



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, the **Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC)** 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 marine and terrestrial 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 globally in support of long-term commitments to conserve the land assets of religions, including identifying opportunities for registering areas around places of worships and sacred landscapes and sites as VCAs. Our target for 2016 is to list at least three new VCAs in places of worship and to promote ARC VCAs in international meetings related to biodiversity and sustainable development.

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.

Signature & Date 31 March 2016

Francis Vorhies
Executive Director
Earthmind
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Gland, Switzerland

EARTH  MIND

Signature & Date 26.4.16

Martin Palmer
Secretary General
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