

**One-on-One with Christine Lagarde, featuring Sir David Attenborough: Balancing Nature and the
Global Economy
April 11, 2019
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
IMF HQ1 Atrium**

Panelists:

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, IMF

Sir David Attenborough, Broadcaster, Writer and Naturalist

Nature and economic progress often have a conflicting relationship. While water, forests and other natural resources make life and industry possible, the demands of a growing economy are putting unsustainable pressures on the global climate and vital ecosystems. In a strongly worded warning to policymakers that time is running out, Sir David Attenborough spoke about the need for International action to save the natural world from extinction.

Key Points:

- **If we damage the natural world, we damage ourselves.** The impact of our growing populations and consumption directly threaten our own future, according to Attenborough. Of all the mammals on Earth, 96 percent are humans and livestock. Just 4 percent are wild animals.
- **The demise of civilization.** Attenborough warned of the potential collapse of civilization and the extinction of much of the natural world. With the projected rise in ocean levels and increase in the average temperature of the planet, large swathes of land, even countries, will become uninhabitable, triggering mass climate-induced migration.
- **Waste is the enemy.** In response to a question by the Managing Director on what we can do to make a difference, Attenborough highlighted the perils of overconsumption and the growing scourge of plastic waste, particularly in the oceans. We can all do more to reduce our waste.
- **Getting in touch with nature.** Citing the UN, which estimates that more than 50 percent of the world's population now lives in towns and cities, Attenborough highlighted the risk of people losing touch with nature. Never has it been more important to understand how the natural world works and what we need to do to preserve it, he added.
- **A call for action and hope for the future.** Attenborough urged policymakers to stop supporting and subsidizing industries/activities that damage the planet, and instead invest in enterprises that “help, not hinder.” He warned that the time to act on climate change was running short, and that we are headed for a major catastrophe unless we act on the Paris Agreement’s goal of limiting global warming. Our hope, he added, is with the growing movement of young people who are taking the moral lead in tackling climate change.

Quotes:

“We are in the process of a new extinction, and we’re halfway through it.” **Sir David Attenborough**

“If you regard homo sapiens as a civilized species, it could well be that the civilizations upon which we have enjoyed and lived a wonderful life will collapse.” **Sir David Attenborough**

"Nature is the chain and every element of the chain matters." **Christine Lagarde**

"Why do I have hope? Because young people today understand these situations better than they ever have in my lifetime. And young people are saying to those of us who have the power, do something." **Sir David Attenborough**

Contributor: Analisa Ribeiro Bala