

February 18, 2020

To:

Ibrahim Baylan, Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation

Isabella Lövin, Minister for the Environment and Climate

Jennie Nilsson, Minister for Rural Affairs

Magdalena Andersson, Minister for Finance

Amanda Lind, Minister for Culture and Democracy

Members of the Swedish Parliament

Swedish members of the European Parliament

Presidents of the Swedish political youth organizations

Herman Sundqvist, Director General, Swedish Forest Agency

Copy to: *Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Swedish Forest Agency, County Administrative Boards of Sweden*

Appeal:

Crisis in the Swedish Forest – Act Now!

There is a climate and biodiversity crisis in the world, and a catastrophic future lies ahead.^{1,2} According to official reporting under the EU Habitats Directive, 14 of 15 forest biotopes in Sweden do not have a favorable conservation status.³ Mainly due to this habitat destruction, over 1,800 forest-living species are red-listed in Sweden.⁴

We are therefore dismayed that high conservation value forests are being logged or are planned to be logged in Sweden. Sweden holds a considerable proportion of the remaining high conservation value forests in northwestern Europe – a part of the last wilderness. These forests need to be protected in order to safeguard the biodiversity and mitigate climate change.

Despite the critical forest situation, the Swedish Forest Agency has decided that at the end of 2020 it will stop registering areas classified as woodland key habitats.⁵ A woodland key habitat is a forest area that is of major importance for the flora and fauna, which often harbors endangered and rare species.⁶ According to the Swedish FSC standard, woodland key habitats must be exempted from felling.⁷

The Swedish Forest Agency has also recently released a report with several measures for intensified forest management.⁸ The measures promote increased logging, clearing of ditches and more plantations, instead of preventing biodiversity loss and emissions of greenhouse gases.

This year 2020, national and international environmental targets should already have been met. At least 17-20 percent of all of terrestrial areas should be conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas. The rate of loss of all natural habitats should be at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero.^{9,10} Today, only about 6 percent of the productive forest land in Sweden is formally protected.¹¹

The situation of forest biodiversity is urgent in the world, and Sweden is no exception. Sweden is failing to reach its national and international environmental targets.¹² The potential to achieve these targets is reduced every time there is logging in a high conservation value forest.

In order to stop the on-going degradation of the forest landscape in Sweden, the situation demands that:

- Woodland key habitats continue to be registered when forest areas are notified for felling after 2020.
- Forestry is stopped in all high conservation value forests*.
- The state-owned forestry company Sveaskog is given amended owner directives with a lower required rate of return to be able to achieve the environmental targets regarding [sustainable forests](#) and [biodiversity](#).
- The budget allocated to forest protection is increased to 5 billion SEK per year, starting during this Government's tenure, until all high conservation value forests are protected in a long-term, quality assured and transparent way, with a landscape ecology approach.
- Clear-cutting forestry is phased out and replaced by forestry without clear-cutting methods in forests without high conservation values.

Act now.

* High conservation value forest = Core areas (värdekärnor in Swedish) including registered and unregistered woodland key habitats. Forests in High Value Forest Landscapes and continuity forests as well as forests with unknown biological values must be visited in the field and inventoried prior to any kind of planned forestry operation. If high conservation values are discovered, these areas should be exempt from forestry.

Signatures of NGOs:

Julian Klein, Spokesperson, Protect the Forest (Skydda Skogen), Sweden

Isadora Wronski, Interim Programme Manager, Greenpeace Sweden

Mikael Sundström, Chair, Friends of the Earth Sweden (Jordens Vänner), Sweden

Marcus Lidström, Interim Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen i Norrbottens län, Sweden

Katja Kristoffersson, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen Jämtland-Härjedalen, Sweden

Mattias Ahlstedt, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen i Dalarna, Sweden

Jenny Olsson, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen Gävleborg, Sweden

Karin Sundqvist, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen Sandviken, Sweden

Barbro Carlberg, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen Östergötland, Sweden

Margareta Wikström, Chair, Naturskyddsföreningen i Rättvik, Sweden

Per Darell, Naturskyddsföreningen i Alvesta, Sweden

Jonas Nordenström, Sorsele skogsgrupp, Sweden

Claes Hellsten, Gränna skogsgrupp, Sweden

Christer Borg, General secretary, Älvräddarnas Samorganisation, Sweden

Tove Lönneborg, Chair, Nature and Youth Sweden (Fältbiologerna), Sweden

Pia Björstrand, Spoksperson, Climate Action Sweden (Klimataktion), Sweden

Robin Zachari, Chief secretary, Skiftet, Sweden

Pella Thiel, Coordinator, Naturens rättigheter i Sverige, Sweden

Peder Karlsson, Chair, End Ecocide Sweden

Henrik Hallgren, Chair, Lodyn, Sweden

David Bennett, Chair, Omställningsnätverket, Sweden

Gunilla Winberg, Chair, Framtiden i våra händer, Sweden

Viktor Säfve, nature conservationist and small-scale farmer, Haddebo ideella natur- och kulturförening Hjärtats Eko, Sweden

Hjalmar Croneborg, Chair, Sveriges Mykologiska Förening, Sweden

Martin Westberg, Chair, Svensk Lichenologisk Förening, Sweden

Tomas Hallingbäck, Chair, Mossornas Vänner, Sweden
Sören Nyström, Vice-chair, Dalarnas Botaniska Sällskap DABS, Sweden
Jan Brenander, Skogsgruppen i Oskarshamnsbygdens Fågelklubb, Sweden
Stig-Åke Svenson, Chair, Dalarnas Ornitologiska förening, Sweden
Larsgunnar Nilsson, Chair, Tjust Fågelklubb, Sweden
Johan Lind, Chair, the Swedish Association for Nature Photographers (Naturfotograferna/N), Sweden
Leif Lundberg, Member of Maskaure sami village, Sweden
Arend de Haas, Director, African Conservation Foundation, United Kingdom
Darío Solano, Educator, AfrosRD, Dominican Republic
Frances Pike, Co-ordinator, Australian Forests and Climate Alliance, Australia
Almuth Ernsting, Biofuelwatch, United Kingdom/USA
Otto Löwer, BUND, Germany
Dr. Petra Ludwig-Sidow, BundesBürgerInitiative Waldschutz, Germany
Sylvain Angerand, Campaign coordinator, Canopée, France
Diego Cardona, General coordinator, CENSAT Agua Viva, Colombia
David Harary, Board Chair, Center for Development and Strategy, USA
Nataša Crnković, President, Center for Environment, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Vlastimil Karlík, Executive Director, Czech Coalition for Rivers, Czech Republic
Rita Uwaka, Project Officer, Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nigeria
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Adrian Bebb, Programme Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Europe, Belgium/EU
Olli-Pekka Siira, Vice chairman, Friends of the Earth Finland, Finland
Dr. Lutz Fähser, Forest Director, Friends of the Earth Germany, Germany
Andrey Laletin, Chair, Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia
Dirk Riestenpatt, Chairman, FSC Germany, Germany
Simone Lovera, Director, Global Forest Coalition, Global/Paraguay (head office)
Anne Petermann, Executive Director, Global Justice Ecology Project, USA
Anna Kárníková, Director, Hnutí DUHA - Friends of the Earth Czech Republic
The Presidium of International Young Naturefriends (IYNF), Czech Republic
Maarten Visschers, Leefmilieu, the Netherlands
Danielle van Oijen, Program coordinator forests, Milieudefensie, the Netherlands
Bente Hessellund Andersen, Forest and climate campaigner, NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark
Simon Counsell, Consultant (former Executive Director, Rainforest Foundation UK), United Kingdom
Dr. J.R. Werner, Wildlife Ecologist, Northern conservation coalition, Canada
Bob Bancroft, Biologist, Nova Scotia Healthy Forest Coalition, Canada
Zoltan Kun, Independent Nature Conservation Expert, Hungary
Mary Booth, Director, Partnership for Policy Integrity, USA
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Neville Durow, Save Our Planet Network, South Africa
Anohar John, Director, Trivandrum Friend In Need Society (TFINS), India
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