

WSF Joins HuntFish30x30



The 30×30 Initiative seeks to conserve 30% of lands and waters across the globe by the year 2030. Recognizing the input of sportsmen and women, the Wild Sheep Foundation has committed to the program.

The Wild Sheep Foundation has added its name to the growing list of conservation organizations that support the objective of conserving at least 30% of our lands and waters by the year 2030. This target is the goal of the 30×30 Initiative. It is an international effort that was adopted by the Biden administration in Executive Order 14008.

“The sportsman’s position on this promising goal is that—if done right—it will advance the 100-plus-year successful legacy of conservation in America,” said Gray N. Thornton, President and CEO of the Wild Sheep Foundation. “However, if it is misused as a ploy to deny access for recreation, wise use and land and water management, it will undermine America’s legacy of shared uses and care for conservation lands.”

The 30×30 Initiative is based on the principle that wildlife abundance and diversity depends on habitat—the same strategy successfully employed by sportsmen and women in North America for more than a century. It applies to all wildlife and also to sound climate policy because conservation lands sequester carbon. HuntFish30x30 is a coalition of groups formed to ensure that sportsmen and women help guide the decisions that move the nation to 30×30.

Thornton added, “Thirty by Thirty should be for conservation, which means both use and care. The Wild Sheep Foundation joined HuntFish30x30 to ensure this initiative accelerates conservation by relying on the successful expertise and track record of sustainable use and its importance to countries, cultures, and biodiversity worldwide.”

National commitments to this global effort will be discussed at the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, scheduled for May 2021. The CBD was established in 1993 and is an international treaty with three primary objectives:

by The Wild Sheep Foundation

The Conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity; and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Thornton noted, "As Theodore Roosevelt once said, 'Conservation means development as much as it does protection.' It is important that those guiding this effort acknowledge the conservation value of working private lands and multiple-use public lands. This means ensuring access to conservation lands for their management and inspirational values to people. To achieve 30×30, we believe that preservation, protection and such things as wilderness designations can be solutions when and where necessary, but not as a blanket approach to every situation."

Original signatories to HuntFish30x30 include the American Sportfishing Association, American Woodcock Society, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, Center for Sportfishing Policy, Coastal Conservation Association, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, National Marine Manufacturers Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, Quail Forever, Ruffed Grouse Society, Safari Club International and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.

"Historically, sportsman-led conservation efforts defined what conservation is in North America," Thornton continued. "From our focus on the most iconic species of the continent, the conservation movement has grown to encompass all wildlife around the world. This is an inspiring statement about humanity. It is also a reminder that hunters and anglers must again expand their passions and apply their expertise to play a role in addressing present-day challenges to biodiversity and sustainable use."

WSF is a full member of IUCN, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and works collaboratively with other international conservation bodies on wild sheep and wildlife conservation.

"Our primary focus remains wild sheep conservation in North America," Thornton concluded. "The pursuit of this has already taken us to an international scale. Other countries, particularly in Mid-Asia, have enlisted us to assist with their mountain sheep and goat programs. These countries are already seeing the positive effects on biodiversity of sustainable use. The North American Model is the envy of the world for a reason. It works."

The Wild Sheep Foundation, based in Bozeman, Montana, was founded in 1977 by conservationists and enthusiasts. With a membership of more than 10,000 worldwide, WSF is the premier advocate for wild sheep and other mountain wildlife and their habitats. WSF has raised and spent more than \$135 million on wild sheep habitat and population enhancements, education and conservation advocacy programs in North America, Europe and Asia to "Put and Keep Wild Sheep On the Mountain"®. These and other efforts have increased bighorn sheep populations in North America from historic lows of 25,000 c. 1960 to more than 85,000 today.

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