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### **EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ENHANCED ACTION ON CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE AS A KEY STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS AND IMPLEMENTING THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY POST-2020**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice and the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, an information document prepared by the [Children & Nature Network](#)<sup>1</sup> and the [International Union for Conservation of Nature Commission on Education and Communication](#)<sup>2</sup> (IUCN CEC). The document is relevant to the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular with regard to Aichi Biodiversity Target 1, decisions XII/2 and XIII/22 on a Framework for a Communication Strategy, and the development of a post-2020 biodiversity framework.
2. The report is being circulated in the form and language in which it was received by the Secretariat. The views expressed in the document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

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<sup>1</sup> The Children & Nature Network is leading a global movement to increase equitable access to nature so that children—and natural places—can thrive. Among its contributions, it has developed and houses the most extensive collection of research, news, and thought leadership for connecting children and families to nature.

<sup>2</sup> The IUCN CEC is a network of more than 1,100 volunteer experts who drive change for the co-creation of sustainable solutions through leading communication, learning and knowledge management in IUCN and the wider conservation community.

## INTRODUCTION

1. This information document presents a synthesis of evidence supporting the concept that, in addition to awareness-raising, enhanced action on connecting people with nature will be important for creating the broad-based public and cross-sectoral support and action on biodiversity necessary to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Strategic Plan during this and subsequent decades.
2. In the most recent updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected [Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Options to Accelerate Progress](#), (SBSTTA 22/INF/10) the Executive Secretary to the CBD notes that current evidence suggests the responses to biodiversity loss are increasing but biodiversity is continuing to decline. Actions aimed at accelerating progress towards the Targets, such as those identified in [Global Biodiversity Outlook 4](#) (GBO4), remain relevant.
3. One area for enhanced action identified in GBO4 is “Coherent, strategic and sustained communication efforts, strategies, and campaigns to increase awareness of biodiversity and its values, and ways to support its conservation and sustainable use” – i.e., Aichi Biodiversity Target 1. The Convention’s [Communication, Education and Public Awareness](#) (CEPA) programme is an important instrument for delivering on action on Target 1. Decision XII/2 re-enforced the important role of CEPA and led to the development of recommendations for better communication of the values of biodiversity, including a Framework for a Communication Strategy (see Decision XIII/22). The over-arching goal of this framework is to support the implementation of the CBD now and in the subsequent decades leading up to 2050.
4. As is noted in the [description of Aichi Biodiversity Target 1](#), addressing the direct and underlying drivers of biodiversity loss will ultimately require behavioural change by individuals, organisations and governments. Understanding, awareness and appreciation of the diverse values of biodiversity underpin the willingness of individuals to make the necessary changes and actions and to create the “political will” for governments to act.
5. A new synthesis of the evidence around factors that influence conservation and pro-environment behaviours is being developed by the Children & Nature Network in collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and several partner organisations worldwide through [#NatureForAll](#) (Charles et al, 2018). A draft for review by Parties will be made available immediately following SBSTTA 22 and SBI 2. Aspects of this evidence that are particularly relevant in the context of the Convention are presented below.
6. This growing body of evidence consistently demonstrates that, in addition to awareness, meaningful experiences and connection with nature are key to engendering stronger valuation, support, and action for biodiversity conservation across generations, sectors, and societies. Increased attention to the importance of public engagement and connection with nature will be important for achieving behaviour change and creating and maintaining the political will for governments to implement the Convention. While they remain critically important, efforts to increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity and its values, and of actions that can be taken, are not enough.

## CONTEXT

7. Many human beings are living with little direct and conscious experience of the beauty and complexity of the Earth’s living systems. The realization that humans are just one part of this interdependent and interconnected web of life has been forgotten or lost in the memories of many. While this disconnect can occur even in rural and undeveloped areas, it tends to be exacerbated for people living in cities and heavily urbanised areas. Significantly, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 55 % of the world’s population residing in urban areas in 2018. By 2050, 68 % of the world’s population is projected to be

urban ([UN World Urbanisation Prospects, 2018](#)). This is not to say that urban areas cannot be biologically diverse; they can, and are, with care and effort. In fact, urban areas hold great potential for connecting people with nature in their everyday lives. Doing so will be good for people, and for the planet.

8. In recognition of the importance of societal disconnect from nature as an indirect driver of biodiversity loss, in 2016 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) launched [#NatureForAll](#), a global movement to inspire love, support and action for nature conservation. The IUCN CEC and [IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas](#), are co-leading [#NatureForAll](#) by bringing together a diverse coalition of partners to collaborate, scale up actions, and broaden their reach to engage people from all walks of life to experience, connect with, and take action for nature.

9. At a personal and societal level the evidence is strong and growing that people tend to be happier, healthier, and more productive, creative, active and engaged in community and civic life when nature is a meaningful part of their lives (Richardson et al, 2017; Louv, 2012; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Charles & Senauer, 2010; Kuo, 2010; Louv, 2005). For example, infants and toddlers develop healthy resilient bodies from time exploring hands-on and whole body with natural materials; they are stimulated cognitively and physically by the sights and sounds in outdoor spaces; and they develop social skills and bond with family members through shared experiences in the outdoors (D'Amore, Charles & Louv, 2015; St. Antoine, Charles & Louv, 2012). Children between birth and age five to seven benefit from exceptional brain development, stimulated and supported through nature-based experiences. Older children build on this foundation to develop creativity, curiosity, problem-solving skills, collaboration, and confidence. Teens find peer support and grow in self-esteem while working, learning, and exploring in groups—particularly enriched by service-oriented projects in the outdoors—that develop their confidence and care for themselves, others, and the environment (Dadvand et al. 2018; Becker et al, 2017; D'Amore, Charles & Louv, 2015). Adults are demonstrating that exercise outdoors in nature not only builds physical strength and agility, but also lowers their blood pressure and enhances their sense of well-being (Chawla, 2015; Louv, 2012; Kuo, 2010). The benefits to people of all ages—emotionally, cognitively, socially and physically—are becoming widely documented (Louv, 2012).

10. Evidence supporting linkages between exposure to nature and positive influences on physical and mental health was highlighted in the 2015 joint CBD/World Health Organisation [State of Knowledge Review](#). Parties to the CBD have also recognised the importance of inter-linkages between biodiversity and human health, including these mental and physical health benefits (Decision XII/6). Healthy people reduce social costs. Healthy environments contribute to economic benefits. Achieving these benefits requires that people have access to nature. And having access to nature depends on enough people caring enough to make sure that there are places and spaces where people can experience nature daily or often, and through all stages of their lives.

11. Lack of personal experiences with nature, as well as lack of understanding of Indigenous relationships with nature, limit our understanding of environmental challenges and appropriate actions to address those challenges (Cajete, 2015). However, we humans are capable of reversing the trends of the immediate past and present in order to achieve a new and healthy relationship with nature, a relationship that embodies an inherently regenerative and life-nurturing way of being on Earth. This regenerative relationship, combined with informed and responsible action, will achieve a healing time on Earth. In the process, we will heal ourselves.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW?

### *Indigenous Wisdom: We Are One*

12. As is highlighted in [Article 8\(j\)](#), Parties to the CBD have agreed to respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous and local communities. Examples of Indigenous world views remind us that we are all one with nature. In the South Pacific, New Zealand's Maori people

have traditionally held a deep connection to the environment, focused on their tribal lands and waters in particular. The Maori world view positions Maori as both part of the natural system and guardians for that system (Cowie et al, 2016). In Australia, Indigenous culture was founded on the belief that people and nature are created as one. Tribes had their own wisdom to connect them to the land or “country” (Gammage, 2011; Hendricks & Hall, 2012). For Indigenous peoples, the concept of “country” embodies sustainability. It is the holistic engagement of a person with a specific physical location that is both symbolic and real.

13. For example, in North and South America, Indigenous people have many ways of remembering and practicing Earth-based wisdom. Illustrative, for the Makunas, Eastern Tukanoan groups from the Northwest Amazon, humans and non-human beings share many of the same places. There is no separation between beings. There is no separation between the visible and invisible, or between culture and nature, making evident the complete interdependence of all living beings. (L. Cayón, *Antípoda* N 7, 2008, p141-173)

#### ***Bonding with Nature Contributes to Care for the Earth***

14. A growing body of evidence indicates that time with nature can create a connectedness—that is, an emotional affinity or love of nature, a oneness with all that is. Such connectedness can occur in a variety of settings. In fact, connectedness with nature is emerging as a critical predictor of conservation and pro-environment behaviours (Mayer & Frantz, 2004; Braun & Dierkes, 2017; Otto & Pensini, 2017; Beery & Jorgensen, 2018). Such a bond contributes to a person’s identity as well as their tendencies to care about, conserve and protect nature (Kals, Schumacher & Montada, 1999; Schultz, 2002; Hinds & Sparks, 2009; Goralnik & Nelson, 2011; Beery, 2013).

15. An emotional bond influences people’s thoughts, attitudes and behaviours. Along with one’s personal sense of identity, a strong emotional bond can affect whether or not people choose to be physically close to nature. This bond can inspire a feeling of safety when close to nature or distress when separated from it. It can spark a willingness to invest financial or mental resources in nature or, importantly, to protect it from harm (Green, 2018; Park & MacInnis, 2006).

16. Literature reviews have resulted in an affirmation of what is currently a generally agreed-upon view: While awareness remains important, knowledge alone is not enough to cause people to take action to benefit the environment (Bamberg & Moser, 2006; Klockner, 2013).

17. To increase awareness of and action for biodiversity and its values globally, connectedness provides necessary preconditions for realizing desired conservation outcomes. Connectedness takes many forms. It can be stimulated, maintained and enhanced in various ways. However formed, it is a strong predictor of conservation and pro-environment behaviour for people of any age. It can be so powerful that it becomes a way of life, a lifestyle that benefits everyone—from self to others to the environment.

#### **PATHWAYS TO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION BEHAVIOUR**

18. There is increasing recognition and a growing body of research that indicates time spent in nature increases the likelihood of viewing one’s self as a part of the natural world. Jordan and Kristjánsson (2017) argue that the underlying basis of our unsustainability is “a human-nature relationship and worldview which fails to encompass interconnectedness and the interrelatedness of environmental and social issues;” and the importance of “a more holistic view of human flourishing as necessarily situated within nature.” Nature connection experiences “need to engage participants in re-examining who we are, and how we are connected to everything around us...any change that is short of that scale will not solve the problems we face” (Ehrenfeld and Hoffman, 2013, p4).

19. Nature connection can move us from a focus on objects to a focus on interactions and relationships, and shift our concentration from “preventing doom” to “anticipating care” (Postma & Smeyers, 2012, p409). A meaningful connection to nature can be facilitated and enhanced throughout our lives—and may start at any time. Opportunities to cultivate that sense of connection can be created, as well, in varied settings—including wild and rural areas as well as within the urban environments where more and more people live.

20. Several studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between the level of involvement in nature-based activities as diverse as fishing (Oh & Ditton, 2008; Oh & Ditton, 2006), SCUBA diving (Thapa, Grefe & Meyer, 2006) and bird watching (Cheung, Lo & Fok, 2017; Hvenegaard, 2002; McFarlane & Boxall, 1996), and an individual’s concern for the resources on which their activity depends. Others have found an association between people’s attachment to the specific places where they interact with nature and their pro-environment behaviours, suggesting that people who develop an attachment to a place are more likely to want to protect it and to oppose the degradation of its environment (Tonge et al, 2015; Ramkissoon, Smith & Weiler, 2013; Halpenny, 2010; Stedman, 2002; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). Some studies have suggested these links extend to more general care for the environment in everyday life (Halpenny, 2010; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001).

21. For those who already have positive attitudes toward the environment, regular time in nature may play an affirming role by keeping nature “top of mind” and increasing the likelihood that they will take action to benefit the environment (Thapa, 2010; Tarrant & Green, 1999; Manfredi, Yuan & McGuire, 1992). Making nature a part of people’s daily lives, habitual experiences, and regular, even frequent, experiences outdoors in nature are encouraged (Kellert et al, 2017).

22. Regular experiences in nature can be gained in a variety of ways. The image of a romantic adventure where solitude brings transformation is one path to nature’s abundant gifts, but it is not the most frequent. Many people today, especially those with little or no connection to nature through direct experience, need and benefit from the company of family and friends to inspire joyful time in natural spaces. Such experience can be satisfied by places of nearby nature, which are the most accessible for most people.

23. A powerful and effective approach to engaging families and friends is occurring through the growth, internationally, of locally-driven, self-organising, groups of people interested in getting children outdoors in nature on a regular basis. Research conducted on some of these groups is finding enormous benefits to family bonding, enhanced confidence and creativity on the part of children, appreciation and respect for their children’s interests and strengths on the part of parents, and the kind of connectedness to nature that research indicates is key to a lifelong commitment to care for the Earth (D’Amore, 2015; D’Amore & Chawla, 2017).

24. Research indicates that meaningful childhood experiences in nature are connected to adult-conservation behaviours. Louise Chawla has found that two factors contribute most to children developing into adults who take action to benefit the environment: positive direct experience in nature and role models of care for nature (Chawla & Derr, 2012; Chawla, 2009; Chawla, 2006). A number of studies, from Germany to Taiwan (Hsu, 2017; Kals et al, 1999), provide support for the important role of childhood recreation in nature, often with family members, as a predictor of behaviours to protect the environment.

25. With meaningful nature-based experiences as the foundation, what else is a significant influence on actual behaviours? Chawla and Cushing (2007) indicate that programmes designed to foster environmental commitment and action are most successful when they occur over an extended period of time, include opportunities to acquire and practise action skills, and result in some tangible success in accomplishing at least some of the intended goals. Some success, often beginning on a small scale, allows for the development of perceived confidence and a sense of efficacy (Chawla & Cushing, 2007).

26. In building pathways to conservation behaviour, intention, affect, emotions, and a subtle range of influences are all part of the process. Awareness and knowledge alone will not make the difference. Direct experiences, self-directed learning and play, repeated exposures, a perceived belief in one's own personal efficacy, a caring mentor, and an emotional bond or connectedness—these are among the strongest influencers.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WAY FORWARD

27. When we consider the scale of the challenges facing humanity today, we need to be thinking about actions in the aggregate. What combines to make a significant difference? The people you surround yourself with play a big role in whether you feel able to act on personal environmental values. In a study of ethical behaviour in the financial sector in Australia, it was found that if your team appears to support being environmentally responsible, you will feel you are able to be so as well (Metcalf & Jung, 2017). In addition, environmental values appear to work best at a group level, meaning that we are able to understand aspects of the environment better if we try to understand them through group discussion.

28. Simply recognising that individual actions add up to a larger whole is instrumental. A recent study about factors affecting people's likelihood to take action to affect global climate change is helpful. In this context, the researchers found that highlighting collective responsibility was more effective than appealing to personal responsibility (Obradovich & Guenther, 2016). Others have established similar findings for challenges occurring on a large scale: a sense of personal efficacy combined with an appeal to collective responsibility is most effective. Said another way, "(T)he effect of private action is limited unless it is combined with organising for collective public change" (Chawla and Cushing, 2007; p. 441). In other words, we need to build a culture of conservation in all regions of the world.

29. To build a culture of conservation, we must also recognise that barriers remain to increasing connectedness. Many attributes of contemporary life throughout the world contribute to disconnect between people and nature. These include, for example: Fear and perceptions; competing priorities; cultural differences; degraded environments; lack of resources; lack of transportation or access; school and academic environments; urbanisation.

30. Governments, organisations, and individuals across the world are implementing policies and practices to overcome these barriers. Below, we provide a review of approaches for increasing connectedness between people and nature as well as examples of policy initiatives and proposed policy directions from global to local levels that would support implementation.

#### *Connect to Nature Where We Live, Work, Learn and Play*

31. As a part of the [IUCN Programme 2017-2020](#), #NatureForAll works with partners across sectors such as health, education, museums, zoos, botanical gardens, aquaria, youth, tourism, technology and transportation to identify, develop, share and measure impact of: knowledge, frameworks and other tools for connecting people with nature and enable the replication and scaling up of successful programming globally. Key strategies underlying best practice for connecting people with nature worldwide have been summarized in the [#NatureForAll Playbook](#). These strategies include: 1. Bring children into nature at an early age; 2. Find and share the fun in nature; 3. Use urban gateways to nature; 4. Embrace technology; 5. Share cultural roots and ancestry in nature; 6. Seek out diverse partnerships; 7. Empower a new generation of leaders.

#### *Examples of Policy Efforts and Proposed Policy Directions to Connect People with Nature*

32. There are many policy initiatives underway at every level. These are only a few examples.

#### **International**

#### *Examples*

33. [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) includes a right to an education that involves respect for the natural Environment. Passed in 1989, 196 nations have signed it, not including the United States.

34. Achievement of [the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) will implicitly require increased attention to connecting people with nature. For example, in addition to Goal 14 and 15, which are direct outcomes of the implementation of the CBD, several of the SDGs and targets are indirectly related to nature experience and connectedness. The evidence reviewed in this report indicates that enhanced action on nature experience and connectedness by Parties, other Governments, relevant organisations, funding agencies, and civil society, would contribute to achieving SDG [3.4](#), [4.7](#), [8.9](#), and [11.7](#).

35. As was noted in CBD Decision XIII/22, in 2016, [the International Union for Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\) Members' Assembly passed resolution 085](#), "Connecting People with Nature Globally." This resolution called for the launch of #NatureForAll within the IUCN's Programme 2017-2020, as noted above, to scale up the reach and impact of efforts to connect people from all walks of life with nature in order to increase support and action for nature conservation globally. Through this resolution, the IUCN Members Assembly also called on all components of IUCN to support governments and other stakeholders in implementing CBD Decision XII/2C; and called on Parties to the CBD to take further action and coordination for implementation of CBD Decision XII/2C.

#### ***Proposed Policy Directions***

36. Evidence synthesized in this report suggests that enhanced action on Aichi Biodiversity Target 1, including coordination and implementation of CBD Decision XII/2C and XIII/22, should continue.

37. In addition, Parties to the CBD should consider enhanced action on connecting people from all walks of life with nature as a vehicle for achieving Target 1 and inspiring pro-conservation attitudes and behaviours, thereby accelerating progress towards achievement of other Aichi Biodiversity Targets and implementation of other aspects of the Convention (e.g., including recent decisions such as Decision XIII/6 on biodiversity and human health and Decision XIII/3 on mainstreaming).

38. The Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework should recognise growing societal disconnect from nature (e.g., through rapid urbanisation and other processes) as an important indirect driver of biodiversity loss; and it should include strategies for addressing this disconnect in order to bring about the transformations necessary to halt biodiversity loss and achieve the UN SDGs. Evidence about effective strategies for reversing the influence of disconnect from nature as a driver of biodiversity loss, such as that presented, should be used to guide post-2020 target-setting.

39. As Parties begin to prepare the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, they should consider how enhanced action on connecting people with nature can be integrated into a renewed Strategic Plan. For example, a renewed version of Aichi Biodiversity Target 1 (or its equivalent in the Post-2020 Framework) should not only address awareness but also actions to increase connectedness of people from all walks of life with nature in order to inspire significantly-enhanced, broad-based public and cross-sectoral action on biodiversity conservation.

40. In addition, as Parties consider strengthening linkages between the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework and the UN SDGs, they should note, as indicated above, how enhanced efforts to connect people from all walks of life with nature will contribute to achievement of multiple SDGs, particularly SDG 3, 4, 8, 11, 14 and 15.

#### **National and Sub-national**

### *Examples*

41. National and sub-national governments are beginning to address connectedness with nature in their environmental policies. For example United Kingdom's new [25 Year Environment Plan](#) includes policies related to connecting people with the environment and helping children and young people engage with nature and improve the environment. At the sub-national level, the State of Victoria, Australia's [Victorian Public Health and Well-being Plan 2015-2019](#) highlights the importance of creating liveable neighbourhoods to improve health and well-being, and recognises that interacting with nature can have a range of other benefits. The plan notes that parks and open spaces make important contributions to healthier, active communities and improved mental health of Victorians. The [Healthy Parks Healthy People](#) initiative, which was spearheaded by Parks Victoria, continues to grow [in Australia](#) and globally at both the [national](#) and [sub-national](#) levels.

### *Proposed Policy Directions*

42. National and sub-national governments and stakeholders have the opportunity to implement sector-specific policies. Promising policy directions include:

- Policies that encourage biodiversity conservation organisations to work across sectors so that people of all ages experience the diverse benefits of connectedness with nature;
- Education and child care policies that promote time outdoors in nature and experiential learning about the environment in early childhood;
- Parks, recreation, and tourism policies that promote family-friendly experiences; interpretive programmes; and outdoor, environmental, place-based and experiential education;
- Community planning and urban development policies that create nature-rich cities for the benefit of people and nature;
- Health and elder care policies that promote the health benefits of contact with nature for people of all ages;
- Arts and culture policies that promote the integration of culture and nature (i.e., one-ness with nature) and celebrate stories of connection and healing; and
- Policies that encourage private sector investment in programming, infrastructure, and innovative solutions (e.g., technology) for connecting people with nature.

### **Local (Cities and other Urban Areas)**

#### *Examples*

43. With the worldwide trend toward urbanisation, creating nature-rich cities is an essential part of a long-term strategy to care for the Earth.

44. For example, The City of Madison, Wisconsin is one of seven cities across the United States partnering on the Cities [Connecting Children to Nature project](#), which strives to promote equitable nature access to children and families. Its most recent [draft comprehensive plan](#) includes strategies to provide equitable nature access for its citizens. Similarly, East Dunbartonshire, in Scotland, has an [Open Space Strategy](#) that sets out standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, including parks, gardens, play areas and nature reserves, for its population. A new [National Park City](#) movement, aims to establish London, UK as a National Park City and develop a universal charter for National Park Cities that could be adopted elsewhere.

45. Umbrella organisations and initiatives like, [ICLEI](#), [the Nature of Cities](#), [European Union's Green Week](#), [Green Surge](#), the [World Urban Parks Association](#), the [IUCN Urban Alliance](#), [C40 Cities](#), [880 Cities](#), and [Natural Systems and Sustainable Cities](#) (CBD/SBSTTA/21/INF/14) are providing practical tools and policy guidance to support local initiatives aimed at improving the sustainability of urban environments and the quality of life of urban populations.

### *Proposed Policy Directions*



46. In 2017, as part of the Parks for the Planet Forum, 52 experts in urban planning, childhood development, conservation, environmental policy, and health gathered for the Parks for the Planet Forum's meeting on *The Child in the City: Health, Parks and Play*, to assess the evidence and accelerate action for nature and health to benefit children in a rapidly urbanising world. The resulting recommendations are listed below.

- Ensure children of all age, backgrounds, income and abilities have equitable access to nature and play regularly and in meaningful ways to promote good health and well-being.
- Embed nature in everyday places used by children, such as schools, backyards, parks, playgrounds and city streets, to make the city into a natural outdoor classroom.
- Involve children in designing and planning natural spaces for recreation, education, inspiration and health, to give them ownership and pride in their local communities, schools and parks.
- Build curiosity, wonder and care for nature in children.
- Protect natural features across cityscapes and create an equitably distributed network of accessible green and nature-rich spaces that all generations can reach on foot.
- Connect cities with the broader ecosystems in which they are embedded, creating corridors for people, plants and animals to move safely across the city and into its surroundings.
- Establish more urban conservation areas to increase access to nature and connect cities to the broader protected area network.
- Work together through cross sectoral and multi-level partnerships to build an inclusive culture of health in cities.

### **CONCLUSION: A CALL FOR INSPIRED ACTION**

47. The time is now. The evidence is clear. One of the most important things that any of us can do for ourselves, those we love, people throughout the world, and the living systems that support us all is to connect with nature. That connection can start in the simplest of ways, beginning in childhood and renewing through all the stages of life. It can take many forms, and occur in many ways. It requires places and spaces for people to connect with nature's richness and complexity from backyards to apartment rooftops, on city streets and rural roadways, on school grounds and in urban neighbourhoods, from wild protected areas to public urban spaces. Connecting with nature helps to bring us all peace and good health, and provides the foundation for resilient, healthy ecosystems to thrive and remain for generations to come.

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