentally sustainable action for the forthcoming year. Homes, offices, government buildings and iconic landmarks across Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas went dark to acknowledge the action of people from all corners of the Earth that goes beyond the hour.

Earth Hour begins in 2007 in Sydney, Australia. By 2010, with more than 120 countries and 4,500 towns and cities participating, Earth Hour has become a global phenomenon. In 2011, WWF's Earth Hour goes beyond the hour.

Earth Hour is WWF's biggest public campaign and has grown since 2007 to become a global phenomenon. In 2011, WWF asked people to go beyond turning off their lights for an hour and make firm commitments to protect the environment.

Canon

This book was printed by Canon Europe in Germany on FSC paper in order to reduce the ecological impact and minimize paper wastage. Many of the images used in it were taken from the WWF-Canon Global Photo Network. Canon Europe became the first Conservation Partner for WWF in 1998, and since then has worked with WWF to support its work by providing funds for conservation and to raise awareness of conservation issues.

WWF

Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

panda.org/50