

Foreign Assistance for International Conservation

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The United States provides foreign assistance to support the conservation of wildlife and ecosystems in the form of financial, programmatic, and technical support to address international conservation activities. International conservation activities include those relating to species protection, biodiversity, habitat restoration, and forest recovery, among other issues. Several federal agencies administer these programs, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Department of State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Some Members of Congress have demonstrated interest in international conservation, particularly with respect to biodiversity and human rights issues, funding for foreign assistance, and oversight of U.S. agencies administering related activities. Further, there is continued congressional interest in international conservation treaties to which the United States is a signatory, such as the [Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna](#) (CITES).

Table 1 lists selected U.S. international programs that address conservation. (This list excludes programs primarily addressing climate change.) It includes a description of each program, as well as the enacted funding levels for FY2020-FY2023 and the FY2024 Administration's request. The funding in **Table 1** is for specific programs, for financial commitments to international treaties or organizations, or from a line item in appropriations law or a committee report that identifies funding for a set of activities. This list and funding levels are not exhaustive, as some conservation activities not included may be conducted as part of multi-sectoral projects with a focus on objectives not limited to conservation. Other programs where conservation may be a secondary objective may not be listed in this table.

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Table 1. Enacted Appropriations from FY2020 to FY2023 for Selected Federal Programs That Address International Conservation and the FY2024 Request.

(\$ in millions)

Program	Description	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024 Request ^a
USAID Biodiversity Programs	Biodiversity conservation activities conducted by USAID aim to help developing countries maintain biodiversity and habitats and the environmental services they provide. USAID funds projects and activities in approximately 60 countries worldwide and emphasizes sustainable development and community-based conservation.	Not less than 315.0	Not less than 320.0	Not less than 385.0	Not less than 385.0	156.4
USAID/State Wildlife Poaching and Trafficking Programs	This category covers funding under several accounts that address wildlife trafficking. A portion of funds is appropriated to in-country programs in Africa and Asia, and another portion is appropriated to the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Program (INL) to develop criminal justice systems and capabilities addressing wildlife crime in foreign countries.	Not less than 100.7	Not less than 100.7	175.0 (50.0 for INL and not less than 125.0 for other accounts)	175.0 (50.0 for INL and not less than 125.0 for other accounts)	77.9
International Conservation Programs	This funding supports commitments under international treaties that address conservation. Some examples include CITES, the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the International Tropical Timber Organization.	7.0	7.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
U.N. Environmental Programs	This funding goes toward the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), which works in themes related to climate change, disasters, ecosystems, environmental governance, chemicals and waste, resource efficiency, and sustainability.	10.6	10.6	10.2	10.2	10.2
Department of the Treasury Global Environmental Facility	Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a multilateral environmental trust fund that supports projects with global environmental benefits related to six areas: biodiversity, climate change, international waters, the ozone layer, land degradation, and persistent organic pollutants.	139.6	139.6	149.3	150.2	150.2

Program	Description	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024 Request ^a
Department of the Treasury Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation	This program funds “debt-for-nature” transactions, in which a developing country partner’s debt is exchanged for local funds to conserve tropical forests.	15.0	15.0	15.0	20.0	15.0
Department of State and USAID Sustainable Landscapes Programming (also known as Natural Climate Solutions)	This program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.	Not less than 135.0	Not less than 135.0	185.0	185.0	112.0
FWS Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF)	The MSCF issues grants to support conservation efforts benefitting certain species, including African and Asian elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, great apes, tortoises, freshwater turtles, and marine turtles. The grants target species and address habitat conservation, law enforcement, and technical assistance for conserving species under the MSCF.	15.0	18.0	20.0	21.0	22.0
FWS Neotropical Migratory Bird Fund	This funding provides grants for the conservation of hundreds of bird species that migrate among North and South America and the Caribbean.	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.1	9.9
FWS International Affairs	This program addresses wildlife conservation, wildlife trade, and the implementation of several U.S. wildlife laws. Subprograms include the Wildlife Without Borders Program and the International Wildlife Trade.	18.8	23.0	25.4	29.0	26.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>[FWS International Conservation Subprogram]</i> 	This program consists of subprograms that address regions or specific species. Funding is used to provide technical and financial assistance to conserve high-priority species and habitats.	[10.8]	[10.3]	[9.9]	[10.1]	[12.9]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [FWS International Wildlife Trade Subprogram] 	This program is responsible for implementing CITES and various U.S. laws to ensure the international wildlife trade is not harmful to species.	[8.0]	[12.7]	[15.5]	[19.0]	[13.8]
U.S. Forest Service International Program	The U.S. Forest Service International Program promotes sustainable forest management and biodiversity internationally. Activities include managing protected areas, protecting migratory species, engaging in landscape-level forest planning, preventing illegal logging, and promoting forest certification.	12.0	15.4	17.0	20.0	22.0

Source: Pertinent annual appropriations laws and committee reports for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, and State and Foreign Operations and Related Agencies from FY2020 to FY2023. Congressional budget justifications for the Department of the Interior and State and Foreign Operations for FY2024.

Note: [] = subset of program.

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