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IN HARMONY WITH ALL LIFE ON EARTH

OUR 12 COMMITMENTS
TO SUSTAINABILITY

Foreword

The times in which we live are ones of intensifying climate change, deteriorating ocean health, and collapsing biodiversity. According to the report by the IPBES – the biodiversity-focused equivalent of the IPCC – presented to UNESCO in April 2019, never in history has nature experienced such dramatic decline. One million species – out of the eight million identified to date – are facing the threat of extinction.

Such loss of diversity, including genetic diversity, puts global food security at risk by weakening the resilience of many agricultural systems.

This is the context in which a partnership was established between UNESCO and the Relais & Châteaux Association. The Association's commitments clearly underline the importance of the interconnection between food, health, and the environment.

The partnership is part of UNESCO's worldwide efforts in the realms of education, science, and culture and the Organization's search for new, more effective coalitions between international bodies and civil society.

It is our collective responsibility to change course: We can restore balance between humans and the environment by working together, and everyone has a role to play.

In our quest for solutions, we can draw upon the knowledge and experience of more than a thousand UNESCO-designated Natural World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves, and Global Geoparks.

The ancestral culinary knowledge and practices that our Organization preserves through its Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage also constitute precious ideas and inspiration for developing sustainable food systems, that are both healthy and respectful of natural resources.

With one voice, UNESCO and the Relais & Châteaux Association are calling for us all to change our perspectives and practices regarding food, to better build the world of tomorrow. The pages that follow can guide us on this path.

Audrey Azoulay

UNESCO Director General



Established in 1954, the Relais & Châteaux Association unites an exceptional collection of hotels and restaurants throughout the world, operated by independent owners. Embodied by men and women – most often families – they are deeply committed to sharing their local culture as well as their passion for what is good and beautiful.



ZANZIBAR WHITE SAND LUXURY VILLAS & SPA, TANZANIA



TEMBO PLAINS CAMP, ZIMBABWE

© Great Plains Conservation

Our members, in their day-to-day devotion to cuisine and hospitality, are in constant contact with persons of every origin, from all kinds of communities, as well as with nature in its infinite richness and variety.

This singular – perhaps even unique – position has made our members ever-mindful of the way in which the world evolves, and conscious of their responsibility concerning such changes.

In 2014, we drafted a Vision affirming our commitments for “*a better world through cuisine and hospitality*”. Since that time, although our members have been working hard to these ends, it is clear that the world is struggling in the face of mounting challenges: increasing effects of global climate change, alarmingly rapid biodiversity loss, social crises throughout the world.

What actions can we take to address these? How do we embrace our responsibility – individually and as an Association – in this changing world and contribute meaningfully – each of us where we live – to the creation of a new harmony between humans and nature? How can we play our individual parts, making the most of our differences? To succeed, we firmly believe that we must continue to adapt the models of our properties, in order to achieve environmental, social, and economic objectives with equal rigor and dedication.

We cannot invent these new hotel and restaurant models in an isolated manner. We must do it together, within the network, because each Relais & Châteaux property is a source of creativity, ingenuity and solutions that can be beneficial to all the others. The cooperation required to achieve this must include all the stakeholders in our ecosystem – our suppliers and producers, our teams, our guests – particularly the younger generations – non-governmental organizations and local and international public authorities.

We know that these intentions must become tangible, clear, and measurable actions, and we hereby express these actions in the form of 12 commitments, designed to pursue three major missions:



PRESERVE
THE WORLD'S
HOSPITALITY
& CULINARY
TRADITIONS



CONTRIBUTE
TO THE PROTECTION
AND DEVELOPMENT
OF BIODIVERSITY



TAKE DAILY ACTION
FOR A MORE
HUMANE WORLD

© Hannes Niederlechner



These commitments reflect a profound desire to contribute – through the art of hospitality and cuisine and driven by a shared passion for what is good and beautiful – to building a more respectful, united, sustainable world, in harmony with all life on earth.

preserve
the world's hospitality
& culinary traditions

WILD COAST TENTED LODGE, SRI LANKA



© John Trevel

PROVIDENCE, UNITED STATES



© Felix Jahn

SAINT JAMES PARIS, FRANCE



- Promote the richness of the many different hospitality cultures around the world, through the uniqueness of each Relais & Châteaux property and its local character. Preserve local cultural heritage, emblematic local architecture – from the most traditional to the most contemporary –, the decorative arts, as well as landscape and garden design.
- Favor interactions with local communities, producers, and suppliers in order to co-create shared value, and assist them in developing their activities and preserving the diversity of their heritage.
- Serve a cuisine that, by virtue of a chef's creativity, is a statement and an expression of the uniqueness of a place and its biodiversity, a natural and cultural environment, local history, or farming and fishing traditions.
- Work with all stakeholders in our ecosystem to enable as many people as possible to discern and appreciate the essential roles that the environment, food, and cuisine play in our health, to promote quality food products, and the joy of sharing an exceptional meal.

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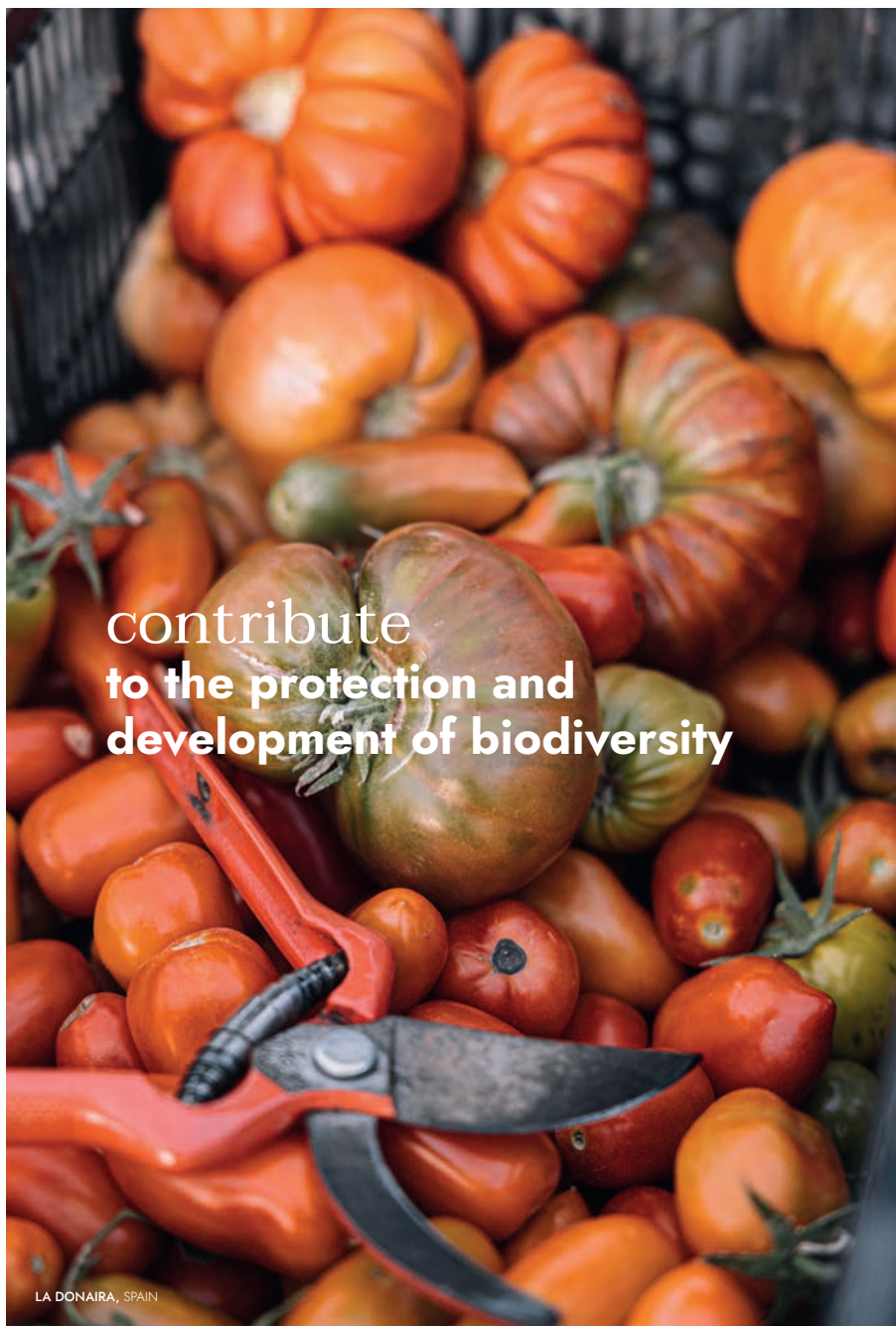


© John Trevel

SINGLETHREAD FARM - RESTAURANT - INN, UNITED STATES

contribute
to the protection and
development of biodiversity

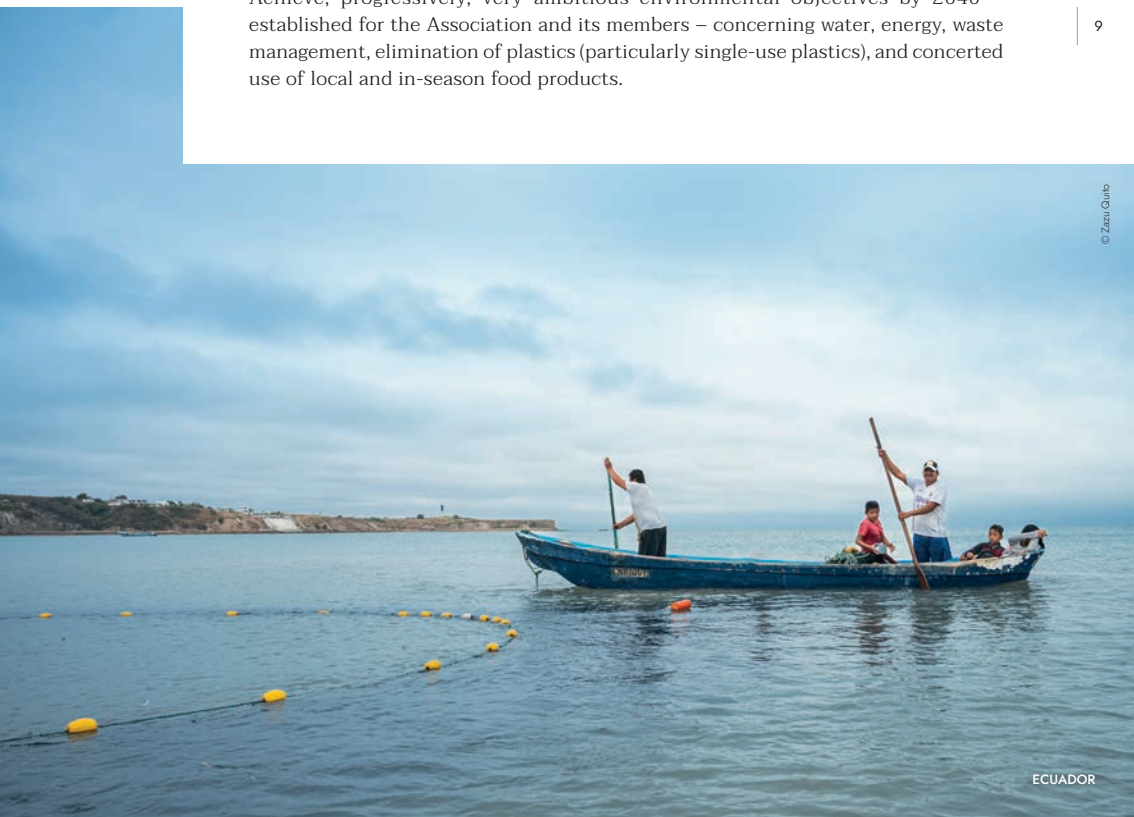
LA DONAIRA, SPAIN





- Contribute to the regeneration and development of terrestrial and marine ecosystems in partnership with local public authorities, non-governmental organizations, scientists, and all other parties committed to preserving biodiversity.
- Capitalize on the influence of the Relais & Châteaux chefs and their sourcing choices to foster the development of regenerative agriculture, promote breeding conditions respectful of animal welfare, and help preserve the planet's oceans by supporting small-scale fishing employing sustainable techniques.
- Contribute, on a worldwide scale – for the Association as well as its members –, to combating global warming by 2040, through the implementation of new day-to-day management practices enabling our members to measure and drive the progressive decarbonization of their activities.
- Achieve, progressively, very ambitious environmental objectives by 2040 – established for the Association and its members – concerning water, energy, waste management, elimination of plastics (particularly single-use plastics), and concerted use of local and in-season food products.

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take
daily action for a more
humane world

SUJAN SHER BAGH, INDIA



- Support local communities in their efforts to preserve and develop their cultural and craft heritage. Work with them to develop education wherever needed and strive together to reduce inequalities. Offer the possibility, for those who wish, to participate and progress socially and economically in the hospitality and culinary professions, within an environment committed to excellence.
- Guarantee our teams, through our collective commitments, truly meaningful positions and responsibilities, as well as exemplary work conditions and management methods, respecting their differences and allowing each team member to enjoy a fulfilling personal and family life.
- Work with our entire ecosystem to pass on our expertise and our passion for what is good and beautiful. Share these treasures each day and promote our commitments to all our stakeholders.
- Ensure each property is a place where the quality of human relations is paramount, a place of respect and harmony, for our guests, our teams, and the communities around us.





LAURA AT PT LEO ESTATE RESTAURANT, AUSTRALIA

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BALLYNAHINCH CASTLE, IRELAND



Driven by these profound convictions, the Relais & Châteaux association and all of its members firmly commit to contribute, proactively, to a more respectful, united, sustainable world, in harmony with all life on earth.

CLIVEDEN HOUSE, UNITED KINGDOM

