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Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit Under President Ali's Leadership, Closes in Guyana with Landmark Commitments, Innovative Partnerships, and a Unified Global Agenda for Nature

Georgetown, Guyana | July 25, 2025 — The inaugural **Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA) Summit** concluded in Georgetown, Guyana today with the official launch of the Alliance, the endorsement of the **Georgetown Declaration**, and an ambitious roadmap to protect and conserve biodiversity, halt biodiversity loss and accelerate nature-positive action. Convened by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana under the patronage of **President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali**, the Summit brought together over **140 countries and organisations**—spanning governments, Indigenous leaders, scientists, financial institutions, NGOs, youth, and private sector actors—from all global regions.

The Summit marked a turning point in international cooperation on biodiversity. The launch of the **Global Biodiversity Alliance (GBA)** established a voluntary, inclusive platform to promote shared implementation, scalable financing, and knowledge exchange to protect and restore ecosystems. The **Georgetown Declaration** was endorsed by Heads of State, Indigenous leaders, NGOs, academia, and private sector actors with broad-based support and participants recognising biodiversity as a global public good and commits to integrating it into national development plans, climate strategies, and financial frameworks. Further, there was expressed commitment to have 140 countries and organisations, including NGOs, the private sector, and indigenous organisations, also adopt this Declaration.

Critically, the Summit featured the participation of **H.E. Ambassador André Corrêa do Lago**, President of COP30, whose address emphasised the integral role of biodiversity in climate negotiations and urged strong alignment with the upcoming **COP30 in Belém, Brazil**. His presence highlighted the GBA's relevance as a key delivery mechanism for meeting both biodiversity and climate targets, and for advancing the launch of the **Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)** at COP30. He commended Guyana's leadership on biodiversity conservation and highlighted the importance of President Ali's leadership in stewarding this agenda on the global stage.

Among the most significant outcomes of the Summit was the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Guyana and the Yale Center for**

Biodiversity and Global Change. This agreement will guide scientific collaboration and the co-development of Guyana's **National Biodiversity Information System (NBIS)**—a digital backbone to support the country's new **National Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy**, which aims to establish the world's first fully standardised, national-scale biodiversity tracking framework. The NBIS, grounded in science, transparency, and sovereignty, is intended as a replicable model for other nations within the Alliance.

Specifically, the Alliance unveiled a comprehensive roadmap structured around five strategic pillars:

- Achieving the global 30x30 target: protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030.
- Mainstreaming biodiversity into national and corporate development planning.
- Unlocking innovative finance, including biodiversity credits, green bonds, and debt-for-nature swaps.
- Empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities through recognition, governance, and finance.
- Building robust systems for monitoring, accountability, and data sovereignty, including the creation of the **Gross Biodiversity Power Index**.

The Summit's agenda was structured across three dynamic days, each focused on different layers of global to local action:

Day One centred on laying out the Global Context of Biodiversity and set the political tone for the Summit. High-level plenaries were led by President Ali, joined by leaders including President Luis Abinader of the Dominican Republic, Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados, Vice President María José Pinto of Ecuador, and President Ivan Duque, former President of Colombia, along with other dignitaries. These discussions centred on aligning global ambitions, reinforcing political leadership, and affirming biodiversity's role as a pillar of sustainable development. The day culminated in the **official launch of the Alliance**, the adoption of the Georgetown Declaration, and a keynote address by **Vice President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo**, who emphasised Guyana's transition from carbon leadership to biodiversity finance.

In his keynote address, Vice President, Dr. Jagdeo emphasised that: *"Guyana's progress—anchored in the LCDS, has extended into biodiversity and is a practical example of how countries can lead on climate, forests, and nature while advancing inclusive development."*

Day Two focused on Solutions and Regional Actions focused on technical tools, financial mechanisms, and community-driven solutions. Thematic sessions covered a wide range of critical topics:

- **Strengthening International Will and Global Collaboration** explored how partnerships, particularly across the Global South, can accelerate conservation. Speakers included COP30 President Corrêa do Lago, the Minister of Sustainable Development of Belize, ACTO's Secretary-General, and the CEO of Conservation International.
- **Financing Biodiversity** addressed how to scale conservation through innovative finance tools such as biodiversity credits, green bonds, and debt-for-nature swaps.

Representatives from The World Bank, Sylvania, the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, and government officials, emphasized the need to link funding to environmental performance and integrity.

- **Biodiversity as a Driver of Bioeconomic Transformation** highlighted nature's role as the foundation for inclusive economic growth. Case studies from the Amazon, eco-tourism, and indigenous enterprises were shared by Iwokrama, the FAO, and Concordia.
- **From Data to Decisions** focused on cutting-edge technologies for biodiversity tracking and impact measurement. Presentations from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Yale University, and the Chicago Field Museum demonstrated how scientific tools are being used to inform real-time conservation decisions.
- **Investing in Life** explored nature's economic case and the potential to unlock trillions in sustainable value. Experts from McKinsey & Company, UNDP-BIOFIN, and Oxford University emphasised how biodiversity valuation can transform national finance and investment strategies.

In his address on the second day, **President Irfaan Ali** emphasised that: *"The **Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit 2025** has established a new model of multilateralism—grounded in equity, data, and collaboration. It sets the stage for a future in which biodiversity is no longer an afterthought, but a core pillar of climate stability, economic progress, and global wellbeing."*

Concurrent sessions added further depth and inclusion. Topics included:

- **Innovative Tools for Monitoring**, showcasing community-based data systems and applied technologies.
- **Gender, Youth, and Traditional Knowledge**, highlighting the contributions of Indigenous leaders, young conservationists, and women in ecosystem management, including from the National Toshias Council and the South Rupununi Conservation Society.
- **Compliance and Verification Standards**, with global experts from ART, Verra, and SGS exploring performance-based systems.
- **Green Taxonomies and Biodiversity-Aligned Business**, offering insights into how finance frameworks can align with conservation outcomes.
- **Empowering Local Leaders**, which presented community-led conservation tools and capacity-building approaches.
- **Bridging the Finance Gap**, outlining practical strategies to accelerate access to biodiversity finance and build enabling ecosystems of policy, data, and capacity.

Day Three: Field Visits gave delegates the opportunity to experience firsthand the remarkable biodiversity of Guyana's ecosystems. Delegates visited either the **Mahaica River system** or the **Iwokrama Forest Reserve**, witnessing the living application of conservation principles, Indigenous stewardship, and biodiversity-based livelihoods.

Throughout the Summit, a recurring theme was the importance of **inclusive and locally-led conservation**. The Alliance embraced a strong commitment to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), with sessions dedicated to their governance roles, knowledge systems,

and financing needs. The Summit also endorsed the principle of **data sovereignty**, ensuring that biodiversity monitoring supports local ownership and equity.

The Summit concluded with a communiqué affirming next steps, including the preparation of a unified Alliance position for **COP30 in Belém** and an **Action Plan**, the operationalisation of NBIS in Guyana, the scaling of biodiversity finance tools, and the dissemination of the GBA's Action Plan and technical models for global application.

In his closing address, **President Irfaan Ali**, confirmed as the inaugural Chair of the Global Biodiversity Alliance, declared: *“Let this Summit be remembered not just as a gathering of ideas, but as the beginning of implementation. With vision, science, and unity, we now walk the path from commitment to measurable action.”*

The **Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit 2025** has set a powerful precedent: a unified global coalition determined to act decisively to protect nature, uplift communities, and ensure that biodiversity remains at the heart of the planet's sustainable future.

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