



Bill Ulfelder © Jonathan Grassi

From Our Executive Director

This year's extreme weather, with blistering heat waves, massive forest fires and unprecedented flooding around the globe, has shown us that the effects of climate change are more profound than ever. We must respond to what U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres has called a "code red for humanity" with much more than hope—we need action. Which is why The Nature Conservancy is developing innovative, unique solutions. Tackling climate change requires that we minimize greenhouse gas emissions and conserve healthy lands, waters and oceans. The Conservancy is grateful for your support as we focus in on these goals in New York and around the world.

Bill Ulfelder, Executive Director



With the right designs, the bases of offshore wind turbines can serve as important habitat for fish and other marine species. © Vattenfall Nederland

Creating Marine Habitat and Clean Energy

What if the foundations of offshore wind turbines, the parts that connect with the sea floor, could create new habitat for fish and other marine life? With more than 2,000 new offshore wind turbines likely to be installed off the East Coast by 2030, this is a worthwhile question. In fact, with The Nature Conservancy's help, answering it could help make offshore wind power even more of a win for people and nature than it is now.

In New York alone, there are plans to purchase 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind power by 2035, enough to power six million homes with renewable energy. Those turbines are key to helping New York achieve its ambitious climate and clean energy goals and to creating jobs. Still, "ocean development has impacts,"

says Carl LoBue, New York Oceans Program Director. "Our goal is to avoid, minimize and, when we can, pursue opportunities that development creates to do something positive."

LoBue is one of a group of Conservancy scientists and policy experts across the Atlantic states who are exploring how different types of materials at turbines' bases can best create habitat for marine life. Their aim is to influence policymakers and wind power developers so that turbine design and construction is done with healthy oceans in mind. Chris McGuire, the Conservancy's Massachusetts Marine Program Director, shares that "right now, engineers are being asked to optimize for cost and turbine protection only. We're asking them to optimize for nature as well."

DONATIONS:

Go to nature.org/newyork to donate. Or you can email donate@tnc.org for more information.



Clockwise, left to right: Stu Gruskin joined The Nature Conservancy in 2012. © Adrienne Gruskin; with Governor Kathy Hochul © Jessica Ottney Mahar; zero-emission vehicles got a boost in this year's legislative session. © BXGD.

NATURE
NEW YORK

437,830

The number of mangroves and other native trees the Conservancy has planted in the Caribbean



Our New York team advances conservation not just in the Empire State but also around the world. © Paul Selvaggio

Policy Matters

Meet Chief Conservation and External Affairs Officer Stu Gruskin

Part of your job is setting The Nature Conservancy's policy agenda in New York. What was it like to do this during the pandemic?

It was a challenging year for our policy team, in part because the Capitol in Albany was closed to visitors for the whole legislative session, and there was uncertainty about the pandemic's financial impacts. Our extraordinary policy crew found new ways to reach lawmakers, mobilize stakeholders and collaborate with partners. Because our team was nimble, innovative and creative, we succeeded despite the pandemic.

What were the most important policy wins this year?

Lawmakers reauthorized the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act. If it passes, it will reduce pollution, protect clean water, preserve farmland and open space, and help communities prepare for extreme weather, all while creating 65,000 jobs for New Yorkers. The budget included \$300 million for the Environmental Protection Fund and \$500 million for clean water infrastructure.

We also successfully advocated for bills that will improve forest health and protect clean water, enable more New Yorkers to switch to clean energy, prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, improve soil health, and require that all new cars sold by 2035 are zero-emission vehicles.

What are some of our goals for the new legislative session in January?

We will, of course, be actively engaging our new governor as we continue to press forward with some of the items that didn't pass last year. These include setting a goal to conserve 30 percent of New York's land and water by 2030, making it easier to buy electric vehicles in New York, and ensuring that a million acres of endangered wetlands are protected before it's too late. As always, we'll be focusing on securing strong environmental funding through the budget process.

Global Focus

From our health to our climate, it is clear that our world is connected. Our New York team takes that responsibility to heart as we advance the Conservancy's ambitious new 2030 goals to benefit biodiversity, sequester carbon and reduce climate risks to people. Thanks to specific gifts from New Yorkers, we can conserve New York's forests as we also connect forests in Belize. As we create nature-friendly siting guidelines for solar energy in the Empire State, we support similar work in India, a critical place to work on addressing climate change. And as we collaborate to restore healthy oceans off Long Island, we secure habitat for whales, both here and in the Caribbean. Together, we help communities to build a healthier, more resilient future.