



Sustainable Cayman
PREPARING TODAY FOR A
BETTER TOMORROW

A roadmap to achieve 30% conservation of land

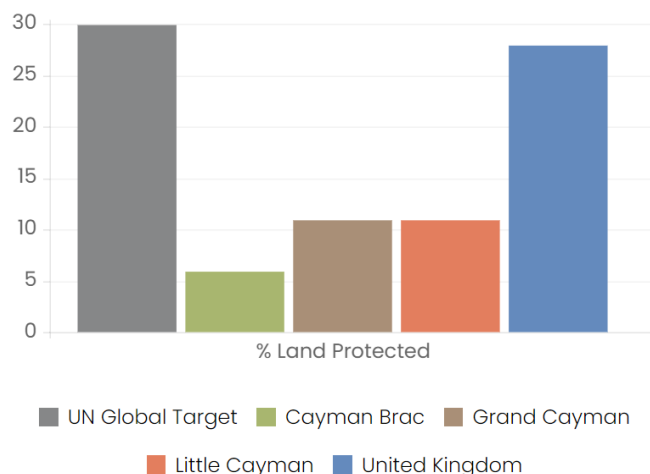
Defining the Problem

National governments increasingly recognize that mass ecosystem destruction, wildlife extinctions, and shifting climates have pushed conservation to the top of their agenda. It has become imperative to implement comprehensive, long-term measures that stop these trends and restore the function of nature. For instance, in November 2021, The United Kingdom passed a flagship Environment Act on how nations can legally commit to work towards improved environmental conditions and halt loss of biodiversity. The UK has also committed to protecting 30% of its land and sea for nature's recovery by 2030. Governments from around the world will be meeting once again in 2022 to commit to more stringent global targets for preserving nature under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Governments and businesses now have an opportunity to take a critical, collective step to arrest this decline:
TO AGREE TO PROTECT AT LEAST 30% OF THE WORLD ON LAND AND SEA.

In addition to the Environment Charter (2001), the Cayman Islands is a party to multiple Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's), including: (a) the Convention on Biological Diversity ("Rio Convention"); (b) the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance ("Ramsar Convention"); (c) Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol to the Cartagena Convention ("SPAW Protocol"); and (d) Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ("Bonn Convention"). As such, the Cayman Islands is obligated to fulfill formal and substantive aspects of these agreements.

A Roadmap For Conservation



The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed eighteen of Cayman's plant and animal species as endangered. We lack wildlife corridors, green spaces in urban areas, and connectivity between habitats across the island. Moreover, only 11% of the land on Grand Cayman, 6% on Cayman Brac, and 11% on Little Cayman is protected. As tiny islands, the loss of ecosystem services jeopardize the security and wellbeing of our community in many, interconnected ways.

We need a strategic 30 by 30 roadmap to achieving acceptable conservation targets for all three islands.

Possible Paths Forward

Approve Nominations for Protected Areas. Once approved by the National Conservation Council (NCC), it is up to Cabinet to approve nominations that have made it to this round. The approval of these lands by the NCC means that they are indeed of ecological and/or social value. Approving many, if not all, of these nominations - as well as encouraging the support and cooperation of private landowners - would be a major step in bringing the Cayman Islands closer to preserving 30% of our land.

Mapping Lands Using GIS. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping is an efficient way to collect ecological data with the purpose of identifying ecologically valuable lands that could be acquired to reach 30% protection. Measures of ecological value across the landscape in the area of interest should include variables such as: (a) beta-diversity; (b) vulnerability; (c) fragmentation; (d) connectivity; and (e) resilience.

Adopting a Policy Framework. Having a policy to support environmental stewardship, such as a framework of ownership or management agreements, would legitimize protection. This could encourage philanthropic donations where the general policy is to fully protect biodiversity or ecological restoration. The approach needs to have both a legal and scientific basis in order to designate both private and Crown land for the public good. Acquired lands can be a mixture of charity-owned land, government-owned land and privately-owned land. Conservation covenants can be made that would document the quality of existing habitats and presence of wildlife, and place restrictions on human activities on the property to ensure it is conserved.

Nature Markets. Having a mapping framework will increase the viability for the increasing interest and development of Nature Markets. Covering three areas of, intrinsic nature markets, offset nature markets and derivative nature markets, the Cayman Islands could become the leader in this field, as presented by Ralph Chomi on behalf of Taskforce on Nature Markets during his recent visit to the Cayman Islands.

Closing Thoughts

This is not only an 'environmental' issue, but a 'human survival' issue as well. Measures that protect the environment can stabilize communities and their economies, and enhance the welfare of their people by improving their resilience. Thus, every department of the Cayman Islands Government has a part to play in creating a sustainable future for the people.

We support the Cayman Islands government and private stakeholders in taking responsible action towards achieving 30 by 30

References:

Nature.Org: 30x30: Eight Steps to Protect the Best on Earth

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/what-we-do/our-insights/perspectives/thirty-percent-protect-best-biodiversity-on-earth/>

UK Launches worlds largest ocean monitoring system:

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/smartwatermagazine.com/news/govuk/uk-launches-worlds-largest-ocean-monitoring-system%3Famp>

Green Alliance Blog: post by Kate Jennings, head of sites and species policy at the RSPB.

<https://greenallianceblog.org.uk/2021/09/02/theres-a-reality-gap-in-the-governments-promise-to-protect-30-percent-of-land-for-nature/>

JNCC Nature Positive 2030

<https://jncc.gov.uk/our-role/the-uk/nature-positive-2030/>

The Guardian: 50 Countries Commit to Protection of 30%

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jan/11/50-countries-commit-to-protection-of-30-of-earths-land-and-oceans>

Biodiversity in the UK Overseas Territories

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmenvaud/674/67406.htm>

LEFT: Ecological footprint tool Nov 2015 - Oxford

EAC Publish Report on UK's Global Biodiversity Footprint

<https://cieem.net/eac-publish-report-on-uks-global-biodiversity-footprint/>

Defra Environment Bill

[September 2021: Nature and conservation covenants \(parts 6 and 7\) - GOV.UK](#)

Law Commission Conservation Covenants

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322592/41070_HC_322_PRINT_READY.pdf

Four Endangered Species Call Cayman Home

<https://cayman.loopnews.com/content/little-known-facts-about-4-endangered-species-call-cayman-home>

List of Critically Endangered Species in Grand Cayman

https://rainforests.mongabay.com/biodiversity/en/cayman_islands/CR.html

World Wildlife Org: Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, Little Cayman

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/ecoregions/nt0208> Using earth observation to map terrestrial habitats of the Turks and Caicos Islands

<https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/ba26b0c2-f7e6-40ee-a0f3-fb6eabed60e9/JNCC-Report-664-FINAL-WE B.pdf#page15>

What does biodiversity net gain mean for residential development?

https://www.savills.com/research_articles/255800/319716-0

Will Biodiversity Net Gain deliver for nature in England?

<https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/will-biodiversity-net-gain-deliver-for-nature-in-england/>

The Future of Nature Markets

<https://www.naturemarkets.net/publications/the-future-of-nature-markets>

Delivered on 20 May 2022



Sustainable Cayman

Est. 2014