

OUR VISION IS  
THAT WE ALL ACT  
EVERY DAY ON THE  
UNDERSTANDING  
**THAT WE ARE ONE  
WITH NATURE**

THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION  
**2020+ STRATEGIC PLAN**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The David Suzuki Foundation would like to thank our community, donors, staff and board of directors for their contributions to this work and to our collective action to come.*

*The David Suzuki Foundation works in communities throughout Canada on historic, traditional and many unceded territories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.*

*With gratitude.*

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# A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDING FAMILY

The year 2020 was to be one of unprecedented change in humanity's direction in response to 2019's massive fires that engulfed an entire continent and massive rallies where young people demanded action to protect their future. But in the waning weeks of 2019, reports of a new coronavirus outbreak focused attention on a more immediate threat. In the 50th year since the first Earth Day, the COVID-19 virus forced everything else out of the news as four-billion people retreated into self-isolation. That changed everything.

We collectively mourn the human suffering and lost lives from this virus. The disruption it caused is something we will collectively work to resolve. How we respond can change the course of history.

As we write this letter, the rulebooks are being rewritten for things we once viewed as unchangeable: equity, diversity and inclusion norms, economic priorities, the role of the state. This instability is challenging. It also brings unprecedented opportunity.

In the flurry of memes that swept social media in the wake of the virus, one stood out: "We can't go back to normal. Normal wasn't working. Normal cannot handle a global crisis." It's an opportune moment to ask ourselves: What wasn't working about the way we lived before COVID-19? How can we change things for the better as our "new normal" continues to unfold?

Nature got a break during our retreat into self-isolation. Air pollution in major cities dropped by up to 50 per cent. Wildlife began to reappear as humans retreated. As politicians and corporations struggle to deal with immediate needs while seeking the outlines of the future, it is vital to remember that as biological beings, our very survival depends on clean air, water, soil and energy and a variety of other species. How can we learn to live interdependently with the natural world and not as its enemy?

This global pandemic prompted billions of us to act together to protect our most vulnerable. In doing so we've demonstrated to ourselves that we *can* do what's needed



L-R: Severn & Sarika Cullis-Suzuki, David Suzuki, Tara Cullis

to solve even greater threats to humankind — threats such as climate change.

**We are one species on a pale blue dot in a seemingly infinite universe. We've been given an extraordinary chance to learn, adapt and, if we're lucky, continue to flourish because an infinitely smaller speck, called COVID-19, forced us to act.**

Will we use this opportunity to help humankind recognize and give thanks for nature's generosity? Will we commit to a reciprocal obligation to enable it to thrive? Or will we further entrench ourselves on an unsustainable course constrained by political and economic rules?

The fate of generations is decided at moments such as this. This is our time. Let's make the most of it.

# A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Creating a long-term vision for the future of our organization may seem like an impossible task at this moment. COVID-19 is upending everything we thought we knew about how we function as a society. But there are two reasons why the timing couldn't be more critical.

First, it's at times like this when we humans, knit together by the narratives we tell ourselves, need a compelling vision for the future. Second, the course of human history shows us that moments of crisis often make it possible to change our collective fates for the better.

This plan is informed by more than 2,000 DSF supporters and thought leaders. We gathered input from our community, donors, staff and three-dozen external experts through in-person interviews, workshops, dialogue and surveys. We are grateful to everyone for their wise counsel, creative ideas and generous guidance. We listened and acted.

Overwhelmingly, we heard four things:

**Be focused.** Everyone knows who we are, but not everyone knows what we do, in part, because we've been trying to do too much. So we've focused our strategic objectives by moving from 36 to five. We've also streamlined our programs, moving from seven to four, and we'll continue to focus our delivery of these programs on what matters most.

**Be fast.** One thing is clear: there is no time to lose. The science tells us we have eight years left to prevent irreversible climate change. Building on the groundswell of Canadians calling for change, we must support people throughout the country to act now, with a sense of urgency — at home, in our communities, in our legislative assemblies and in Parliament.



Margot Young, Board Chair

**Be flexible.** We recognize that the need for rapid change is also a call to our own organization to adapt quickly and nimbly. We've evolved the way we plan our work so that our activities reflect an evolving context by using a dynamic planning approach. This means that we'll develop and adapt our program mix as needed so that we can realize opportunities as they are presented by a changing context. You can stay up to date on our latest developments on our website: [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)

**Bring people together.** We updated our theory of change to reflect the profound role we can play in not just in engaging people where they live but also in supporting and amplifying existing movements. We believe that if we act boldly together we can change the arc of human history.

We're looking forward to acting boldly together with you. Whether it's our first meeting, or whether we've been working together for decades, thank you for your interest, your support and your shared commitment to our common future. Onward.



# FOCUSED. FORWARD. TOGETHER.



## FOCUSED. FORWARD. TOGETHER.

**T**he David Suzuki Foundation is one of Canada's largest and most trusted environmental charities. Our work aims to help solve the climate crisis and mass species extinction by focusing on three essentials: zero carbon, thriving nature and sustainable communities. By communicating the best available science in ways that engage our community and compel governments to make change, we work to create a world where we all act on the understanding that we are one with nature.

Our new Strategic Plan is created based on three imperatives:

### **We must act with focus to address root causes of the environmental crises.**

Given the enormity of these crises, we must focus on addressing their root causes: those based in societal systems and those based in our own individual values, beliefs and behaviours. This plan addresses both. Our new sustainable communities focus area, introduced later in this plan, deepens our work to address these root causes.

### **We must act together to benefit from the multiplier effect of collective action.**

Our Foundation was founded 30 years ago with a Declaration of Interdependence. The need to act together, in concert, en masse, has never been so clear. In the initial weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, we saw the power and efficacy of global action. In the months that followed, we learned, often the hard way, about the importance of working together to respond effectively and fairly. We can continue to save lives and livelihoods by applying what we learned through this to tackling the climate crisis and mass species extinction.

### **We must act now before it's too late.**

At the Foundation we used to strive for "sustainability within a generation," but the science now tells us we don't have that long. If we want our children to grow up in a world with a safe climate and thriving nature, we must act now. We've updated our mission and vision statements to reflect this reality and guide our work toward urgent action now, for the future.

## OUR NEW MISSION

To protect nature's diversity and the well-being of all life, now and for the future.

## OUR NEW VISION

We all act every day on the understanding that we are one with nature.

## OUR VALUES

Our values remain the same.

**We are committed.** We uphold our principles — interdependence, interconnectedness, respect, equality, learning, nature and hope. We bring ourselves, intellectually and emotionally, to our shared vision of the common good.

**We are collaborative.** We nurture authentic, respectful relationships with a diversity of partners, with Canadians throughout the country and with each other to broaden our reach and achieve stronger outcomes.

**We are courageous.** We make courageous decisions about the work we undertake and we persevere no matter what hurdles we face. We maintain optimism in our conviction that society can be transformed to make it just and sustainable.

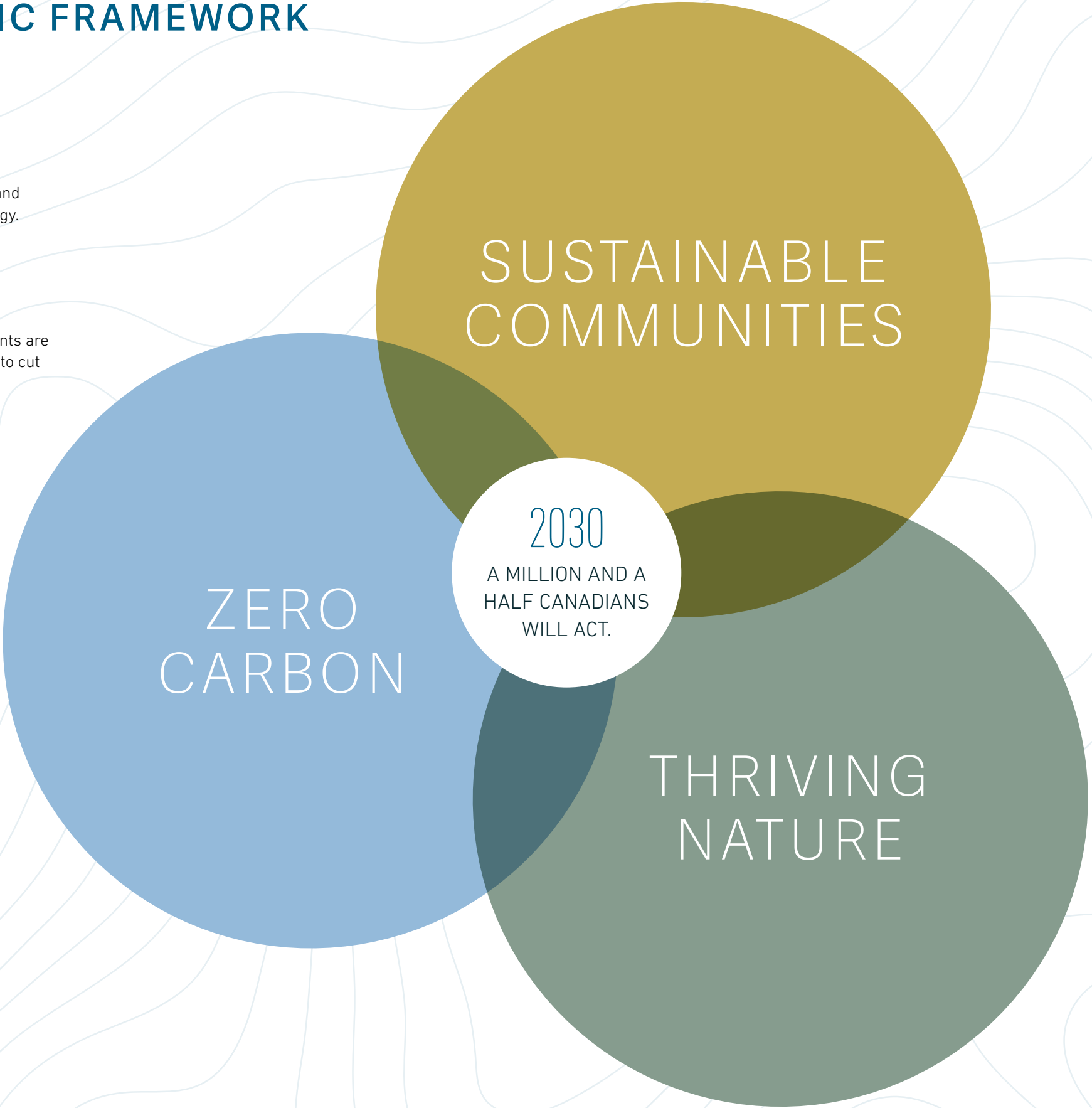
**We are solutions-seeking.** We actively engage in the work of finding innovative solutions to build the healthy, just and prosperous communities we envision.

**We are integrity-driven.** We hold ourselves accountable to the highest ethical standards and don't compromise on our principles or our commitment to good science.

# THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION 2020+ STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## ZERO CARBON

- 2050** We'll eliminate carbon pollution and use 100 per cent renewable energy.
- 2030** We'll cut carbon pollution in half.
- 2025** **CLIMATE SOLUTIONS**  
Federal and provincial governments are implementing policies and plans to cut carbon pollution in half by 2030.



## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- 2050** We'll live within the Earth's finite limits.
- 2030** We'll thrive while reducing our ecological footprint by a third.
- 2025** **RENEWABLE COMMUNITIES**  
Communities representing 50 per cent of Canada's population are implementing ambitious action plans to reduce environmental footprint.

## THRIVING NATURE

- 2050** We'll conserve and restore nature so that it supports biodiversity.
- 2030** We'll protect and restore our most at-risk ecosystems and species.
- 2025** **WILD NATURE CONSERVATION & RESTORATION**  
20 per cent of Canada's land and ocean is under formal protection and the majority of areas are providing conditions for abundance, as well as recovery of species at risk.
- REWILDING COMMUNITIES**  
Communities representing 50 per cent of Canada's population have embedded nature-based solutions into their operations.



# ZERO CARBON



PHOTO: GREEN ENERGY FUTURES

## ZERO CARBON

**A**ll Canadians are experiencing the effects of climate change. Whether it's breathing smoky air, surviving a killer heat wave or worrying that the basement might flood again, we're seeing the direct effects of climate change on our physical and emotional well-being.

It's not surprising then, that climate change is the most urgent environmental issue of our time. In 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 C. The report concluded that we have 12 years left to prevent carbon dioxide from reaching irreversible levels with catastrophic consequences for life on Earth. Globally, we've exceeded our annual carbon budget since the IPCC report was published. As this document goes to print we now have less than a decade.

*By 2050, we'll eliminate carbon pollution and use 100 per cent renewable energy.*

*By 2030, we'll cut carbon in half.*

Canada signed on to the UN Paris Agreement of 2015, which aspires to limit global warming to 1.5 C. Although the agreement itself is not enough to keep emissions at safe levels, it's an important step in the right direction. The Pan-Canadian Framework guides our national approach to meet these commitments. Since its creation, we've seen action from the federal government and some provinces (like B.C. and Quebec) to reduce

carbon pollution and promote renewable energy use. We need to build on this momentum if we are to reach our national targets and reduce the impact climate change has on the lives of generations to come. **We need to act as if our life depends on it — because it does.**

We're starting from a strong place. Canada has abundant, untapped, clean, low-impact, renewable energy resources throughout the country and an existing electricity system that has a high potential to store energy and dispatch it when needed. We need to first work to conserve more energy and then double down on generating more renewable energy from safe, environmentally responsible sources.

The research shows that focusing on this transition will create a range of economic opportunities throughout Canada. That said, change of this magnitude is inherently disruptive and requires support to ensure a just transition that protects workers, Indigenous Peoples and communities affected by the climate crisis and its associated economic and social effects.

It's a big challenge and we need action at all levels. Federal and provincial policy can mobilize resources broadly. Action at the local community level can transform these resources into results on the ground. Our Climate Solutions program focuses on federal and provincial opportunities. Our Renewable Communities work (described in the next chapter) focuses on local community opportunities.



# CLIMATE SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

Our Climate Solutions program supports change at federal and provincial levels to enable climate action. Specifically, we build broad support, provide policy advice and conduct research to transform the way we produce and consume energy. Together with the academic community, we're creating a blueprint for Canada's transition to a renewable energy future and bringing this research forward for the benefit of all policy-makers and citizens. We see a Canada where air quality improves, energy is affordable and carbon pollution declines rapidly.

*By 2025, federal and provincial governments are implementing policies and plans to cut carbon pollution in half by 2030.*



## THE THREE RS RESILIENCE, RIGHTS AND RECONCILIATION

The new century brought with it new basics that must be understood and embodied if our work is to have lasting impact.

**The first is resilience.** Ensuring our communities are prepared for, and can thrive in, the face of adversity brought about by external shocks such as the climate crisis or a pandemic is no longer optional. It's essential. We're all in this together. Acting collectively and proactively is key.



PHOTO: MATHIEU MORIN

**The second is rights.** At DSF we spent half a decade building awareness throughout Canada that a healthy environment is a fundamental human right. We empowered ambassadors to carry this message to their city halls and our national Parliament. We're supporting youth in the streets and the courts who are demanding bolder action from government on climate change. We'll continue to work across our programs to ensure that these rights are secured and safeguarded.

**The third is reconciliation.** The Federal Truth and Reconciliation Committee highlighted that reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is a journey that all Canadians must take together. We're on the path and will continue the journey through training, ensuring Indigenous inclusion on our staff and board, and following and supporting the lead of our many Indigenous partners.

At the David Suzuki Foundation, we believe deeply in all three of these essential elements. We're committed to ensuring that they're not only evident in what we do but that they're also embodied in how we do it.

## EXPLAINER ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Many of us are familiar with the idea of measuring carbon footprints; that is, how much carbon pollution is created as a result of our actions. However, what most of us don't know is that our carbon footprint is only part of the picture of our overall impact on the planet.

This is because of how carbon pollution is measured. The most popular way of measuring carbon footprints includes only those emissions we create directly, by burning fuel to run our cars or heat our homes. What's not measured is the pollution created in building our cars, homes and everything else we consume or the pollution that's created in disposing of these things afterward.

Carbon pollution is just part of the overall environmental impact. What's also not measured is how much natural habitat (soil, forests, grasslands, wetlands, lakes, rivers,

oceans) is consumed and altered by human activity, making it increasingly difficult for other species to survive. We can't make good choices if we can't see clearly. The current myopia created by the rush to carbon zero threatens to leave us blind to other important environmental impacts. Considering our ecological footprint changes that.

Ecological footprint is a measure of humans' impact on nature. It measures the area of land and water needed to produce the goods and services to support a given lifestyle. It's the missing link between our current practice of measuring and managing carbon pollution and measuring and managing humans' use of biodiverse parts of our planet. At the David Suzuki Foundation, we're formally adopting ecological footprint as an additional measure so that we can help all Canadians see the big picture and our part in it.







## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Popular media tells us that our personal satisfaction increases as we consume: A larger home, a more powerful car, a more exotic vacation — notions of bigger, better, faster and further push us to excess. This is not only a never-ending pursuit, it's also ecologically unsustainable and socially inequitable. If everyone on Earth lived the way we do in North America, we'd need 3.4 planets to sustain us.

*By 2050, we'll live within Earth's finite limits.*

*By 2030, we'll thrive while reducing our ecological footprint by a third.*

The research tells us a different story. The data show that consumption and life satisfaction do correlate but only to the point at which a person's basic needs are met. After that, other factors, such as the strength of one's personal relationships, correlate much more strongly with happiness than consumption. As we know, after enduring the period of forced social isolation during the COVID-19 crisis, staying socially connected is key to our resilience and well-being.

This is great news for people and the planet. Many of us in North America can live fuller, happier, lives

while consuming less. Seeking "the good life" is not fundamentally at odds with protecting life on Earth. This means that more of us, over generations, can thrive happily in balance with nature.

To achieve this, we must do two things.

First, we need to change the system. Systems that we've created, including how we build our cities, towns and communities, lock us in to unsustainable patterns of overconsumption. Without access to amenities such as renewable heat and power sources, sustainable transportation and walkable neighbourhoods, many of us are forced to make choices about how we work, play and travel that are not in our own long-term interests.

Second, we need to change ourselves. Our values, beliefs and behaviours create and reinforce cultural norms, many of which currently encourage excess. These are changeable. The current surge in popularity of plant-based diets among North American millennials is one example of how cultural norms can have real impact on consumption patterns.

Our Renewable Communities program looks at both sides of this equation.



PHOTO: PAUL KRUEGER





PHOTO: LEO CHAN

## RENEWABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Canadians, like other North Americans, consume more than our fair share of Earth's resources. This consumption is concentrated where we are: in our communities. Because of this, we can address overconsumption systemically by reimagining and redesigning the places and spaces where we live. If we do this well, we can also increase social connection, furthering resilience and well-being.

Two thirds of our total consumption is of energy: heat and power for buildings, transportation and industry. Using energy more efficiently, and shifting to renewable sources, will not only reduce our overall consumption of resources but will also reduce carbon pollution. This is key to addressing climate change.

The remaining third of our consumption is of other goods, those we consume directly (like tomatoes from the garden) and those used by industry to produce other products that we ultimately consume. It's a

long journey from farm to fork, and from ore to iPad. Many resources are wasted along the way. "Circular economies" work to address these system failures in three ways: by reducing consumption, reusing resources and regenerating natural systems.

*By 2025, communities representing 50 per cent of Canada's population are implementing ambitious action plans to reduce environmental footprint.*

Accelerating the transition to a clean-energy, resilient, circular economy is a critical step toward ensuring a safe climate and thriving planet. Working with local governments, citizens, Indigenous knowledge-holders, the private sector, academia and other agents of change, the Renewable Communities program will accelerate place-based actions in communities large to small.

### SUCCESS STORY

## CITY OF MONTREAL CLIMATE PLAN

For most Canadians, two-thirds of our personal ecological footprint is driven by how we heat and power our homes and how we travel. Reducing this impact is not something most of us can do on our own; we need support from local and regional governments to provide us with the opportunity to live with lighter footprints.

By passing policy to enable smart urban design (including walkable neighbourhoods, greater density and access to green transportation choices) and renewable energy options (to heat and power our homes), local and regional governments can enable millions of Canadians to live within nature's finite limits. That's why we partner with and support cities throughout Canada, like the City of Montreal, to declare climate emergencies and take bold action.

In Montreal, we mobilized a group of philanthropic foundations along with the C40 (international association of cities on climate change) under the mayor's leadership to build and adopt an ambitious climate plan that aims to reduce emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030 based on 1990 levels, and to make the city more resilient to climate change.



This unique partnership is now mobilizing philanthropic, private and institutional resources to accelerate ecological transition, to support implementation of the city's plans. Watch for more, bold, local government action as we support more cities to build a renewable future for their citizens.



PHOTO: CAROLINA ANDRADE

## WELL-BEING ECONOMIES PILOTS

If you failed to keep your New Year's resolution, you're not alone; a full 80 per cent of us did. Why is it so hard to change a habit? One reason is that habits are reinforced by the context around us. We're more likely to sustain a change if the context around us also changes. Because of this, addressing habitual patterns of overconsumption requires a fundamental rethink of how we've structured our economy and society. At DSF we're conducting a series of small pilots in partnership with other leading thinkers to see what societal and policy changes are needed to create a well-being context that empowers individuals to make changes. More on this to come.



DEMONSTRATING INTERDEPENDENCE THROUGH INTEGRATION OF OUR WORK

If you move from a house in the suburbs to a condo in the city, will you be helping to achieve our climate goal, our nature goal or our well-being goal? The answer is yes. A smaller home to heat, located within walking distance of amenities means less carbon pollution. Increased housing density means less urban sprawl, leaving more room for wild nature. All of these factors contribute to a reduced environmental footprint, enhancing well-being. Everything is interdependent.

Our strategic plan is designed with this interdependence in mind, with each area focused on different facets of the central challenge of tackling the environmental crisis. The table below illustrates how our programs are designed to deliver on multiple strategic goals and objectives.

CLIMATE	WELL-BEING	NATURE
<b>ZERO CARBON</b>	<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>THRIVING NATURE</b>
By 2050, we'll eliminate carbon pollution and use 100 per cent renewable energy.	By 2050, we'll live within Earth's finite limits.	By 2050, we'll conserve and restore nature so that it supports biodiversity.
By 2030, we'll cut carbon pollution in half.	By 2030, we'll thrive while reducing our ecological footprint by a third.	By 2030, we'll protect and restore our most at-risk ecosystems and species.
<b>CLIMATE SOLUTIONS</b>		
By 2025, federal and provincial governments are implementing policies and plans to cut carbon pollution in half by 2030.		
<b>RENEWABLE COMMUNITIES</b>		
By 2025, communities representing 50 per cent of the Canadian population are implementing ambitious action plans to reduce environmental footprint.		
<b>REWILDING COMMUNITIES</b>		
By 2025, communities representing 50 per cent of the Canadian population have embedded nature-based solutions into their operations.		
<b>WILD NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION</b>		
By 2025, 20 per cent of Canada's land and ocean is under formal protection and the majority of areas are providing conditions for abundance, as well as recovery of species at risk.		

THRIVING NATURE





# THRIVING NATURE

Every breath we take is a reminder that we depend on nature for our survival. We're not the only ones who rely on clean air, fresh water and biodiversity to survive; wildlife needs it too. We're in the middle of a mass extinction. The UN estimates that 150 to 200 species become extinct each day. Canada has more than 500 species at risk. Insects, which make up two-thirds of all life on Earth, have declined by 45 per cent since 1974, affecting all life right up the food chain.

Habitat loss is the main cause of this mass extinction. Human activity, and more recently, climate change, is eliminating or severely degrading habitat through deforestation, desertification, pollution and ocean acidification at rates not seen before in human history. The UN has declared 2021-2030 to be the Decade of Restoration to recognize that we must repair biodiversity for the benefit of all.

*By 2050, we'll conserve and restore nature so that it supports biodiversity.*  
*By 2030, we'll protect and restore the most at-risk ecosystems and species.*

Because over 80 per cent of us live in cities, it's easy for us to think that there is a vast wilderness in which wildlife can thrive. In fact, humans' environmental footprint is huge. According to the UN, human use directly affects more than 70 per cent of all ice-free land. Only 10 per cent is land we actually live on. The rest we impact to serve our insatiable consumption. Our Renewable Communities program works to address the human consumption aspects of this equation. Our Wild Nature and Rewilding Communities programs focus on maintaining, restoring and reconnecting biodiverse ecosystems both "out there" in the wilds of Canada and "right here" in our own backyards.



## SUCCESS STORY ORCA PROTECTIONS

Salish Sea orcas (a.k.a. southern resident killer whales) are at imminent risk of extinction. They're harassed by boaters and disturbed by underwater noise. Populations of their preferred food, Chinook salmon, are declining. The interdependence between orcas and salmon illustrates the importance of healthy ocean ecosystems. If we don't recover declining Chinook salmon, orcas may not survive.



PHOTO: CENTER FOR WHALE RESEARCH

More than 35,000 people are now members of #JoinThePod on social media and some 4,000 people have signed our pledge to take personal action to protect the whales and salmon. It's working!

The David Suzuki Foundation and our supporters pushed for unprecedented positive changes for orca and Chinook and the coastal communities that depend on them.

In 2019, Canada announced the boldest measures ever to recover at-risk orcas and Chinook salmon. These include greater whale-watching restrictions, no-vessel zones in some feeding areas and reduced harvest of at-risk Chinook.

In 2019, Canada also made important changes to the Oceans Act and Petroleum Resources Act that will strengthen protection of at-risk marine ecosystems. This includes a simpler process to create marine protected areas and adopting recommendations to improve their quality. This means the government can react quicker and more efficiently to prevent harmful activities in marine protected areas.

These changes make a big difference in protecting these important areas and set us up for longer-term success. We continue to advocate for more safeguards for marine ecosystems and at-risk species from coast to coast to coast.

## WILD NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM

To protect all life on the planet, including our own, we need to do two things. First, we need to protect and maintain wild areas that support biodiversity. Second, we need to restore areas that have been degraded so that biodiversity is again abundant. Because restoring nature can take decades, it's essential that we first focus on protecting what's left. Doing this not only helps wild creatures, it also helps humans. Canada's wilderness areas are among the few remaining "lungs of the planet" upon which we all depend for clean air, a stable climate and a safe future.

To achieve this, we need four things. First, we need traditional protected areas and parks. Second, we must support and accelerate the growth of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. Third, we must advocate

for the co-governance by Indigenous People of "protected areas" that were imposed on their traditional territories. This important shift in governance is a necessary step toward reconciliation. Fourth, because protected areas alone are not enough (they do not change the way people interact with nature outside the park), we must also shift the way people do business, learning to work with nature to meet our needs while maintaining biodiversity.

*By 2025, 20 per cent of Canada's land and ocean is under formal protection and the majority of areas are providing conditions for abundance, as well as recovery of species at risk.*





PHOTO: EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS, LAURA BERMAN

## REWILDING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

In the face of species extinction, we need to build sustainable, resilient communities by restoring ecosystems where we live. Protecting nature in communities helps insects, birds, fish and other small animals thrive and allows nature to help us. Nature-based solutions can purify our water, soil and air, absorb stormwater, control erosion, restore places in our communities we've damaged and physically cool our cities. They improve human health and can be cost-effective, complementing traditional engineered solutions.

Given the obvious benefits, why don't we make this a priority? Local governments in many communities often lack the resources, information or support needed to make this happen. We can help in three ways. First, we

use science and economics to help local governments understand how nature-based solutions can enhance, and in some cases replace, engineered solutions. Second, we need to change law and policy to allow these solutions to become common practice. Third, we need to collaborate with local residents and governments to conserve the wild spaces and biodiversity that remain in our communities, and monitor the health of these spaces to support continued abundance.

*By 2025, communities representing 50 per cent of Canada's population have embedded nature-based solutions into their operations.*

## THEORY OF CHANGE AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES







# THEORY OF CHANGE AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES

**A**n inspiring vision, necessary mission and bold goals and objectives are just the beginning. It takes a sound theory of change to achieve them. Goals and objectives describe what we'll accomplish together. Our theory of change describes how we'll get there.

At the David Suzuki Foundation we believe that if we:

- Offer solutions rooted in science and enabled through policy and law
- Inspire commitment toward a viable future for all

- Empower people in place, and
- Help accelerate movements

then we will address underlying causes of the environmental crisis. This includes changing the system (economic, legal, governance and other societal systems) and changing ourselves (shifting individuals' values, beliefs and behaviours).

We employ these strategic approaches in concert across all of our program areas. An overview of each follows. More detail can be found in our campaign plans.

## OFFER SOLUTIONS ROOTED IN SCIENCE AND ENABLED THROUGH POLICY AND LAW

### SCIENCE, POLICY AND LAW

A hallmark of the David Suzuki Foundation is our commitment to science and the scientific process. We not only use science to ground our work, we also support good scientific practice by ensuring that our work, and the data on which it's based, is peer-reviewed, informed by subject-matter experts and publicly available.

Frequently, science points to the need for stronger laws and regulations to accelerate progress toward addressing environmental crises. These are an expression of our collective choices, indirectly, through decisions made by the governments we elect. DSF supports evidence-based decision-making and engages in public policy dialogue to advance solutions. We engage Canadians to do to the same.



## INSPIRE COMMITMENT TOWARD A VIABLE FUTURE FOR ALL

### COMMUNICATIONS

The David Suzuki Foundation — and David's career — have largely been built on the premise that the better people understand the science, the better we'll be able to make decisions for the collective good. Complex systems and ideas can be explained simply and clearly. It's all about the science, presented in visionary ways that inspire and engage people to imagine and co-create our common future.

As a science and evidence-based organization, we endeavour to find the best available information on the environmental challenges we face — the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis and the economic engines behind them — and distil it for our audiences, connecting dots across all of our online and offline communications platforms, in engaging ways that inspire action.





# EMPOWER PEOPLE IN PLACE

## ENGAGEMENT

Our goal is to not only help our community better understand the situation we're in, but to also engage community members in ways that help them to be part of something bigger — part of a movement. We amplify local, regional, national and international movements, and we co-develop a strong and cohesive narrative with our supporters and partners that leads to a compelling vision of our shared future through inspiring messages and storytelling.

We are successful when we inspire our community to take collective action toward real solutions — toward a better, viable future for all. To do this, we engage people where they live, through the power of digital platforms and technology, so that they can “be the change” in their own communities and model this way of being for others. Our connection with communities starts here and transforms over time. Through deep relationships, sometimes built over decades, we engage local groups, support local leadership and empower individuals to take action. We provide the right tools for community members to take the type of action they are ready to take, and we continuously inspire them to take more involved action in their lives, whether it's signing a petition, changing a lifestyle habit or creating a local community group to lobby their government representatives.



PHOTO: GREEN ENERGY FUTURES

**We serve as connectors and conveners, offering individuals a number of ways to get involved with our work and with active environmental movements throughout the country. We bring thousands of voices together to create a chorus that is impossible to ignore.**

## FOLLOWING AND SUPPORTING THE LEAD OF PEOPLE IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Our Foundation was founded on the premise that empowering people to take action in places where they live is key to protecting the places and spaces we love. This is most evident in our decades of collaboration with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, from David's work in 1982 to amplify the voices of the Haida in their struggle to protect Gwaii Haanas to our more recent efforts to support the work of the Grassy Narrows First Nation in their fight for safe drinking water.

We aim to follow and support the lead of Indigenous Peoples in their territories, and partner, where appropriate, with communities and Indigenous organizations, on topics related to the goals in this strategic plan. Our intention is to work collaboratively, recognizing the importance of taking guidance from the Indigenous communities and organizations with which we engage. We will strive to balance our respect for Indigenous decision-making regarding their traditional territories with our core value of ecological sustainability.

# HELP ACCELERATE MOVEMENTS



PHOTO: ROBIN LOZNAK

## MOBILIZATION

One of the gifts of digital technology is the ability to connect like-minded people across distances. This is especially important when the status quo doesn't serve the common good. When this happens, we must mobilize.

Mobilization is mass social change in action. Often instigated by citizen-led groups or movements, mobilization aims to shift attitudes, change behaviours and influence policy to drive systemic change. The #FridaysForFuture movement prompted by Greta Thunberg's climate strike is a powerful example of people mobilized through the power of technology, united across nations, demanding change.

**Mobilization is powerful in democracies because, as history tells us, when non-violent movements grow to a certain size (typically about 3.5 per cent of the population), they reach a tipping point that makes systemic change not only possible but probable.**

We often associate mobilization with rallies and demonstrations in the streets. What you see in the streets is only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the surface of any visible movement is a massive invisible movement of organizing, distributed leadership and decentralized systems, built to support the great weight of the social change we seek and empower people to take action locally.

At the David Suzuki Foundation, much of our work reaches Canadians because of David's fame. That said, we know that sometimes we can help most by not being the face of change. Sometimes we can help most by leading from behind — by listening to what's needed, providing resources, making innovative digital tools available to boost other progressive leaders and amplifying the voices of leading movements.

*By 2050, we'll all act every day on the understanding that we are one with nature.*

*By 2030, a million and a half of us will act.*

We did this in 2019 when we hosted Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg in Montreal and Vancouver. Our investment enabled an alliance of grassroots groups to mobilize over 500,000 and 100,000 people at the Montreal and Vancouver climate rallies respectively, contributing to a global total of over six-million people demanding action. Whether it's in the streets or online, we'll do it again. We'll be there to ensure our collective voices aren't just heard in the halls of Parliament but that they result in the tangible changes needed to safeguard the future of all species, including our own.





PHOTO: ROBIN LOZNAK

## SUCCESS STORY

# YOUTH CLIMATE LAWSUIT

In October 2019, 15 young people from across Canada filed the country's first lawsuit of its kind against the federal government, in part for violating their rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* by contributing to and perpetuating dangerous climate change.

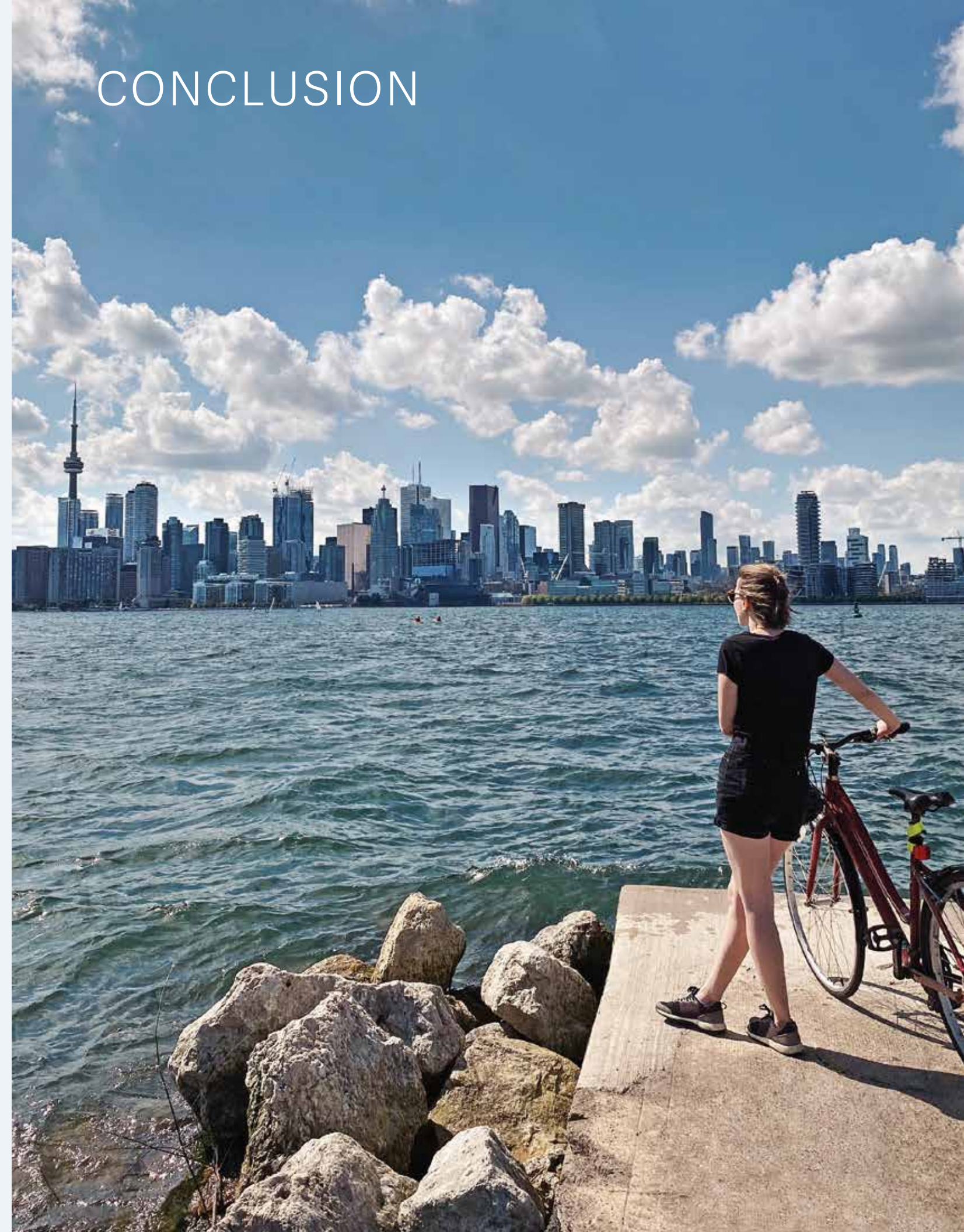
The goal: Force urgent and effective climate action from the Canadian government.

The young plaintiffs suing the federal government are all living with climate impacts. These include coastal erosion destroying family property, asthma worsened by wildfire smoke, illness transmitted by insects whose ranges have

been expanded by global heating and crippling anxiety about the dying planet.

In actions aligned with our Theory of Change, The David Suzuki Foundation is supporting these youth and their right to a safe climate by accelerating the movement, contributing to the cost of preparing their legal case and providing communications support and training to assist them on their journey for climate justice.

Learn more about the young plaintiffs and follow the lawsuit's progress at [davidsuzuki.org/youthclimate-lawsuit](https://davidsuzuki.org/youthclimate-lawsuit).



# CONCLUSION





## CONCLUSION

**A**t the beginning of this decade, we came together globally and, initially, “flattened the curve” to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. In doing so, we saved lives.

There’s another curve that needs to be flattened. Our unsustainable overconsumption threatens the health of our own species and others with whom we share this

beautiful planet. Right now, like never before, we have the knowledge, skill and opportunity to act. If not for generations to come, then at the very least for our own. We, who have suffered such loss. We, who are overcoming such obstacles. We, who will determine how, in this critical moment in history, the future of all life on Earth unfolds. We who, in acting together to save the planet, just might save ourselves.

## JOIN US!

There are so many ways you can help now. Visit our website to sign on to one of our calls to action, join one of our programs or make a donation. Follow us on social. Join us: [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)

**“When people come together for the good of humanity and the Earth, we can accomplish great things.”**

DAVID SUZUKI



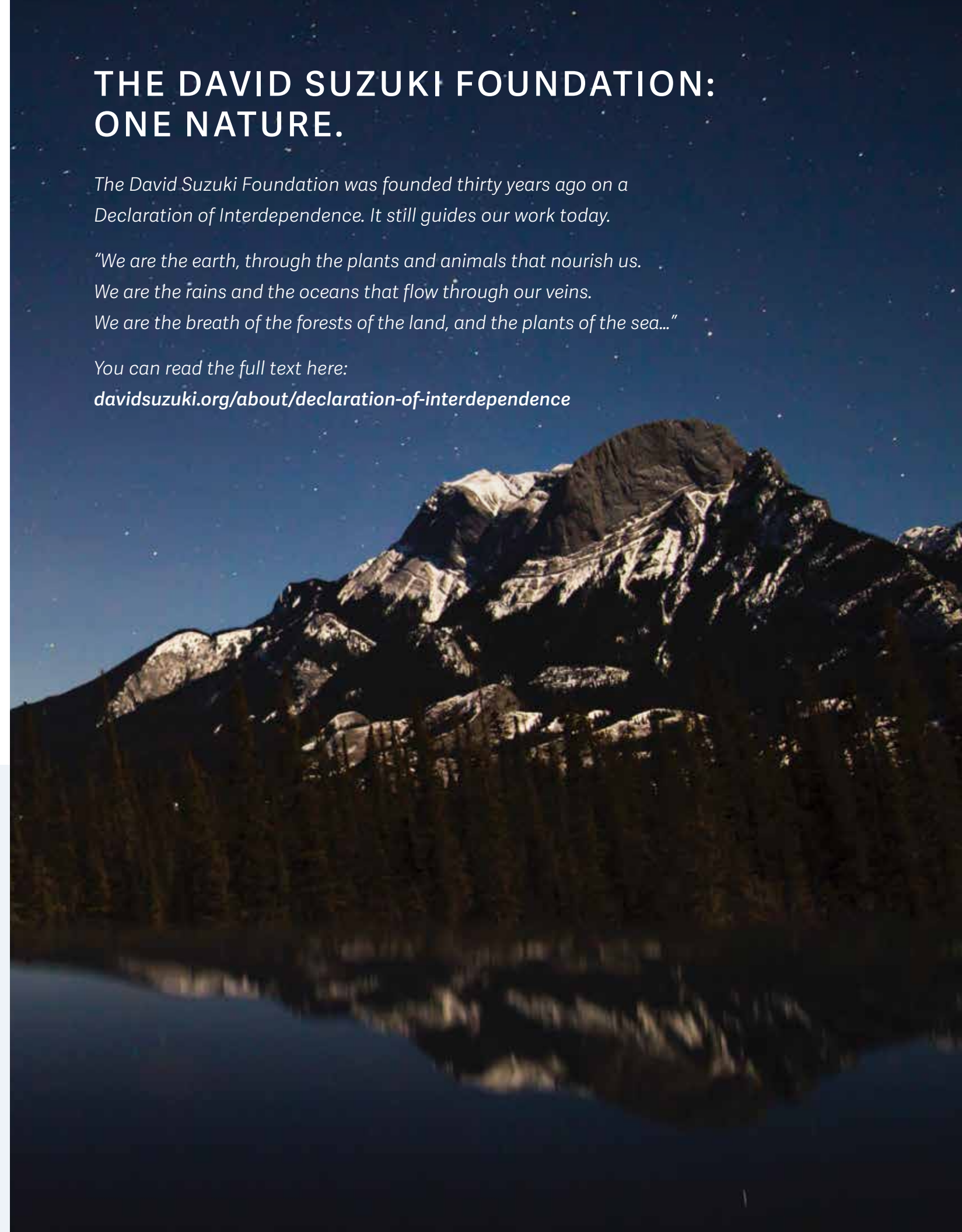
## THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION: ONE NATURE.

*The David Suzuki Foundation was founded thirty years ago on a Declaration of Interdependence. It still guides our work today.*

*“We are the earth, through the plants and animals that nourish us.  
We are the rains and the oceans that flow through our veins.  
We are the breath of the forests of the land, and the plants of the sea...”*

*You can read the full text here:*

[davidsuzuki.org/about/declaration-of-interdependence](http://davidsuzuki.org/about/declaration-of-interdependence)







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