

**IPCC WGII Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report press statement**

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This new IPCC report comes out at a time of great turmoil, when we need strong multilateralism to promote peace and a healthy environment. And the message this report sends is clear. Climate change isn't lurking around the corner, waiting to pounce. It's already upon us, raining down blows on billions of people.

We are seeing dangerous disruption across the natural world. Species are migrating in search of more liveable conditions. In climate risk hotspots, deaths from floods, droughts and storms were 15 times higher than those in more resilient countries over the last decade. This is climate injustice, particularly for indigenous peoples and local communities.

All of this, and more, at only 1.1 degrees Celsius of global warming. Even if we limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the blows will come harder and faster. As things stand, we are heading for closer to 3 degrees Celsius. We are in an emergency, heading for a disaster. We can't keep taking the hits and treating the wounds. Soon those wounds will be too deep, too catastrophic, to heal. We need to soften and slow the blows by cutting greenhouse gas emissions. But we also need to cushion the blows by picking up our efforts to adapt to climate change – which have been too weak for too long.

The best way to do this is to let nature do the job it spent millions of years perfecting. Absorbing and channelling rainwater and surging waves. Maintaining biodiversity and balance in soils so that diverse plants can grow. Providing cooling shade under leafy canopies.

We need large-scale ecosystem restoration from ocean to mountaintop – including through agreeing to start negotiations on a global plastic pollution agreement at the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly. We need to bring nature into baking hot cities to keep them cool. We need to conserve mangroves, coral reefs and nature's other defences. We need to protect and restore wetlands for nature and incorporate wetlands in our cities.

Backing nature is the best way to adapt to, and slow, climate change – while providing jobs and boosting economies. We must start dedicating serious thought and funding to transformational adaptation programmes with nature at their heart. Humanity has spent centuries treating nature like its worst enemy. The truth is that nature can be our saviour – but only if we save it first.