



VCA Approach Partnership Agreement

Under the internationally-adopted Strategic Plan for Biodiversity to 2020, the global community has committed to conserve 17% of terrestrial areas and 10% of marine areas, and to restore 15% of degraded ecosystems. This commitment was reconfirmed in the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN in September 2015.

There is broad agreement that current conservation efforts are insufficient to mitigate the ever increasing ecological footprint of humanity. With the growing human population and its increasing levels of prosperity, the pressures on biodiversity are great. We all need to scale up our efforts to conserve our planet.

In light of the challenges we face, **ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation** and **Earthmind** confirm our common interest to implement and promote the **Verified Conservation Areas (VCA) Approach** as an inclusive measure for area-based conservation. Through the VCA Approach we will strive to scale up conservation action, engage new stakeholders, channel new financing, and strengthen the assurance that money invested in conservation effectively reduces the loss of biodiversity.

Specifically, we will collaborate on promoting the VCA Approach within Europe including new listings; and we will seek core and project funding to support the VCA programme. ECNC will undertake to determine how VCA can be taken up in a number of its relevant projects and programmes, and will clarify on its website how the VCA approach relates to the European Biodiversity Standard. Earthmind will undertake to promote ECNC as a key VCA partner within Europe. Our target for 2016 is to list at least two new VCAs and to secure funding from at least one donor to cover the collaborate efforts of ECNC and Earthmind to scale up the VCA Approach.

This Partnership Agreement shall be promoted on our respective websites, on the VCA website and, as appropriate, through our communications. It will be valid until December 2016 at which time it can be renewed for another year by mutual consent.

04 February 2016

Signature & Date
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EARTH MIND

Signature & Date
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 **ECNC**
European Centre for Nature Conservation