

12 Emerging Global Trends That Bring Hope for 2018

Many of this year's outlook stories paint a grim picture, particularly for our environment. And yet, as we look deeper into some of the challenges ahead, we see new solutions emerging. Without minimizing the task ahead, we want to point to some trends that are unlocking investment for nature and offering hope for a sustainable future.

For press inquiries on any of these topics, contact media@tnc.org.

A deeper dive on all these trends is available on **TNC's Global Solutions** platform at <https://www.nature.org/2018emergingtrends>.



1. HIGH TIME FOR THE HIGH SEAS

Could the biggest thing to happen for the environment in decades be in the middle of the ocean? An unprecedented UN resolution calls for protection of the high seas, which have long suffered from pollution and illegal and unregulated fishing.



"This could be the most important step I have seen in my 30 years working on the ocean. We need a strong treaty that represents biodiversity and the ocean—this process could open the way to create a Paris Agreement for the ocean."

— Maria Damanaki, Managing Director for Global Oceans



2. A NEW PRESCRIPTION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

A tree a day keeps the doctor away? A shift in public health practices is underway as policymakers and healthcare providers alike focus on the connections between nature and human health across the globe.



"More people are breaking out of their traditional lanes of conservation, health and development to find new solutions. It's time to realize that we won't achieve better health for growing populations unless we attend to the health of the planet, too."

— Heather Tallis, Global Managing Director and Lead Scientist for Strategy Innovation



3. FOLLOWING THE MONEY TO GLOBAL IMPACT

Ten years since the term "impact investment" was coined, the sector is scaling in a new way—maybe enough to start closing the **\$300-400 billion gap** (€240-325 billion) for global conservation funding.



"We're seeing a real focus on bringing impact investments to the scale of the global challenges we face. If enough private capital is directed in the right ways, it can provide the needed push on top of public finance to meet the SDGs and Paris Agreement targets."

— Marc Diaz, Managing Director of NatureVest



4. NEW FACES TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Who will step up on this generation's main stage? New leaders—in both the public and the private sector, and from the national to the local level—are emerging to lead on climate action.



"This year's Global Climate Action Summit is just one more sign of the unstoppable momentum we've been building since the Paris climate talks. Despite last year's setbacks, we are seeing more leaders, from China to U.S. state governments to major companies, stepping up to fill the void and lead on climate action."

— Will McGoldrick, Director of Climate Strategy



5. NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS: THE YEAR'S TOP CARBON TECHNOLOGY

Solving for future carbon emissions is one thing; removing carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere is another. Nature itself may be our most game-ready carbon storage technology—and one of the most important ways to begin reaching international climate goals now.



"We have proven the potential of nature to be a climate solution, but the science tells us we have no time to waste. This is a critical year where we need more 'nature for climate'. And we're seeing initiatives in both the public and the private sector beginning to unify these fragmented efforts."

— Justin Adams, Managing Director for Global Lands



6. SOIL — BELIEVE IT OR NOT — IS A HOT TOPIC

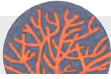
Here's the dirt: this year, soil is on trend. In fact, soil management may be the single most dynamic sustainability solution, with benefits for food security, water quality and climate mitigation.



"We are finally appreciating soil's critical role in not only providing food and water but also stabilizing the climate, and I believe we will see significantly more action on this issue in 2018."

— Deborah Bossio, Lead Scientist for Soil Sciences

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7. ENGINEERING OUR WAY OUT OF CRISIS — WITH NATURE'S HELP

The trillion-pound (£) elephant in the room? Infrastructure. The changing climate is prompting communities around the world to invest in nature as part of their infrastructure planning.



“More people—from governments to engineering firms to insurance companies—are waking up to the fact that major investment in nature is a key part of a new era of infrastructure solutions.”

— Lynn Scarlett, Co-Chief External Affairs Officer



8. BIG DATA AND THE DAWN OF A CONSERVATION REVOLUTION

A welcome disruption? The tech industry is setting its sights on a new sector: conservation. Big data solutions are leading the way, and new funding ventures could accelerate progress.



“Technologies that have revolutionized so many sectors of the economy have the potential to transform the way we do conservation. We’re at the front end of a new ‘nature-tech’ revolution and nature stands to win big from it.”

— Brian McPeck, Chief Conservation Officer



9. MORE COMPANIES ARE GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT GLOBAL GREEN GOALS

What to do with SDGs and two degrees? The private sector's increasing alignment with global agreements like the Paris Climate Accord and the UN Sustainable Development Goals signals an important commitment to addressing some of the world's most urgent environmental challenges.



“Investing in nature is smart business. Companies understand that incorporating biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services into their sustainability strategies is an important move that will position them better in the future.”

— Glenn Prickett, Chief External Affairs Officer



10. CLEAN ENERGY IS POWERING THE FUTURE — NOW WHERE TO PUT IT?

Our clean energy future is arriving faster than we thought. That's great news—but siting energy presents its own challenges. Large-scale planning will be key to balancing goals for energy production, development and conservation.



“We can win the battle for clean energy—but the challenge for the future will be figuring out where to put energy installations. We have to think bigger, moving from piecemeal planning to whole-system planning.”

— Joe Kiesecker, Senior Scientist for Global Lands



11. TO REDEFINE GREEN DESIGN, CITIES ARE THINKING BIGGER — AND SMALLER

Green cities are striving for LEED buildings, light rail—and a better experience walking down the block. Ideas about sustainable urban planning are shifting to include a greater emphasis on resilience, inclusivity and human-nature interaction.



“Too often we’ve been designing cities for cars instead of the people who live there. Nature can be a catalyst for flourishing neighborhoods—but it’s crucial we do it equitably, so all communities have access to green spaces and the benefits they bring.”

— Pascal Mittermaier, Managing Director for Global Cities



12. OH, AND ONE MORE THING — MORE

More investment, more research, more accountability, more heroes. The year 2020 will likely be time of stocktaking, and while we're seeing positive trends, we still have a long way to go on global targets like the SDGs. Meeting those targets will require more accountability, scientific research, innovation and real-world solutions.



“It is increasingly clear that it is impossible to separate environmental concerns from global advancement and that addressing both will require us to fundamentally rethink and resize our solutions.”

— Giulio Boccaletti, Chief Strategy Officer and Managing Director for Global Water

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