# Conservation leaders outline strategies for building climate resilience in nature



By 2075, the planet is projected to be significantly hotter, with temperatures rising by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial averages. This warming trend presents formidable challenges for ecosystems and the species that inhabit them. In a comprehensive exploration of how nature might bolster its resilience against climate change, several conservationists have shared insights on effective conservation strategies and priorities.

James Deutsch, CEO of the U.S.-based nonprofit Rainforest Trust, emphasises the growing threat climate change poses to biodiversity. Speaking to Mongabay’s Jeremy Hance, Deutsch noted, “In 50 years, it’s entirely possible that climate change will have become the largest threat to many species in the world — and thus to ecosystems in general.” His comments underline the urgency for targeted conservation efforts that can withstand these evolving pressures.

One key approach, according to Andrew Whitworth, executive director of Costa Rica-based Osa Conservation, involves a three-pronged strategy. This includes expanding protected areas such as national parks, implementing species-specific conservation programmes, and prioritising the enhancement of climate resilience within natural systems. Whitworth highlights the importance of elevation diversity within protected areas, citing Peru’s Manu National Park as an exemplar. The park's combination of highland and lowland environments supports incredible biodiversity and provides climatic refuges for species forced to move upslope in response to global temperature increases.

Another crucial element in these conservation efforts is the emphasis on “large, connected, well-managed ecological systems,” as described by Jean Labuschagne, director of conservation development at African Parks. Such systems offer wildlife greater space to find refuge and adapt to changes, including droughts, floods, and fires. Deutsch also emphasises the value of large tropical forests, which offer inherent adaptive advantages due to their size. His organisation prioritises conservation projects within the Amazon, the Congo, and New Guinea forests—three of the planet’s largest tropical ecosystems.

The importance of connectivity across landscapes is further reinforced by research. Whitworth references a 2019 study indicating that 62% of tropical forests lack sufficient connectivity to cope with climatic shifts. This gap poses a limitation where species cannot migrate smoothly between different habitats, especially from lowlands to uplands. Osa Conservation’s shift from simply planting trees in lowland areas towards creating climate corridors on the Osa Peninsula exemplifies strategic responses to this challenge.

Efforts like the 30×30 initiative, which aims to protect 30% of Earth’s land and waters by 2030, are viewed as vital steps towards creating resilient ecosystems. Currently, only 17% of terrestrial areas and 8% of marine environments enjoy protected status globally. Building on this foundation, high-quality management and unified vision within the conservation community are essential to ensuring long-term success.

These perspectives collectively underscore that the path to climate resilience in conservation involves scale, connectivity, and adaptive management. The lessons shared by conservation leaders across diverse regions provide a roadmap for responding to the escalating impacts of climate change on global biodiversity.

The Mongabay article by Jeremy Hance presents these insights and the strategies currently shaping conservation efforts worldwide.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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