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Airbus supports the IUCN's "Plant a Pledge" campaign advocating the largest land restoration initiative ever

Bianca Jagger calls on public to urge global leaders to meet 150 million hectare restoration target

Ahead of the Rio+20 Earth Summit, campaign ambassador Bianca Jagger, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Airbus launched today "*Plant a Pledge*" – an online campaign to mobilise public support for the largest restoration initiative in history.

The 150 million hectare target is known as the Bonn Challenge, after ministers and CEOs met last year in Germany to issue an urgent rallying cry to the global community.

"IUCN's latest research now shows that in restoring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020 – which is only 15% of the estimated area of degraded forests worldwide – we would see more than US\$ 84 billion net injected annually into local and global economies and cut the climate change "emissions reduction gap" by 11-17%," said Stewart Maginnis, Director of the Nature-Based Solutions Group of IUCN. "It will make significant contributions to the global challenges we face today, alleviating poverty, slowing global warming and securing food, particularly for those who need it most."

The campaign is calling on individuals around the world to *Plant a Pledge* of support through the campaign website – which will become a global petition to be delivered at the UN climate change talks in Qatar, later this year.

Each online pledge asks governments, private landowners and communities who manage lands to commit areas for restoration in order to achieve the Bonn Challenge by 2020.

The Global Partnership for Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), who along with the German government hosted the original Bonn Challenge meeting, recently identified two billion hectares of land worldwide – an area the size of South America – as offering opportunities for forest landscape restoration. Repairing landscapes would restore their ability to support people and wildlife and would significantly increase global capacity to process greenhouse gases, according to IUCN.

"Improving fuel efficiency is at the heart of our business and we have reduced emissions by 70% in the last 40 years. Aviation today represents 2% of manmade emissions and we are continuing to improve the efficiency of our industry to reduce this, having invested over two billion Euros in environmental research and development, this year alone. The partnership with the IUCN reflects our commitment to support those tackling the other 98 percent," said Andrea Debbané, Airbus Vice President of Environment Affairs. "Landscape restoration reduces net emissions by increasing carbon storage and is a practical, sustainable solution to many issues facing the planet, people and the economy."

“For over thirty years I have campaigned for human rights and environmental protection. These issues may seem unrelated, but their causes, and their solutions, are interconnected”, said Bianca Jagger, campaign ambassador, and Founder and Chair of the Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation. “With the *Plant a Pledge* Campaign we can take concrete steps towards restoring the landscape in deforested and degraded areas and repair the damage to human lives and natural resources. Achieving the restoration of 150 million hectares of former forest land around the world by 2020 - the Bonn Challenge target - will improve lives, the economy and the planet and will offer solutions to the impending climate crisis. Pledge at www.plantapledge.com and help push land restoration to the top of the political agenda.”

“With this campaign, we also hope to highlight that landscape restoration is about so much more than just planting trees” says Carole Saint-Laurent, IUCN’s Senior Policy Officer for Forest Landscape Restoration. “A restored landscape allows for different land uses to coexist: from agriculture, to forests managed for timber, fuel and fruit, and protected wildlife reserves, to areas managed for the protection of water supplies. The goal is to revitalise the landscapes so it can meet the needs of both people and nature, sustainably.”

For further information visit: www.plantapledge.com [live from 00.01, Tuesday 12 June] or www.iucn.org or www.airbus.com/en/presscentre

Contact for the media:

- Interviews available on request. Please contact Good Relations.
- To download images and further background information go to: <https://plantapledge.sharefile.com/f/fo7ed4ae-7265-45b9-9481-b1bf592f1a98>

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Notes to editors**WHAT IS THE PLANT A PLEDGE CAMPAIGN?**

- Plant a Pledge is the public facing campaign designed by the IUCN and Airbus to build a significant groundswell of support, urging Governments, Businesses and Environmental experts to work together to restore lost landscapes around the world with the aim of meeting the Bonn Challenge - the biggest restoration initiative the world has ever seen.
- In September 2011 commitments were made to the GPFLR Bonn Challenge by governments, business leaders and environmental experts to work towards the restoration of 150 million hectares of lost landscapes by 2020. This ambitious but attainable target represents a giant step forward in the acceptance of landscape restoration as a means of meeting global and local challenges.
- Forest and landscape restoration (FLR) turns barren or degraded areas of land into healthy, fertile, working landscapes that can meet the needs of people and the natural environment, sustainably.
- Repairing ruined landscapes restores their ability to support people, wildlife and livelihoods, put back some of the world's capacity to process greenhouse gases and pump an estimated US\$84 billion (net) into the global economy
- We would encourage everybody to visit www.plantapledge.com, to pledge support. Your click will contribute to the upsurge of public pressure on governments to deliver on their promises – taking millions of people out of poverty, injecting billions into world economies and making the world a greener, more sustainable place.
- The IUCN will use these signatories to ensure that governments put their pledges in writing – outlining specific promises about land areas, locations, timescales and methods of restoration
- The Bonn Challenge will make a significant contribution to the existing Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Target 15 (aiming for the restoration of at least 15% of the world's degraded ecosystems by 2020), and the UNFCCC REDD-Plus goal (to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss).

WHAT WILL AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT PLEDGE LOOK LIKE?

- The IUCN and GPFLR partners are working to help governments, landowners, corporations and non-governmental organisations define their commitments. Including: area to be restored; timescale (before and after the 2020 date); functions, purpose; and the type of activities.
- Those who own or have the right to manage land pledged for restoration will be tracked and held to account by the GPFLR.
- Commitments will be announced at GPFLR events over the next 12 months. They will be made public on the GPFLR website and linked to the IUCN/Airbus Plant a Pledge campaign 'counter'.
- Reaching the Bonn Challenge target will depend on the success of hundreds of landscape restoration projects around the world.

ABOUT THE PARTNERS**The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) www.iucn.org**

- IUCN helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.
- IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,000 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world.
- IUCN coordinates the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), which, together with the government of Germany, co-hosted the roundtable meeting in Bonn in September 2011 at which the Bonn Challenge target was agreed.

Airbus www.airbus.com

- Headquartered in Toulouse, Airbus is owned by EADS, a global leader in aerospace and related services. This group has a presence on every continent, and employs a total workforce of more than 119,000.
- Airbus itself is a truly global enterprise of some 55,000 employees, with fully-owned subsidiaries in the United States, China, Japan and in the Middle East, spare parts centres in Hamburg, Frankfurt, Washington, Beijing and Singapore, training centres in Toulouse, Miami, Hamburg and Beijing and more than 150 field service offices around the world.
- The Plant a Pledge campaign forms part of the Future by Airbus (FbA) programme, Airbus' vision of sustainable aviation in 2050.

The Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration www.ideastransformlandscapes.org

- The Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) is a worldwide network that unites influential governments, major UN and non-governmental organisations, business and individuals with a common cause.
- The Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) was launched in 2003 by IUCN, WWF and the Forestry Commission of Great Britain. Since then more than 25 governments and international and non-governmental organizations have joined.
- The GPFLR builds support for restoration with decision-makers and opinion-formers at both local and international level, and influence legal, political and institutional frameworks to support FLR.
- The GPFLR's Learning Network is vital to the sharing of FLR experience from around the world, and to the achievement of milestones such as the Bonn Challenge target. That experience includes helping to bring about breakthrough projects and undertakings in settings as diverse as China, Rwanda, Indonesia, North Korea, Brazil and the US.

The emissions gap

- The emission reductions gap is the estimated shortfall in climate mitigation action, once all current greenhouse gas reduction efforts and commitments are taken into account, required to avoid global temperature increases exceeding 2°C.