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Leading coalition calls for nature powered circular bioeconomy to be the driver of climate solutions at COP28

Founding Members Lombard Odier, AstraZeneca and LVMH provide their backing to the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance as it delivers transformative action on the ground.

At COP28, the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA) are calling on leaders from across government, corporate, finance and civil society spheres to play their part in creating regenerative landscapes, and sustainable communities and markets.

As world leaders gather at the summit to discuss and agree collective ambitions on climate, the CBA will be convening private, public and community partners to galvanise collective action that delivers tangible progress on the ground. The scaling up of nature-based solutions and regenerative value chains will be central to the success of efforts to secure a sustainable future for people and planet.

At an event co-hosted with the UK Government on 2nd December 2023, and in support of the COP28 Presidency's efforts to 'put nature, people and livelihoods at the heart of climate action', the CBA will bring together leading voices to highlight the critical role of nature, and the circular bioeconomy it powers, in driving the transition to a net-zero, climate positive and inclusive economy. When properly valued by economic systems, nature's benefits can help to address complex global and interconnected crises.

With the backing of Founding Members Lombard Odier, AstraZeneca and LVMH, the event will also mark the CBA's official launch as a British charity, as the UK forges a global leadership role in securing nature as the world's most precious economic asset, at the heart of the global climate agenda.

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance is a leading collaborative platform that facilitates public-private partnerships to accelerate the transition to a circular bioeconomy that is climate-neutral, inclusive, and prospers in harmony with nature. The Alliance was established in 2020 by His Majesty King Charles III (formerly His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales).

CBA's Living Labs across four continents demonstrate how investing in nature and empowering local and indigenous communities can catalyse the development of circular bioeconomy value chains, while restoring biodiversity and local livelihoods. These public-private-community partnerships aim to create a scalable blueprint that drives progress towards global climate targets.

Dame Amelia Fawcett, CBA Chair and Co-Chair, International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits said *"Our world, powered by an extractive and fossil-based economy, has reached a tipping point. We need a new economy powered by Nature - a circular bioeconomy that prospers within our planetary boundaries to support human health and sustainable wellbeing. The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance is connecting the dots between local and indigenous communities, investors, companies and NGOs to accelerate action on the ground to create regenerative landscapes and sustainable communities as the basis for a circular bioeconomy."*



Hubert Keller, Senior Managing Partner at Lombard Odier said:

“A new economic paradigm is beginning to emerge, as the financial community wakes up to the essential role that nature will play in tackling the climate challenge. Lombard Odier is delighted to be a Founding Member of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance, leveraging our expertise in attracting investors to the opportunity offered by Nature-based solutions, including the protection, restoration and sustainable management of our land systems. By unlocking and accelerating investment into nature at scale and working with like-minded partners within the Alliance, we look forward to supporting efforts to boost biodiversity and secure regenerative value chains - the very basis of a nature-positive economy.”

Juliette White, Vice President Global Sustainability, AstraZeneca said:

“The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance is a unique organisation, whose support for sustainable and resilient landscape regeneration is building ecological and community resilience around the world. As founding members of the CBA Charity, we are delighted to be deepening our collaboration, and continuing to support community-led reforestation and circular business models. I’ve seen first-hand from our partnership with the CBA on AZ Forest projects in Ghana and Rwanda how effective public-private collaboration can drive sustainable impact at scale.”

Uyunkar Domingo Peas Nampichkai, Technical Advisor and Field Representative for the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAE) said:

“We talk a lot about transition. How can we change? Ecological transition? For me the rainforest will not undergo transition. It automatically regenerates. The transition must be human. Human transition, a change of hearts and minds.”

Why nature?

Nature across the globe has been significantly altered by multiple human drivers, with the great majority of indicators of ecosystems and biodiversity showing rapid decline. Nature loss is fundamentally and bidirectionally interconnected with climate change – both crises accelerate each other and present systemic risks. Climate change is a key driver of nature loss and degradation (e.g., wildfires, droughts, pest and diseases) reducing nature’s ability to provide climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits and in many cases turning natural sinks into important sources of greenhouse emissions. This in turn intensifies the impacts of climate change, resulting in a vicious cycle of escalating effects.

The UK Government are leading the drive for nature focussed solutions as one of the first countries to pledge to protect 30% of their land for nature by 2030. They played a leading role at the COP15 UN biodiversity summit in Montreal in December 2022, driving negotiations and securing international commitments to protect nature and reverse biodiversity loss.

What is a circular bioeconomy?

A circular bioeconomy offers a conceptual framework for using renewable natural capital to holistically transform and manage our land, food, health and industrial systems, as well as our cities. A circular bioeconomy is a bounded ecosystem, through which biological resources (plants, animals, micro-organisms



and derived biomass, including organic waste) are sustainably managed and transformed in a circular manner into food, feed, energy and biomaterials. The aim of a circular bioeconomy is to ensure we are living within our means, and within the ecological boundaries of the environment.

How does the CBA protect nature?

The CBA mobilises transformative action on the ground towards nature restoration and sustainable development through its global network of Living Labs for Nature, People and Planet. The aim is to create scalable blueprints to transform degraded landscapes and non-sustainable value chains into regenerative landscapes and sustainable markets that are inclusive, biodiversity-positive and climate-neutral.

Each Living Lab mobilises funders, NGOs, governments, and local communities, using a landscape restoration project as the starting point to catalyse the development of circular bioeconomy value chains while restoring biodiversity and local livelihoods. Living Labs test holistic approaches to landscape restoration and sustainable value chain creation; focus on research and capacity building; and are based on public-private-community partnerships. They place local and Indigenous communities at their centre, empowering nature and people in a concrete territorial context and integrating traditional knowledge as well as science-based research and innovation.

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance's aspiration is to create a proof of concept - a blueprint- to scale up the transformation our landscapes and value chains need. CBA are excited to share this solution with stakeholders at COP28, and demonstrate to the climate community a tangible answer to landscape degradation, whilst building sustainable value chains for local communities. This supports governments to develop science-informed strategies to transition towards a circular bioeconomy and advance global action on climate.

ENDS

For invitations to CBA's event – *'Nature & People: Powering a Circular Bioeconomy'*, opportunities for interviews and any media enquiries

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Notes to editors:

Biography of Marc Palahi

Marc Palahi is an internationally recognised expert on forests, circular bioeconomy, and global change, with over two decades of experience in leading scientific initiatives, including serving as the Director of the European Forest Institute. He played a pivotal role in advancing the Institute as a pan-European scientific policy platform and promoting the integration of knowledge into actionable initiatives at the intersection of science, policy, and business.



Marc is highly recognised within the scientific community, contributing to, and co-authoring, over 40 scientific publications. In addition to his role as CEO of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance, established by His Majesty King Charles, Marc is also Chief Nature Officer at holistiQ Investment Partners.

Living Labs: the start of a journey towards more resilient communities and landscapes

A Living Lab for community and ecological resilience, in Ghana, is building on a 10-year community-based project in Atebubu, central Ghana, planting and stewarding 4.5 million trees in the region.

This region is one of Ghana's key areas for charcoal production, and the natural forested land in the area has been subject to heavy encroachment by farmers and illegal tree cutting for charcoal. Degradation, habitat change from dry forest to savannah woodland and agricultural clearance has also contributed to the intensity and incidence of wildfires. Common challenges faced by local communities in the region have included unemployment, deteriorating soil fertility, limited education opportunities, poor communication networks, changing climate and weather-related challenges. This is causing a self-perpetuating cycle as the current challenging conditions, poverty and lack of opportunities are leading to low standards of living and out-migration, as well as encroachment on forested land.

The tree planting initiative has encouraged multi-sectoral collaboration and is improving livelihoods for women and youth through employment in tree nurseries, the timber value chain, and as community mobilizers. It is also facilitating capacity building through an out-grower scheme and community meetings. In addition, food security is increasing due to innovative farming methods, and embedding community practices that cause less harm to the landscape.

This Living Lab has created circular business models relying on biological resources (biomaterials and bioenergy) and nature-based systems. This in turn improves financial literacy and business development for smallholder farmers connected to agroforestry and woodlots and provides resources for farmers to participate in and benefit from new commercial bio-based products and services. This is a key example of integrating tradition and technology while introducing new technologies to create innovative bio-based value chains, respecting local traditions and rights.

This Living Lab, supported by AstraZeneca, demonstrates the power of biodiversity regeneration and a nature-inspired economy to catalyze local jobs, livelihoods, and economic alternatives – all co-designed with local stakeholders.

More information on Atebubu Living Lab can be found [here](#)



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