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WWF and the US Government: Partnering to Protect the Future of Nature

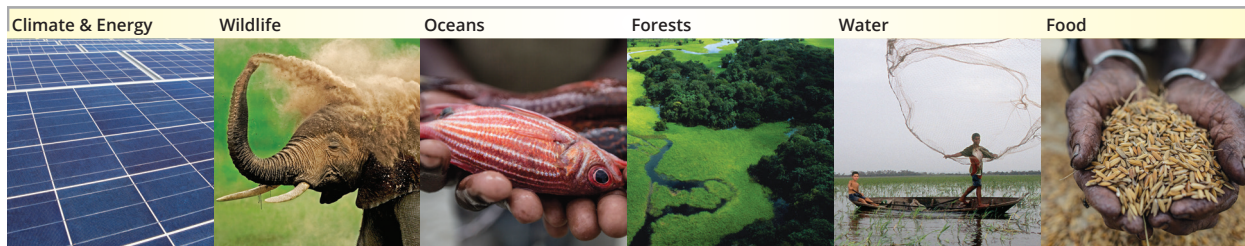
For 50 years, WWF has been protecting the future of nature. WWF works in over 100 countries and is supported by over 1.1 million members in the US and 5 million supporters worldwide. WWF's unique way of working combines global reach with a foundation in science, involves action at every level from local to global, and ensures the delivery of innovative solutions that meet the needs of both people and nature. WWF also partners with governments, businesses, foundations, communities, and individuals to conserve many of the world's most ecologically important regions. Working together, we are advancing WWF's mission to conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on Earth. We are doing this by

- protecting and restoring species and their habitats around the globe
- strengthening communities' ability to conserve and manage their natural resources
- transforming markets to reduce the impact of commodity production and drive the sustainable production and consumption of food and clean energy around the world
- ensuring that nature's value is reflected in decisions made by individuals, communities, governments, and businesses
- working with governments and institutions, including the US government, to improve policies and implement investments that support the conservation of nature

For decades, the US government has been a leader in international conservation. US federal agencies play a key role in promoting the conservation of species, habitats, and natural resources, particularly in the developing world. America's tradition of conservation began over 100 years ago with the leadership of Americans such as Teddy Roosevelt and the creation of agencies such as the National Park Service. This legacy is reflected in WWF's own values and leadership, which are solutions-oriented and bipartisan. Over the past century, as our country has taken on a greater leadership role in the development and stability of our partners around the world, conservation has become a key consideration for Republican and Democratic administrations alike. International conservation investments (through agencies such as USAID) are now vital components of US foreign policy and an important means of bolstering global stability and enhancing our own security and economic growth.

How Conservation Supports US Security:

- The scarcity of natural resources—including water, food, and energy—contributes to conflict, migration, and instability in many parts of the world.
- The illegal exploitation of natural resources, such as wildlife, timber, and fish, is often linked to large-scale criminal activities and transnational organized crime.
- The illegal natural resource trade is worth billions of dollars annually—money that is used to undermine good governance and rule of law in the developing world and has been shown to finance security threats, including groups with ties to terrorism.
- The Department of Defense recognizes that climate change poses a significant risk to US interests globally, as a threat multiplier that is contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources, such as food and water.



How Conservation Supports US Economic Growth and International Development:

- Our economic growth is linked to that of our international trading partners. Many developing economies are heavily dependent on natural resources, and managing those resources sustainably is critical to support both local economies and global supply chains.
- The illegal trade in natural resource commodities undercuts US businesses by billions of dollars annually, depressing prices, undermining the integrity of global markets, and putting law-abiding US companies at a competitive disadvantage.
- US efforts to curtail this illegal trade and build stronger environmental policy frameworks level the playing field for US workers and businesses while conserving our shared resources.
- US support to ramp up renewable energy markets in developing countries has created jobs in the US and increased demand for US products overseas.
- America's public lands are the backbone of our outdoor and recreation economy, generating \$646 billion annually and supporting 6.1 million American jobs. By exporting this successful model, the US is demonstrating how conservation can bring economic growth to rural areas while creating new business opportunities, including in the US travel and tourism sector.

WWF encourages Congress to continue the American commitment to conservation in the following ways:

- **Support continued robust funding for international conservation programs**, including
 - USAID Biodiversity Conservation Programs
 - USAID and State Department Programs to Combat Wildlife Trafficking
 - Global Environment Facility
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service Multinational Species Conservation Funds, International Affairs, and Office of Law Enforcement
 - US Forest Service International Programs
 - USAID, NOAA, and Customs and Border Protection Programs to Combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing
 - USDA Conservation Programs on Private Lands
 - Green Climate Fund
- **Support strong implementation of policies to combat illegal trade**, including the END Wildlife Trafficking Act, the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking, the Seafood Import Monitoring Program, and President Trump's Executive Order on Transnational Organized Crime (including wildlife trafficking).
- **Support US government leadership on combating climate change**, including
 - US participation in the Paris Agreement
 - US domestic actions to reduce emissions and meet our Paris commitments
 - Renewable energy programs, incentives, and research
 - Investments in resilient communities and ecosystems
 - US climate science programs and research
 - US contributions to the Green Climate Fund