



Embargoed until 04.11.2020, 12:00 CET

IUCN and partners launch novel fund to drive investment in nature-based solutions

Gland, Switzerland, 04.11.2020 (IUCN) – IUCN today announces the launch of Nature+ Accelerator Fund, a first-of-its-kind private sector-focused nature conservation accelerator fund providing measurable conservation and social benefits while delivering financial returns for investors.

The Accelerator Fund offers investment capital to early-stage as well as more mature nature-based solutions projects (NbS) with high potential for growth and positive conservation impacts, mainly in emerging markets. The fund is complemented by technical assistance and capacity building offered to project developers to help them maximize the environmental, social and financial potential and identify and secure complementary and follow-on funding.

With the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as an anchor investor, the Nature+ Accelerator Fund has already secured US\$ 8 million in risk-tolerant financing. The commercially-operated fund, which will be managed by asset management company Mirova, aims to raise further investment to create a US\$ 200 million portfolio of projects ranging from the seed investment phase through to the sustainable growth phase. The Accelerator is now ready to accept commitments from public and private professional investors.

“There is a growing case for why investing in nature should be a viable proposition for the private sector. The Nature+ Accelerator Fund is designed to create a sizable pipeline of attractive nature-based investment deals to be offered on the market. The fund will accelerate the growth of mature and near-mature investment plans in Nature-based Solutions and help prepare them to access commercial financing”, said **Sead Maginović, IUCN Global Director Nature-based Solutions**. “This fund, operated by Mirova, is supported by a mix of private and public funding with the ambition of growing a US\$ 200M portfolio.”

To ensure the rigor of conservation outcomes for both public and private investments, the Nature+ Accelerator Fund relies on the best practice and growing evidence from nature-based solutions approaches spearheaded by IUCN, its Commissions, and its Members. For instance, the Accelerator will apply the newly created Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions and the Species Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) metric within its investment portfolio.

This unique collaboration of major global institutions to advance investment in nature draws from the work of the Coalition of Private Investment in Conservation (CPIC), which supports the Accelerator through a working group focused on investment structuring. The Accelerator relies on investment blueprints from the 80+ member CPIC community (a group of leading civil society organisations, private and public sector financial institutions and academia working to deliver a material increase in private, return-seeking investment in conservation).

“The Nature+ Accelerator Fund is the result of years of fruitful engagement and work of the members of the Coalition for Private Investment in Conservation. This fund will help identify investable projects in natural capital and conservation at a critical moment,” said **Geoff Fonseca, Director Programs at the GEF**. “While public funds remain insufficient to reverse biodiversity loss, this fund will help create a needed track record of new business models that protect and promote nature. We look forward to seeing its results and working to bring the most successful projects to scale.”

Mirova has been selected to structure and operate the Nature+ Accelerator Fund, with the aim of ensuring that the projects benefiting from the fund’s investments generate added value and are well-positioned to qualify for follow-up investments from other existing funds and capital available for

conservation finance. The fund will be managed by Mirova Natural Capital, a subsidiary fully owned by Mirova.

“As an early mover in the natural capital space, innovation and additionality remains in Mirova’s DNA. We believe this accelerator focuses on the real funding gaps. It is also central in our growth strategy and ambition to scale up investments in natural capital”, said **Vincent Gad, Managing Director Mirova Natural Capital**.

Through the expertise of IUCN, CPIC and others, the Nature+ Accelerator Fund will remain robust and agile to deliver on needed innovations in the sector while maximising sustainability and conservation outcomes.

Notes editors

Form of information or statement: 01/2023

www.iucn.org

About the GEF

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has provided more than \$20 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$112 billion in co-financing for more than 4,800 projects in 170 countries. Through its blended finance initiative, the GEF has provided more than \$800 million in support for 98 projects, mobilizing \$8 billion.

www.thegef.org

About the Mirova Natural Capital Platform

An experienced and recognised asset manager with an impact-driven approach to investment aligning strong financial returns with measurable environmental and social impact. It is the product of the acquisition in 2017 of Althelia Ecosphere Ltd, a pioneer impact investor in the natural capital space, by Mirova, the leading European Responsible Investment platform, and is committed to be the leading global natural capital fund manager. www.mirova.com

Mirova

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Mirova is an affiliate of Natixis Investment Managers.

About CPIC

The Coalition for Private Investment in Conservation (CPIC) is a global multi-stakeholder initiative focused on enabling conditions that support a material increase in private, return-seeking investment in conservation.