

First-ever initiative launched demonstrating the key importance of rewilding nature in addressing global climate change

Restoring wildlife is essential for solving the climate emergency. Today, as a part of a ground-breaking public discussion on humanity's relationship with wild nature, global experts launch the new **Rewilding and Climate Initiative**. This first-ever global nature restoration target -- aimed at helping our planet stay below the 1.5°C rise in average temperature -- accelerates the identification of wild and natural solutions to the climate emergencies and is an important step in the race to stabilize the climate and halt mass extinction.

The Rewilding and Climate Initiative is kicked-off by a webinar discussion, "Animating the Carbon Cycle", hosted by the [WILD Foundation's Global Rewilding Alliance](#) in cooperation with [One Earth](#) and [Re:wild](#) (formerly the Global Wildlife Conservation) as a part of the official launch of the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#). During the discussion, leading global experts draw useful linkages between the climate system and biodiversity, through well-documented examples and stories of how wild animals are our practical and inspiring partners in the effort to stabilize climate change.

"We are excited to be part of the historic launch of a new rewilding and climate initiative in partnership between One Earth, Re:wild, [GRID-Arendal](#), the [Yale University School on the Environment](#), and the Global Rewilding Alliance", said **Vance Martin**, President of the WILD Foundation. "Our relationship with nature has too-long been ignored. The leaders now working on the connection between nature and climate are advancing new knowledge and ideas that will help spur a more responsible and respectful behavior toward wildlife, wild places and the communities that steward them."

Other statements by some of the "Animating the Carbon Cycle" expert panelists who will help guide and create the outcomes of this new global initiative:

Karl Burkart, One Earth: "Besides going renewable in energy, we need to supercharge ecosystems through rewilding to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. And we also know how: preserve the 1.9Tera tons of Carbon of the [Global Safety Net](#) and add another 8% - or 150 GtC Carbon - to be captured in new nature by 2100. We invite the UN Decade to adopt this target as a benchmark for the critically important global initiative of restoring the planet".

Russ Mittermayer, Re:wild: "Many of the highest priority areas for biodiversity are under extreme threat and could easily be lost in the next decade, if not sooner. Both existing and new protected areas and indigenous and community-owned lands are essential to prevent further loss and stabilize the climate".

Kristine Tompkins, Tompkins Conservation: "We can't mitigate climate change without protecting, rewilding, and investing in nature. In the Iberá wetlands, northern Argentina, Rewilding Argentina together with Tompkins Conservation are therefore reintroducing 9 keystone "architects of the ecosystems", including the jaguar and giant river otter. They will together help create more functional nature, better global climate, and more prosperous local economies.

"The best way of supercharging ecosystems is through animating the carbon cycle" says **Oswald Schmitz**, Yale University. "The way species like sea otters, wolves, forest elephants and wildebeest control how carbon is stored in ecosystems has largely been ignored in current climate models. Let's team up with the wildlife to solve the climate crisis".

Steven Lutz, GRID-Arendal: "The ocean is the largest carbon sink on the planet. The focus of current climate assessments has been on phytoplankton and zooplankton, largely ignoring the critical role fish and sea mammals play for the climate. Best known is how whales facilitate carbon storage. Less discussed is how fish species animate the carbon cycle. Overfishing of the ocean has a dramatic, negative impact on the climate".