

Under the High Patronage of  
Mr. Emmanuel MACRON  
President of the French Republic



GLOBAL  
**FOREST SUMMIT**

PARIS | ONLINE | 12 MARCH 2021

**Protect faster, Restore stronger**

March 2021

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Co-organized by



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# Nature calls for bolder leadership

Over the last few months, many major milestones for the planet's global governance were postponed: the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the COP for Biological Diversity or the COP on Climate Change. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed our action to make further progress for Earth.

**The hope is that 2021 will finally be the "super-year for nature".** Not because the successive lockdowns of 2020 have saved a small amount of our carbon budget. But because it will mark the start of the "decade of action". For the first time ever, the three Rio Conventions will take place in the same year (the COP Desertification, the COP Climate, and the COP Biodiversity).

It is high-time to go beyond raising awareness about nature and to implement bold programs of immediate remedies with long-term impact. For the sake of both climate and biodiversity. The first challenge too often overshadows the second, but we all need to understand that the environmental crisis is a twin-crisis. We won't win the fight against climate change without protecting biodiversity, as ecosystems are key allies in both mitigating climate disruptions and in adapting to them.

Taking this twofold crisis into account is demanding. But the stakes are higher than developing a double-sided understanding of this challenge. We, as human beings, need to go beyond a long-established idea that would lead us in a wrong way. The Kyoto Protocol was designed in the late 1990s on the principle that we could cap and trade our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Going forward, we need first and foremost to reduce our global footprint on ecosystems. How else can we go into the 22nd century probably starting at +3°C than today? The Arctic is already at +5°C these days! We need to restore nature, as much as possible, as wildlife dropped 68% since the 1970s and one million species are at immediate risk of extinction.

**The UN Secretary-general, Antonio Guterres, pleads for a "global net-zero coalition".** He is right. But this is the least we shall achieve by the COP 26 in Glasgow. Nationally-determined contributions to the Paris Climate Agreement are expected to leave us below the +1.5°C target by 2100. We are not even close to this aim, despite hope rising back from Washington, and the European leadership to maintain the Paris spirit.

**Instead, the global ambition should be to achieve a "nature-positive approach":** given that we have destroyed 43 million hectares of forests between 2004 and 2017 (the surface of Morocco) and that 100 million hectares are in immediate danger of deforestation, we shall steer towards a paradigm shift. We should get from the compensation logics of our disastrous impact on ecosystems, to greater goals of nature protection and restoration.

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**This is the very aim of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, that is a key to achieve the SDGs.** Good news: they are easy to align, as they all operate on the same timeline, with delivery expected in 2030; and the Global Environment Facility is aligning its strategy on this term. Bad news: we are already very late as we face the increasing rhythm of the anthropocene, the accelerating path of the 6th mass extinction, and the pandemic which put us 20 years late in achieving the Global Goals.

When it comes to forests - which host 80% of the species living on emerged lands and naturally absorb more than 30% of our carbon emissions - the whole point is crystal clear.

**Conservation is the vital priority.** The deforestation catastrophe alone accounts for 10% of our carbon budget. But more importantly, it reduces our mitigation and adaptation capabilities. And this does not even address the disastrous impact on wildlife. We need to converge around the High Ambition Coalition to fully protect at least 30% of forests on Earth with prompt and effective measures: immediately stopping international trade agreements that foster imported deforestation, and drastically monitoring global supply chains with policy of a full-transparency. Halting deforestation is the number 1 priority that convokes us all, as heads of States, businesses, international organizations, NGOs, project holders.

**Restoration comes in parallel to conversation and is immediately needed.** Science will always struggle to fully understand ecosystems and how their complex processes - that have been evolving over millennia - can be harnessed at



scale for reforestation purposes. We need to acknowledge this limit of ours. However knowledge to start restoring forest ecosystems is not missing. Restoration practices can be enhanced and ensure that forests get sounder and sounder and contribute to keeping us safe from zoonoses risks. This has to follow qualitative implementation standards: for example, research has demonstrated that mixed-species projects contribute to restoring forests with greater resistance, resilience and ecosystem services delivery. Global efforts to this end are sorely needed as are ambitious economic policies to foster ecosystems restoration beyond development aid. Without financial means to sustain efforts to restore nature, the UN Decade will miss the 2030 target for reforestation.

## **According to the IPCC, we must plant, protect and grow one billion hectares of forests before 2050 to help limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century**

**To fully grasp this forest momentum, we also need to review our policies.** We can follow the framework for sustainable forest management inherited from the 1992 Rio Summit, but it needs to be upheld and to embed biodiversity protection. We also need to assess our land use policies. According to the IPCC, we must plant, protect and grow one billion hectares of forests before 2050 to help limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century. As we gain momentum, this could be achieved by 2030, provided that we implement forest restoration via mixed-species forest plantations, high-level monitoring, close cooperation with local project holders and massive financial support.

Leadership is emerging: the EU paves the way with the goal of planting and restoring 3 billion trees in the decade. On top of this, there is the opportunity of agroforestry that opens other avenues for a better balanced land use too. There is also a greater demand for “nature in town”, that any mayor could work on. Finally, afforestation (i.e. creation of new forests) will also play a role in achieving these objectives, and thus in enhancing our global capabilities to filter air and water as well as increasing our slight chances to mitigate climate change.

**The way to fully usher in the UN Decade is clear: faster protection and better restoration of our forests.** These objectives take us far beyond carbon offsetting, which is a restricted view of our environmental responsibilities. This actually requires a new relationship with nature. It means turning away from a nature-exploiting economy to a circular bioeconomy based on nature-positive principles and that respects the planetary boundaries. It calls for our sense of **emergency**: we cannot step gingerly into the decade of action, we need to run! It goes along with our sense of **responsibility**: as human beings, we need to acknowledge that our ability to understand the complexity of ecosystem services - let alone replicating them - will not save us. It goes along with our sense of **humility**: we first and foremost need to care for the reduction of our environmental footprint, but we also need to make sure everyone is on-board. From the single citizen planting a tree in his/her garden to transnational firms. From indigenous communities to project leaders on the field and even international NGOs. From parliaments of least-developed countries to governments of G20 economies. **Nature calls for bolder leadership. It is in our hands to achieve it.**

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*Stéphane Hallaire, Founder & CEO of Reforest'Action, and Thomas Friang, Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute, co-organizers of the Global Forest Summit*

# The 2021 Global Forest Summit

Co-organized by Reforest'Action and the Open Diplomacy Institute under the High Patronage of Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, the **Global Forest Summit** gathered leaders of international organizations, governments, firms and NGOs on **March 12th, 2021**. The Summit put forest on top of the international agenda ahead of major international diplomatic conferences in 2021.

Considering the future of forests as central in the fight against climate change and willing to protect biodiversity, speakers advocated together for significant measures as 2021 marks the start of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Reaching more than 10 million people around the world, the Global Forest Summit sparked the transnational conversation needed to sustain concrete actions and engage cross-border leadership. This report is not fully-fledged minutes of the Summit but summarizes the overall ideas discussed and main recommendations made.



## Main ideas

The following main ideas were discussed during the March, 12th Global Forest Summit. The recommendations are proposed by Reforest'Action and the Open Diplomacy Institute.

### 01 Forest Momentum

2021 is the year of the three Rio Conventions Conferences of Parties: the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention on Desertification and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. 2021 is also the start of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration. **As such, 2021 could be the decisive super-year-for-nature to scale-up ambitions to address all aspects of these environmental crises.** Forests absorb up to 30% of our carbon emissions, host 80% of terrestrial biodiversity and are key to fight against the desertification of many regions. **We need to build on the Forest Momentum to protect faster and restore better.**

### 02 Global Leadership

Since 2016, the European Union invested a lot of political energy to internationally sustain the Paris Climate Agreement, at risk of a political collapse after the American withdrawal of the Accord. In 2021, the Italian Government chairs the G20 while the British Government presides over the G7. Together, they co-chair the COP 26 Climate in Glasgow. While the US is back, **we hope their joint leadership will accelerate the building of a "global net-zero coalition" with immediate actions taken for real achievements by 2050.**

## 03 Holistic Approaches

Awareness is raising that the climate emergency has prevented from developing the holistic approach needed to address the two sides of the environmental crisis: our ambitions for the planet also have to encompass the dramatic biodiversity loss issues. There is also a growing sense that net-zero approaches will not be enough (though they already mean very demanding efforts): proactive nature restoration is needed beyond reducing and offsetting our footprint on ecosystems. **We look for a paradigm shift that will facilitate "nature positive approaches"**.

## 04 Multi-stakeholder Coalitions

Major initiatives pave the way for this Forest Momentum and convene public and private partners to accelerate. The starting 1 Trillion Trees campaign of the World Economic Forum and the new Imagine movement initiated by Laurent Boillot, CEO of Hennessy, aim at scaling up reforestation efforts. The launch of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance will help to reinvent our relationship to nature and take care of its environmental and social ecosystem services which mankind thoroughly depends on. **The challenge of environmental disruptions calls for such global multi-stakeholder coalitions that raise our ambitions and club our resources.** Coalitions that gather States, companies, NGOs, communities, indigenous tribes and priceless local projects holders.

## 05 Urgent Action at-scale

Forests are truly in a state of emergency. 10 million hectares (i.e. the surface of Iceland) were deforested each year between 2015 and 2020, dramatically fuelling global warming and biodiversity loss. Thus, global ambitions need local players for real and rapid achievements. **Halting deforestation and reducing our carbon footprint are two major priorities.** Alongside, planting one billion hectares of forests as advised by the IPCC will **require a generation of reforestation entrepreneurs working all over the world along three main principles:**

reforestation projects need to be designed and implemented

- with local communities and provide them a direct economic benefit;
- high quality reforestation projects need to care for the importance of mixed-species forests that help maximizing ecosystem services and increasing forest resistance and resilience to natural hazards;
- long term monitoring.

## 06 Forest & Health

Deforestation puts our health in direct danger as it weakens the food security of billions of people. It also concurs food insecurity. Lastly, it dramatically amplifies zoonoses risks which can result in more frequent and violent epidemics. **We commend the One Health initiative** that underlines the vital link between health of nature and health of mankind **and all national efforts to embed forest protection and restoration in their public health policies**, including for the sake of a more global well-being that encompasses social and mental health on top of physical health.



## 07 Forest & Biodiversity

Habitat for more than 80% of terrestrial wildlife, forests are vital for the prevention of the sixth mass extinction. The WWF account a **53% decrease of vertebrate animal populations in forest since 1970.** We therefore commend the following measures to address the danger of mass biodiversity loss:

- review the 1992 framework for sustainable forest management that did not include biodiversity protection;
- raise awareness among "biodiversity-driven companies" which must commit to zero deforestation short-term objectives;
- further study forest ecosystems and their co-benefits to better restore forests;
- foster community-driven solutions involving indigenous communities for both conservation and restoration objectives;
- accelerate the development of agroforestry.

## 08 Forest & Climate

Accounting for 10% of CO2 emissions, deforestation directly contributes to global warming. It also affects our climate change mitigation capabilities, **as forests can absorb up to 30% of our emissions, as well as our adaptation capabilities as they provide ecosystem services** helping to face more frequent and more violent catastrophes. We therefore commend the following measures to better and faster address all aspects of the climate crisis:

- develop legally binding instruments to fight deforestation or international targeted sanction mechanisms;
- increase corporate responsibility with full transparency on supply chains to fight against imported deforestation;
- develop a more granular approach for net-zero ambitions with net-zero commitments at corporate levels;
- raise awareness among sectoral market leaders and B2B companies which can accelerate rolling out the development of net-zero ambitions in their stakeholders (clients, providers, investors);
- develop greater transparency in asset management to quicker stop anti-forest investment.

## 09 Forest & Economy

Classical economic approaches have not yet managed to achieve forest protection and restoration. **Carbon pricing has not reached maturity to induce greater efforts for conservation** nor the emergence of restoration business models. It also misses the point of biodiversity. Also acknowledging that 40 to 60 million people work in informal forest sector, **we commend the following ideas to develop more sustainable economic policies for forests:**

- review economic incentives and in particular land use tax policies to strike a better balance between agriculture lands and forests, as agriculture the main global driver for deforestation;
- develop private-public partnerships for investment in forest restoration that concur to our global nature capital;
- carefully think if the commercialization of ecosystem services is relevant according to the local context by reaffirming that nature is composed common goods;
- accelerate the development of a circular bioeconomy that builds on nature capital and integrates biodiversity protection along climate protection.



# The organizers



## Reforest'Action, Leading B-corp for forest protection and restoration

Forest specialist, Reforest'Action is a B Corp certified company whose mission is to preserve and restore the world's forests, through planting and assisted natural regeneration in response to the climate emergency and the erosion of biodiversity. To achieve this, Reforest'Action rigorously selects forestry projects carried out locally by associations, communities, social enterprises and other public players.

Reforest'Action supports these players financially and in the sustainable monitoring of projects in order to develop the environmental, social and economic multifunctionality of forests. Reforest'Action's mission is made possible thanks to the participatory financing of companies and more than 200,000 citizens. Since its creation in 2010, Reforest'Action has planted and protected more than 12 million trees in 30 countries, sensitized 20 million people to forest preservation and restoration, and generated a positive impact on the living conditions of more than 150,000 people worldwide.

Reforest'Action is in dialogue with public institutions and international organizations to extend and accelerate its commitment to forests.

More information: [www.reforestaction.com](http://www.reforestaction.com)



## The Open Diplomacy Institute, participatory think-tank for international affairs

The Open Diplomacy Institute is a Paris-based think-tank on international affairs. Since 2010, the Institute aims at involving non-diplomatic actors in the global policy conversation and explores all geopolitical trends shaping the life of future generations: balancing power of Europe with the rest of the world, accelerating the ecological transition, taking leadership of digital disruptions, regulation of the global economy and protecting fundamental rights.

Therefore, in 2011, Open Diplomacy created the G20 and G8 outreach groups for youth, the Y20 and Y7. Since this milestone at the heart of the 2011 French presidency of the G20 and G8, the Institute has developed a powerful capacity of "participatory diplomacy" engaging a wide-audience to take part in the design and implementation of international policy.

The Open Diplomacy Institute operates the network of the "Parliamentarians for Peace", a transnational group of MPs advocating for bolder political leadership to sustain multilateralism in international cooperation and to address emerging threats for peace.

More information: [www.open-diplomacy.eu](http://www.open-diplomacy.eu)

# The speakers



## The Opening Panel

### Panel discussion:

- **Lord Zac Goldsmith**  
Minister of State for Pacific and the Environment of the United Kingdom
- **Stéphane Hallaire**  
Founder & CEO of Reforest'Action

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute



## The Session “Forest Momentum”

### Panel discussion:

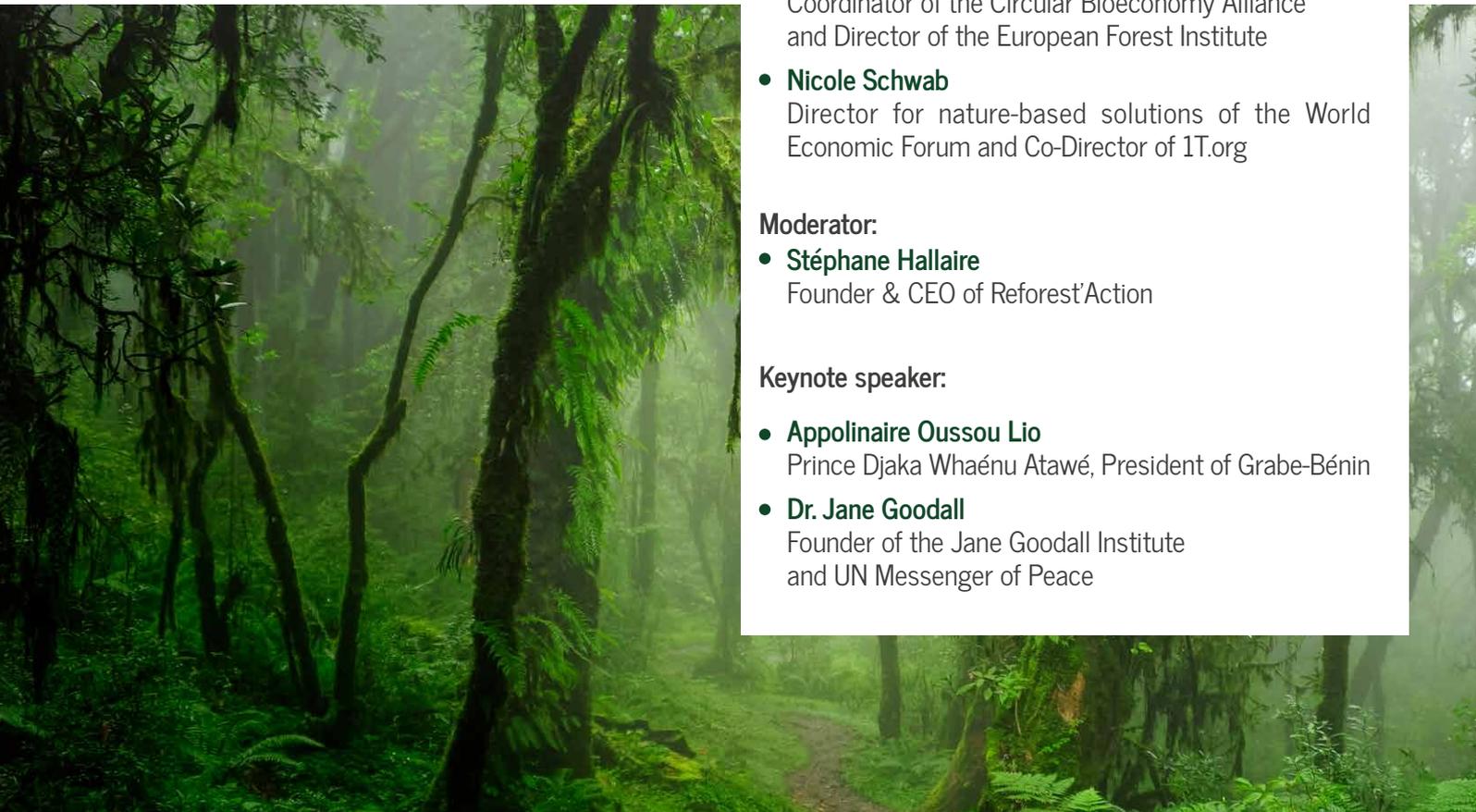
- **Laurent Boillot**  
CEO of Hennessy
- **Tim Christophersen**  
Head of Nature for Climate of the UN Environment Program and Coordinator of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
- **Thomas Crowther**  
Chief Scientific Advisor of the UN's Trillion Tree Campaign
- **Marc Palahi**  
Coordinator of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance and Director of the European Forest Institute
- **Nicole Schwab**  
Director for nature-based solutions of the World Economic Forum and Co-Director of 1T.org

### Moderator:

- **Stéphane Hallaire**  
Founder & CEO of Reforest'Action

### Keynote speaker:

- **Appolinaire Oussou Lio**  
Prince Djaka Whaénu Atawé, President of Grabe-Bénin
- **Dr. Jane Goodall**  
Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and UN Messenger of Peace





## The Session “Forest & Health”

### Keynote Speaker:

- **Ninawa**  
Leader of the Huni Kui people

### Panel discussion:

- **Pascal Canfin**  
Former Development Minister of France and Chair of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament
- **John Paul DeJoria**  
Co-founder and Chairman of the board of JPMS
- **Dr. Jo Puri**  
Director for Environment, Climate, Nutrition, Gender, Social Inclusion of the International Fund for Agriculture and Development
- **Dr. Philippa Whitford**  
Member of the British House of Commons
- **Dr. Naoko Yamamoto**  
Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute



## The Session “Forest & Biodiversity”

### Keynote Speaker:

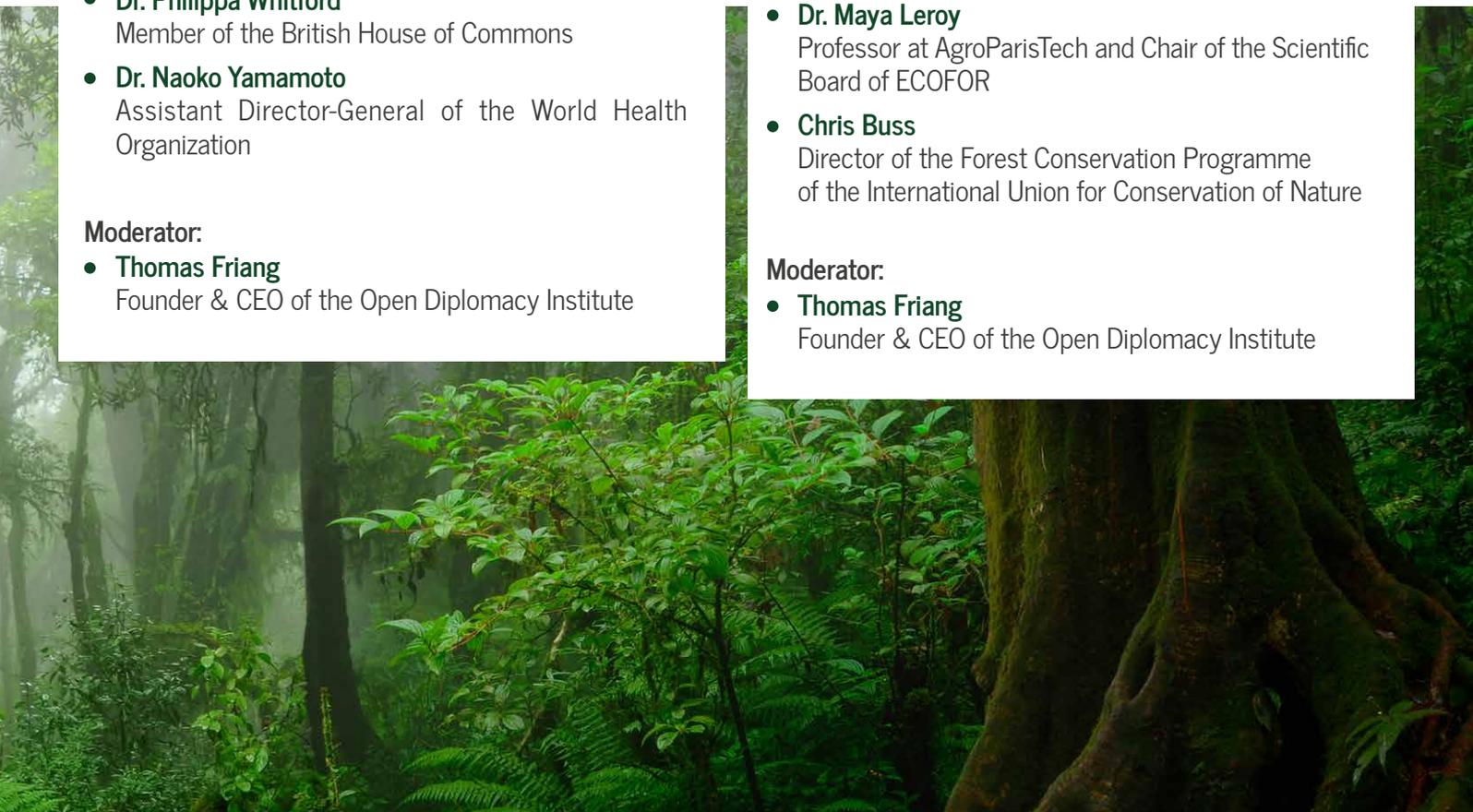
- **Louise Mabulo**  
Young Champion of the Earth 2019

### Panel discussion:

- **Dr. Izabella Teixeira**  
Former Environment Minister of Brazil and Co-chair of the International Resource Panel
- **Dr. Hans Bruyninckx**  
Executive Director of the European Environment Agency
- **Virginie Helias**  
Chief Sustainability Officer of Procter & Gamble
- **Fran Price**  
Global Forest Lead of the WWF
- **Dr. Maya Leroy**  
Professor at AgroParisTech and Chair of the Scientific Board of ECOFOR
- **Chris Buss**  
Director of the Forest Conservation Programme of the International Union for Conservation of Nature

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute





## The Session “Forest & Climate”

### Keynote Speaker:

- **Alexandria Villaseñor**  
Founder of Earth Uprising International

### Panel discussion:

- **Dr. Eva Müller**  
Director-General for Forests, Sustainability and Renewable Resources of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture
- **Dr. Thelma Krug**  
Vice-chair of the IPCC
- **Pape Sgna Mbaye**  
Member of the Parliament of Senegal, Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee
- **Musonda Mumba**  
Chair of the Global Partnership for Forest and Landscape Restoration and Director of the Rome Centre for Sustainable Development, Nature, Climate and Energy of the UNDP
- **Céline Soubranne**  
Chief Sustainability Officer of AXA
- **Max Scher**  
Head of Clean Energy and Carbon Program of Salesforce

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute

## The Session “Forest & Economy”

### Keynote Speaker:

- **Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim**  
Founder of AFPAT

### Panel discussion:

- **Terry Hatton**  
Director-General of the Canadian Forest Service
- **Clarisse Magnin-Mallez**  
Senior Partner and Global Lead for Circular Economy of McKinsey
- **Dr. Robert Nasi**  
Director-general of CIFOR
- **Garo Batmanian**  
Global Lead for Forests, Landscapes and Biodiversity of the World Bank
- **León Jorge Castaños**  
Director-General of the National Commission on Forests of Mexico, Chair of the Committee of Forests of the FAO

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute



## The Closing Panel

### Panel discussion:

- **Isabelle Durant**  
Acting Secretary-General of the UN Conference for Trade and Development and former Vice-prime Minister of Belgium

### Panel discussion:

- **Virginijus Sinkevičius**  
European Commissioner for the Environment
- **Selwin Hart**  
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Action and Assistant Secretary-General for the Climate Action Team
- **Carlos Manuel Rodriguez**  
Chairman & CEO of the Global Environment Facility and Former Environment Minister of Costa Rica
- **Stéphane Hallaire**  
Founder & CEO of Reforest'Action

### Moderator:

- **Thomas Friang**  
Founder & CEO of the Open Diplomacy Institute

### Concluding remarks:

- **Barbara Pompili**  
Minister for the Ecological Transition of France

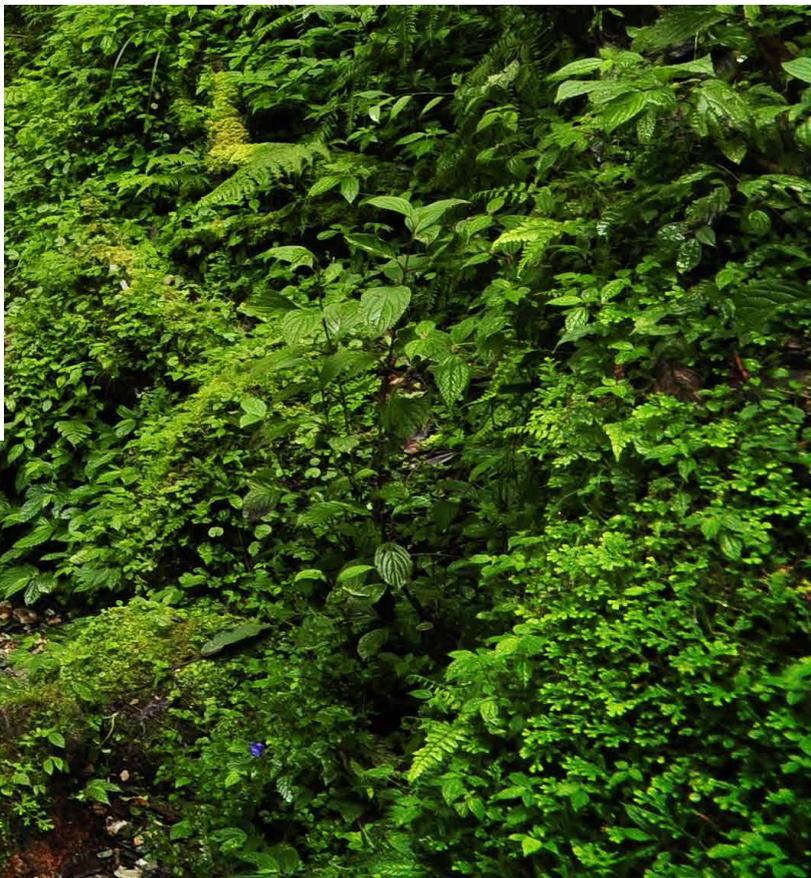
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