

To Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora, Neale Richmond TD
c/o Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union
c/o Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union
50 Rue Froissart
1040 Brussels

Cc: EU Member States, European Parliament, DG BUDG, DG ENV, DG INTPA

Brussels, 6 October 2026

RE: Prioritising Biodiversity in the Global Europe Instrument and Safeguarding Global Development Ambition

Dear Minister Neale Richmond TD,

Europe built its global credibility on ambition — this is not the time to water it down. As the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) enters its final and most consequential negotiations, we write on behalf of 54 organisations to urge you to defend the ambition of the Global Europe Instrument and to keep biodiversity at the core of EU external action.

Healthy, high-integrity ecosystems underpin environmental, social, and economic resilience. They are essential to climate adaptation and mitigation, food and water security, public health and sanitation¹, economic development, jobs and sustainable livelihoods, and long-term peace and human security.² Biodiversity loss, particularly in vulnerable regions, fuels conflict, displacement, and migration pressures, undermining stability.³ The World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2026 is unequivocal: extreme weather events, biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse, and critical changes to Earth systems represent the three most severe global risks to the economy over the coming decade.⁴

In this context, we are asking for three concrete commitments:

- 1. Raise the climate and environmental spending target for GEI to at least 50%, with a minimum of 15% dedicated to biodiversity;**
- 2. Maintain the GEI envelope and resist further cuts, to preserve the EU's credibility as a reliable global partner;**
- 3. Ensure biodiversity is systematically integrated across all relevant sectors — international cooperation, partnerships, trade, and investment policy — including within the Global Gateway.**

¹ [IPBES Thematic Assessment Report on the Interlinkages among Biodiversity, Water, Food and Health](#)

² [A national security assessment: Global biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and national security](#)

³ [EU study on the interaction between security and wildlife conservation in sub-Saharan Africa](#)

⁴ [WEF Global Risks Report 2026](#)

A healthy environment is a pre-requisite for achieving the objectives of the Global Gateway, namely sustainable and resilient economic development and the green transition. Explicitly prioritising biodiversity within the Global Europe Instrument would not only strengthen the effectiveness of EU external action, but would also be fully consistent with and would implement the international commitments and obligations of the EU and its Member States, through the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework⁵, as well as under other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

In an increasingly volatile and fragmented world, ambition is not a luxury — it is a strategic necessity. Europe's long-term socio-economic security and competitiveness ultimately depend on a healthy environment — both within the Union and beyond its borders. We count on your leadership to match the scale of the challenge with the scale of the response.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues in greater detail.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Janice Weatherley-Singh
Senior Director
Wildlife Conservation Society EU Office



Dr Chris Baker
Director
Wetlands International Europe



Ilaria Di Silvestre
Director of Policy and Advocacy, Europe
IFAW



David Morrison
Europe Policy Lead
Conservation International Europe



Flavia Sollazzo
Director of Policy
The Nature Conservancy in Europe



⁵ [UN biodiversity convention: EU reaffirms global pledge to protect a third of the planet by 2030](#)

Ester Asin Martinez
Director
WWF European Policy Office



Mary Rice
Executive Director
Environmental Investigation Agency UK



Prof. Dr Christian Léonard
General Director
Sciensano



Dries Herpoelaert
CEO
Royal Antwerp Zoo Foundation



Fanny Gauttier
EU Public Affairs Lead
Rainforest Alliance



Grégory Breton
Director for Europe and West & Central Africa
Panthera France



Anouk Puymartin
Head of Policy
BirdLife Europe & Central Asia



Geneviève Pons
President and Director General
Europe Jacques Delors



Catherine Weller
Director, Global Policy & Government Relations
Fauna & Flora



Gauthier Carle
Executive Director
Ocean & Climate Platform



Uli Frank Graebener
Executive Director
Rare Europe gGmbH



Connah Snape
Board Member
Youth and Environment Europe



Maria Bellou
President
Biodiversity Action Europe



Dr Mark Jones
Head of Policy
Born Free Foundation



Branka Španiček
Strategic Area Leader - Finance and Biodiversity
CEE Bankwatch Network



Michel Delmas
Président
Réserves Naturelles de France



Antoinette Vermilye
Co-founder
Gallifrey Foundation



Ernesto Díaz
President
Fundación Tierra Ibérica



Naïm Nachid
President
Moroccan Association for the Development of Protected Areas



Els Martens
Board Member & interim General Coordinator
Jane Goodall Institute Belgium



Vilmos Kizsel
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Göncöl Foundation



Dr Najoua Bouraoui
Head
Association pour la Protection de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable de Bizerte (APEDDUB)



Devrol Dupigny
Head of Policy
AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection



Francisco Xanté Lobos
Director Ejecutivo
Asociación de Desarrollo Productivo y de Servicios TIKONEL



Pablo Rodríguez Ros
Director
Marilles Foundation



Marity Gonzalez Garcia
President
Asociacion Pastotres sin Fronteras



Eng. Anas Abu Al-Qasim Al-Qaidi
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Libyan Wildlife Trust (LWT)



José María Musmeci
President
Fundación Patagonia Natural



Quim Pou-Rovira
President
Associació la Sorellona



Fernando Ardura
Director
Fundación Hábitat y Desarrollo – Argentina



Carmen Acedo
President
Sociedad de Biología de la Conservación de Plantas (SEBICOP)



Jessica Fallon
Founder and Director
Wild Legacy CIC



Conor Kretsch
Executive Director
Cohab Initiative Secretariat



Carmen Acedo
President
Sociedad Española de Botánica (SEBOT)



Harm Schoten
Director
Eurosité – the European Land Conservation Network



Gabriel Schwaderer
Executive Director
EuroNatur

euRONATUR

Frans Schepers
Executive Director
Rewilding Europe



Marie Saleem
Director
Reefscapers Foundation, Maldives



Anastasiya Timoshyna
Programme Office Director – Europe and Central Asia
TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC

Zak Smith
Senior Attorney and Director Global Biodiversity Conservation
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)



Eva Graciá Martínez
Chair
Spanish Herpetological Association



José María Rey Benayas
CEO and President of the Board
Fundación Internacional para la Restauración de Ecosistemas (FIRE)



Alexis Katsaros
Executive Director
MedINA - Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos



Nokraoui Moulay Elmostapha
Coordinator
Alliance Civile pour l'Environnement Ammelne



Abdallah Ahjam
Coordinator
Réserve de Biosphère de l'Arganeraie



Daniela Freyer
Head of Policy and Co-Founder
Pro Wildlife



Dr Jamie McCallum
Director, UK and EU
Peace Parks Foundation



Pierre Celestin Nsengiyumva
Chairperson
Sabyinyo Community Livelihood Association (SACOLA)



Jean-Pascal Guéry
President
Conservatoire pour la Protection des Primates



Ernestine Lüdeke
President
Fundación Monte Mediterráneo

