Cape Town Call to Action on Ecological Restoration:
One Earth, One Future, One Chance

Message from the 8th World Conference on Ecological Restoration (SER2019)
Cape Town, South Africa
September 28, 2019

Seventy percent of the planet's terrestrial landscapes are damaged by humans; our oceans, lakes and rivers are polluted and collapsing. We are degrading the planet at a pace that profoundly exceeds the pace of repair. We caused these problems. We must solve these problems.

Ecological restoration saves species; protects livelihoods; cleans water, air, and land; creates healthy soils; and reverses climate change.

This call to action is issued on behalf of more than 800 SER2019 delegates, including restoration practitioners and researchers, community leaders, and representatives of non-governmental organizations, private businesses, and government agencies from 68 countries. We met to address the urgent need for ecological restoration as the key nature-based solution to the challenges of climate change.

We urge governments, industries, communities and all those able to contribute around the world to join us in elevating the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to:

- Engage stakeholders at all levels to heal their land and communities;
- Value the contribution of traditional and local ecological knowledge to solving our complex issues;
- Create sustainable long-term employment by developing robust restoration economies, and the business and financial infrastructure to support it; and
- Use nature-based solutions to build enduring, resilient ecosystems that deliver the full suite of services that society and future generations need to survive and thrive.

Conservation alone is not enough. Carbon sequestration alone is not enough. Ecological restoration is a catalyst for transformative change that brings together all of these activities for our common good. We are one people. We have one earth, one future, and one chance to get this right. Restoration is no longer optional, it's a matter of survival.