

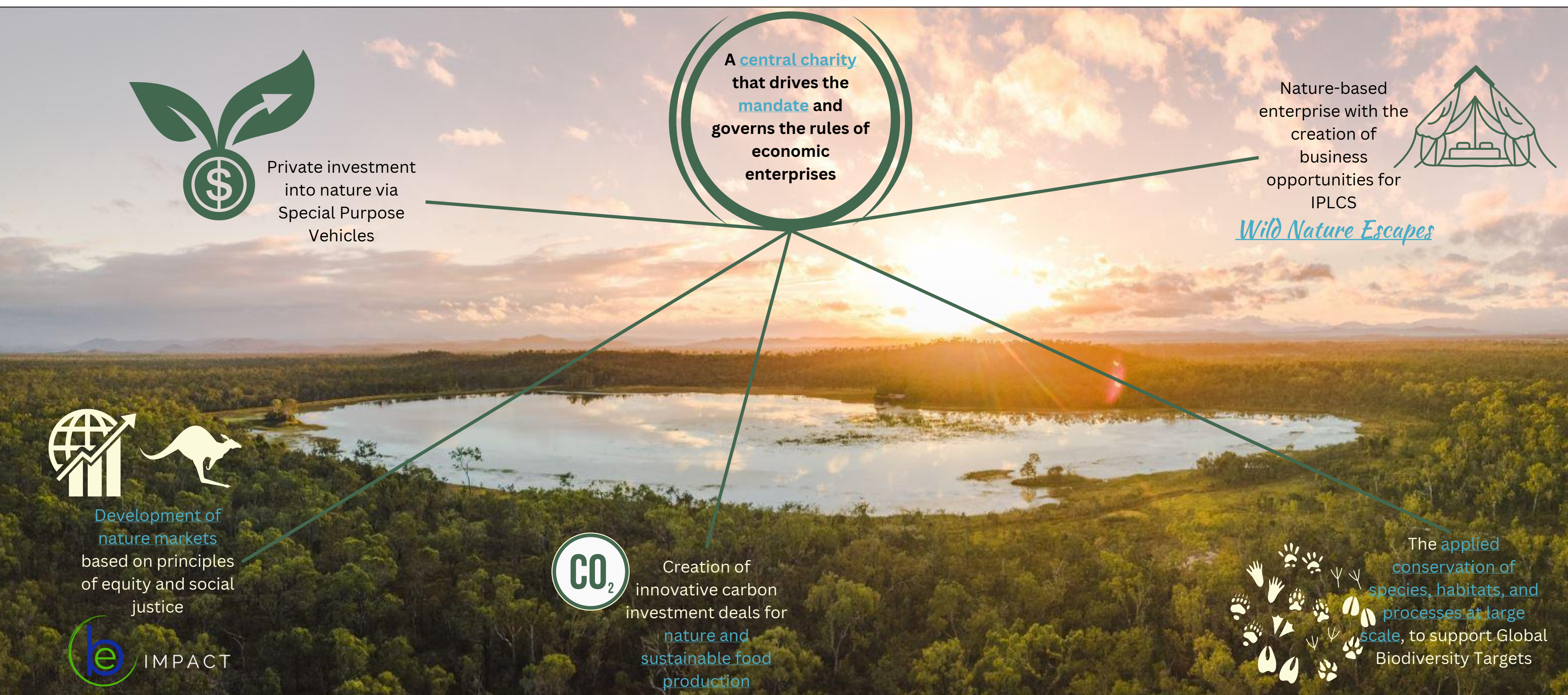


# THE FOREVER WILD INITIATIVE

UNLOCKING NATURE FINANCE FROM  
THE GROUND UP

October 2024







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# INTRODUCTION

With the objective of unlocking private capital to stem further destruction of the Earth's remaining intact ecological systems, the Forever Wild Initiative is a sophisticated approach to tackle major hurdles in this space.

The Initiative is focused on creating globally relevant, economically viable, co-designed landscapes that protect nature and interest holder's rights. We work to drive structural change that fosters IPLC equity. We innovate in nature/biodiversity credits, leading from a landholder perspective, not an investor perspective where a key differentiator is to decrease risk for nature and project proponents. And we don't just write concepts - we actually do it.

Based in remote Australia, the Initiative was conceived by local communities, for local communities. Initially self-financed, it now draws revenue from its conservation and nature enterprises, sustainable food production, and grants. This presentation highlights our achievements since launching in 2018.







# ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY

- 🌿 **2018 LAUNCH.** A nationally registered charity (Australia) and an integrated landscape pilot model with the Queensland Government
- 🌿 **2020 CO-DESIGN.** Completed the 'Shared Earth' landscape design framework with co-design principles and equity for nature
- 🌿 **2022 CARBON FINANCE.** Created Australia's first ever 'Equitable Carbon Finance' investment structure to protect 225,000ha
- 🌿 **2023 BUSINESS EQUITY.** Launched a profit-for-purpose nature enterprise in parallel with a co-designed, wholly-Indigenous owned company
- 🌿 **2024 BIOFIN.** Unveiled a global-first method for Nature Credits explicitly embedding principles of equity for IPLCs and nature
- 🌿 **2024 INVESTMENT:** Developed a unique Special Purpose Vehicle with a mandate for nature, to unlock large-scale nature finance







# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

The formative years of my career, including over 20 years in Africa and South East Asia, cemented my view that the interdependencies of nature, economics and society must all be considered if we are to succeed in creating a genuinely sustainable future.

The question of how to embed equity for nature and the people living in it was foremost in my mind for a long time. To achieve this, we needed radically different approaches. The Forever Wild Initiative is now bringing some of these approaches to fruition.

I am immensely proud of what we have achieved. The Forever Wild Initiative is founded and based in local communities, in one of the Earth's last great wildernesses. It has been a long, hard road to tackle the in-built inequity in nature finance, even more so when attempting this from a remote area, but we have made real progress. There is still much left to do and we are now working to expand our networks to better contribute to a sustainable, equitable future.

*"The last remaining intact ecosystems are the Earth's biological heart. These places - and the people who live in it - must have equity in decisions that are made."*







# 'SHARED EARTH'. A NEW MODEL OF LAND MANAGEMENT

## Working with government

We launched the Forever Wild Initiative with a proposal to adopt all the management costs and responsibilities for a 2,200 hectare 'Government Resource Reserve' in northern Queensland. We worked with the Queensland Government to form a Trusteeship model that explicitly enabled us to pilot and prove the Shared Earth Landscape (nature, people, economics) design framework.

## A biodiversity treasure

The land, filled with old-growth woodland and tropical wetlands, creeks and ridgetops, is a biodiversity treasure. Over 240 species of birds, and endangered mammals, reside on the property. Our first actions were to ask the Traditional Owners if they would like to work with us to create a wholly-owned nature-based enterprise, and to co-design ideas for nature & culture finance.





# AUSTRALIA'S FIRST EQUITABLE CARBON FINANCE DEAL FOR NATURE



## **Commonwealth Bank of Australia**

In 2022 we worked closely with Australia's largest bank to create an interest-free debt finance mechanism based on Australian Carbon Credit Units.



## **225,000 ha of intact land protected**

The debt finance converted to a deal to protect 225,000 hectares of multiple habitat types in Western Australia, that was for sale on the open market.



## **Replicable for IPLCs, NGOs**

The deal structure is replicable for Indigenous Corporations, small NGOs and business, and led to Indigenous land buy-back in Queensland, Australia.





# CREATING IPLC ENTERPRISE EQUITY

## Implementing co-design

The Initiative spent over 3 years building local relationships with First Nations custodians in North Queensland, with the objective of structural equity in our work. In 2023 a wholly-Indigenous owned company was formed to design, deliver and own a wide range of services and products based around nature.

## Wild Nature Escapes

The Initiative concurrently launched a profit-for-purpose tourism enterprise to drive nature-repair revenues to our landscapes in Northern and Western Australia.

The Forever Wild charity owns voting rights to ensure the company engages transparently with local communities through offering enterprise opportunities and revenue-share.





# A GLOBAL FIRST IN BIOFIN

In 2023 the Initiative launched BelImpact.earth, with a method for equitable and verifiable digital certificates, registered on blockchain, for nature repair and social benefit.

The certificates represent the on-ground actions of landholders/IPLCs, designed and valued with those people. The method has a mechanism for custodians to explicitly value their knowledge.



## **A method inclusive of equity principles**

Following an analysis of the multiple layers of inequity in carbon markets, a new approach was required for biodiversity.



## **A method without demanding rights?!?**

The method disallows the developer taking rights, and demands co-design of the actions to protect and repair nature.



## **Funds go where they are needed.**

Following collaborative valuation, funds flow to the ground through the people doing the work, not to exorbitant profit-making.





# SCALING NATURE INVESTMENT

## Working with investors

In 2024 the Forever Wild Initiative began work with a major commercial investment fund to navigate how their needs could be met within the FW Shared Earth Landscape framework. Their goal is to deploy finance to nature, while meeting investor expectations on financial returns.

## 10,000 sq km Shared Earth Landscape

The work currently focuses on demonstrating that nature at scale, at least 10,000 square kilometers, CAN be protected AND that it can be done within a framework that ensures equity and financial viability for interest holders.







# GROWING THE IMPACT

After 6 years the Forever Wild Initiative has challenged norms, and delivered demonstrable change and pathways to grow our impact. Our work is guided by principles and implementation that have direct relevance across jurisdictions, land tenure types, communities and investors.



## **Building on the foundation**

The Forever Wild Initiative is seeking to grow its impact, share its lessons, principles and tools to support large-scale, equitable nature finance.



## **10,000 sq km landscapes**

We must be collectively bold and ambitious. We believe that through intelligent investment mechanisms, equitable markets, and co-design, nature finance can support very large landscape approaches, each at least 10,000 square kilometers. The Forever Wild Initiative is currently developing this concept with on-ground partners in Australia and sub-Saharan Africa.







THE FOREVER WILD INITIATIVE



WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE  
CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS WE WORK ON, FOR  
THEIR ONGOING INPUT, GUIDANCE AND TRUST.

THANK YOU.

October 2024