



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF WORLD ANIMAL NET

Thank you co-chairs for the opportunity to join the important dialogue here today.

Earlier this month, Dr Jane Goodall, a UN Messenger of Peace, joined nearly 170 NGOs from Africa, Asia, Oceania, the Americas and Europe in calling on global leaders to address the wellbeing of animals in COVID-19 recovery and financing efforts, as well as policies intended to “build back better” in what’s being called the Animals’ Manifesto.

The Animals’ Manifesto calls on the Convention on Biological Diversity to break with “business as usual”, and embark on a truly transformative approach as recommended by recent reports from IPBES and UNEP.

The targets of the GBF must be ambitious, meaningful and create an enabling environment for their implementation. It is also critical that the GBF takes advantage of the learnings from our current moment, and incorporates the concepts of One Health and One Welfare.

We would also like to emphasize the importance of addressing the financial incentives currently being distributed to recover from COVID-19 which are harming biodiversity, and call on recovery programs to instead protect biodiversity, nature, animals and humans.

I would like to share with you the words that Dr Goodall, in the foreword to the Manifesto wrote:

“The COVID-19 pandemic is still affecting almost all countries of the world. How shocking to realize that we brought this on ourselves. Through our disrespect of the natural world, and our disrespect of animals.

“Today we stand at a crossroads. Will we continue with ‘business as usual’ in the mistaken notion that there can be unlimited economic development on a planet with finite natural resources and growing populations of humans and their livestock?

Burning fossil fuel, allowing industrial farming, polluting the air, water and land?

Exploiting and abusing animals and their habitats?

If we do, there will be even more extreme weather patterns, worse and more frequent hurricanes and typhoons, floods and droughts and bushfires.

There will be more extinctions and loss of biodiversity. There will be ever more, new, zoonotic diseases.



There will be more suffering of humans and other animals alike. And, in the end, there will be an end to life as we know it, on Planet Earth, including our own. Is this the path we shall continue to tread?

Or, shall we choose to get together and develop a new relationship with the natural world? A new relationship with other animals? A new and more equitable and sustainable, 'greener' economy? It will not be easy but I truly hope we do."

I would like to thank Dr. Goodall for her timely words, and hope that they provide inspiration to you through your continued work in developing the next Global Biodiversity Framework. Now, more than ever, we must forge a new relationship with nature and animals. The GBF is our most promising opportunity to do so.

Thank you.