30X30 MESSAGING KIT FOR ZOOS, AQUARIUMS AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS
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The following guidance and examples are intended to help zoos, aquariums and museums in their efforts to raise public awareness and gather public input for the new national goal of conserving at least 30% of America’s lands, waters and ocean by 2030 in keeping with the vision of the America the Beautiful Initiative. These recommendations align with the national movement for 30x30, yet have been tailored to suit the strengths and circumstances of zoos, aquariums and museums.

This kit was developed by The Ocean Project in collaboration with Frost Science, National Aquarium, New England Aquarium, Philadelphia Zoo, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, Seattle Aquarium, as well as the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Aquarium Conservation Partnership, and the National Ocean Protection Coalition. September 2021.
Most visitors to zoos, aquariums and science museums are unlikely to have heard of 30x30, let alone know of the scientific rationale, the way it was adopted as a national goal in an Executive Order (January of 2021), the plan for achieving it thru a collaborative, inclusive, and locally-driven approach as outlined in “Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful” (May, 2021) or how what is happening here in the US is part of a global movement.

Yet once aware, most visitors to zoos, aquariums and science museums are likely to support the goal, applaud the approach, and appreciate the information. Polling by Hart Research Associates has shown that 86 percent of voters in the United States support a national goal of 30x30. Additional research by The Ocean Project has found that zoo, aquarium and science museum audiences expect, trust and appreciate when provided with information and recommendations for advancing conservation. And data from IMPACTs Research has suggested that when zoos, aquariums and science museums engage visitors in their missions, these organizations also do better on the bottom line.

Moreover, many visitors to zoos, aquariums and science museums will welcome an opportunity to document their support and share their perspective. These additional steps, where zoos, aquariums and science museums are not only providing information but documenting interest and gathering input from their broad and diverse audiences, will be especially important to advancing progress in light of the emphasis on a collaborative, inclusive, and locally-driven approach to 30x30.

The focus in this guide is on raising awareness of the national goal of 30x30, as well as the approach as envisioned in “America the Beautiful.” At a later date, these same points and examples also can be adapted to fit efforts that advance the conservation of local areas.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

The following kit covers key points and hard questions as well as sample scripts and suggested posts, all aimed at helping you develop the right messages for your audiences.

A few additional tips on finding the right time for raising awareness and gathering feedback:

- **When engaging with audiences on-site, consider the moments when groups of visitors are waiting for a presentation or film to begin, or pausing as they leave an exhibit.** The New England Aquarium has had success speaking with visitors about 30x30 as they were waiting for a talk at the top of their central tank, while the Philadelphia Zoo has had great results connecting the message with what visitors had just experienced in their popular exhibit, “Big Time.” See sample scripts and tips below.

- **When engaging with audiences online, be creative!** Announcing your organization’s support for the 30x30 goal and America the Beautiful Initiative is, of course, a great first step. You may also wish to consider additional ways to incorporate this conservation message into your everyday posts, such as responding to a news story, commenting on an upcoming community event, or even announcing the birth of a new animal. You can even enable your audiences to contact their representatives directly by linking to this page, created with the New/Mode platform and available for use by aquariums, zoos, and science museums for this campaign free of charge courtesy of the Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP).

- **When asking for opinions, don't be shy!** When engaging the public on-site, The New England Aquarium, the Philadelphia Zoo, and many others have found that visitors appreciate the opportunity to sign a comment card and share their thoughts on why conserving animals and protecting nature matter to them.

Last but not least, AZA members can receive ongoing updates about progress towards 30x30, nationally as well as internationally, by joining the 30x30 “Community” on the AZA Network. And at any point, please do not hesitate to reach out to project coordinators, Bill Mott (bmott@theoceanproject.org) and Douglas Meyer (dmeyer@theoceanproeject.org).
Nature is a source of joy and wonder, with countless benefits for our communities, from providing food and recreation to supporting our economy and stabilizing our climate. (CONSIDER INSERTING ADDITIONAL DETAIL AND/OR CITING A RELEVANT LOCAL EXAMPLE TO HELP SET HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND HELP ENABLE THE DISCUSSION OF INCLUSION AND EQUITY)

But we are in the midst of a nature crisis. Here in the United States we are losing one football field’s worth of our natural lands every 30 seconds, nearly every corner of our ocean has been touched by human impact, and at least one-third of our wildlife is now at increased risk of extinction. (CONSIDER INSERTING ADDITIONAL DETAIL AND/OR CITING A RELEVANT LOCAL EXAMPLE TO HELP UNDERSCORE THE NEED AND TELL A MORE COMPLETE STORY)

This doesn’t just spell trouble for wildlife - it spells trouble for all of us. Almost all of our economic activity relies on nature. For the first time in 15 years, a major annual report found that the top five risks facing the world in 2021 are all linked to the environment. These include biodiversity loss, climate change, and extreme weather events.

Scientists say that conserving at least 30% of our lands, waters and ocean by 2030 (30x30) is necessary to prevent the extinction of wildlife, stabilize our climate, and safeguard our future, and our children’s future. (YOUR AQUARIUM/ZOO/MUSEUM) applauds the America the Beautiful Initiative, which has adopted this goal of 30x30 and provided a vision for achieving it through a collaborative, inclusive, and locally-driven approach.

For more than a century, the United States has risen to meet major environmental challenges. And (YOUR AQUARIUM/ZOO/MUSEUM) is pleased to see that our nation has been joined by more than 50 other countries in adopting the goal of 30x30, so our national leadership and impact will not stop at our borders.
3. Conserving nature is essential for wildlife conservation, and so much more

- As a leader in animal care and conservation, (YOUR AQUARIUM/ZOO/MUSEUM) knows that conserving 30% of our nation’s lands, waters and ocean by 2030 is the minimum needed to protect our wildlife and cope with climate change. (SOME SCIENCE MUSEUMS MIGHT OPT HERE FOR PHASING THAT BETTER CAPTURES THEIR ESTABLISHED EXPERTISE, “As a leader in the natural sciences,...”) (When possible, include here what your visitors are saying as to why this matters to them!)

- (YOUR AQUARIUM/ZOO/MUSEUM) is committed to conserving nature, and we know if we don’t act quickly, the problem will only get worse. Many species such as the (INSERT RELEVANT LOCAL EXAMPLE) are facing an uncertain future. But if we act now, we can conserve those areas, help plants and animals, and help our communities too. (PARTICIPANTS IN AZA SAFE MIGHT OPT HERE FOR THE PHRASING ”...saving animals from extinction”)

4. Conserving nature can bring benefits to all Americans

- Communities of color, low-income communities, and communities with high numbers of families with children are all more likely to live in areas that are lacking beneficial natural spaces.

- Creating parks and conserving open spaces helps wildlife and lessens the effects of climate change while providing clean air and clear water, as well as physical and mental health benefits to people – benefits that should be equally accessible to all Americans.

- Advancing 30x30 is an opportunity to work towards a more inclusive and equitable vision for nature conservation— one that better reflects our local and national values.

  (When possible, include here what your visitors are saying as to why this matters to them!)

Quick Tip!

Zoos and aquariums can cite examples from their efforts with AZA SAFE when addressing 30x30 and America the Beautiful

5. We can do this! The goal is both ambitious and attainable

- Americans have a strong conservation ethic, and our nation has a history of coming together to create national parks, nature reserves, and marine protected areas. With 12% of our lands and 23% of our ocean currently protected, getting to 30% by 2030 is ambitious, yet also attainable, especially as approximately 60 percent of lands in the continental United States are in a mostly natural condition or could be restored to one.

  (IMPORTANT NOTE RE OCEAN CONSERVATION) There remains a vast potential for future protections to be spread out among representative habitats and bioregions within U.S. waters. The United States has one of the largest ocean territories in the world, greater than the area of our land. But today only 3% of U.S. ocean are fully protected and another 20% highly protected—and nearly all of this area is located in two large protected areas in the remote Pacific Ocean.

- Here in [YOUR COMMUNITY], (YOUR AQUARIUM/ZOO/MUSEUM) is especially proud to be [INSERT A LOCAL CONSERVATION PROJECT THAT’S IMPORTANT TO YOU OR YOUR ORGANIZATION], which will help us reach our national goal of 30x30.
6. This is a national movement that is locally driven

- 30x30 is a global movement with a national goal, yet it is centered on local efforts, and will rely on local input, from tribal councils to state leaders, from farmers and ranchers to fishers, and from conservationists to recreationists, and all other Americans, young and old alike, who use and love our lands and ocean.

- Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities have been effective protectors of biodiversity since time immemorial. As stewards of many important and well-conserved lands and waters in the U.S., tribal nations are key to the success of the 30x30 effort.

- Farmers, anglers, ranchers, and private landowners are some of America’s most important conservationists, and providing the tools, financial resources, and incentives for landowners and the private sector to restore degraded natural areas and manage their resources sustainably will be a must under 30x30.

7. Success to be built together, and shared by all

- Collaboration, a willingness to listen and understand different perspectives, and good-faith conversations between all Americans will be required to achieve 30x30 and solve our nature and climate crises.

- Only by working together can we achieve 30x30 and succeed in slowing the loss of nature and wildlife, lessening the impacts of climate change, and ensuring that everyone has access to the outdoors.

(Additional notes specific to those focused on ocean conservation and/or climate change)

- Marine protected areas (MPAs) are proven tools that take the pressures off of our ocean and give it a chance to heal, and more than 95 percent of Americans are supportive of conserving more of our ocean.

- The nature crisis and the climate crisis are two sides of the same coin. Increasing protections for nature is critical to stabilizing the climate. And one of the most cost-effective strategies for mitigating climate change is to protect more land and water.

Quick Tip!
Encourage and enable audiences to add their own thoughts and ideas about conserving nature, perhaps by asking if they have a favorite animal or a favorite place that they would like to ensure is conserved.
FALSE CLAIM: 30x30 is a top down mandate from the Biden administration that doesn’t reflect the very real needs of communities and people across the country.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
30x30 is a national goal, grounded in science, that’s driven by locally-led, locally-supported conservation efforts to help slow the loss of nature from the ground up. 86% of voters in the United States, including strong bipartisan majorities, support safeguarding 30% of our lands and ocean by 2030. Just like climate change, the loss of nature is an existential threat for American communities and economies. Any effort to accelerate the pace of conservation should be driven by local stakeholders, including rural communities, Tribal Nations, private landowners, fishers and many others on the frontlines of stewarding, using, and enjoying nature. By working together, we can safeguard the natural resources, livelihoods, and cultures that rely on access to the outdoors and restore the degraded lands and waters that have harmed the quality of life of people across the country.

FALSE CLAIM: 30x30 places egregious mandates on private landowners. It is a land grab.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
Private land conservation has always been voluntary. Anyone claiming otherwise, or that 30x30 is an attempt to impede private property rights, is lying about the goals and priorities of the 30x30 initiative. Farmers, anglers, ranchers, and private landowners are some of America’s most effective conservationists. The national 30x30 initiative recognizes those who steward, use, and enjoy nature work together by deploying the necessary tools and resources to aid voluntary private conservation efforts, which have long been a bulwark against the decline of nature. 30x30 is a critical opportunity to support private landowners committed to protecting their property by providing the financial resources and incentives for landowners and the private sector to restore degraded natural areas and manage their resources sustainably.

FALSE CLAIM: 30% is an arbitrary target set for political purposes, not science.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
The 30x30 goal for the U.S. is an acknowledgment, grounded in science, that we need to accelerate the pace and scale of conservation to slow the loss of nature and ameliorate the worst impacts of climate change. It is a goal that is ambitious, but also reasonably attainable within the decade. There is broad agreement among scientists that we haven’t conserved nearly enough of our lands, inland waters, and ocean to slow the loss of nature, safeguard biodiversity, and maintain healthy fish and other wildlife populations. A growing consensus of scientists suggests that we’ll need to protect 30% of the planet’s ocean and lands to meet the scale of challenges facing nature, with many prominent scientists saying we, ultimately, will need to conserve even more than 30%. 30x30 is the right goal at the right time. It’s grounded in science and it’s achievable. The 30x30 initiative will make significant progress towards safeguarding natural areas, expanding access for people to get into the outdoors, and protecting communities from the worst impacts of climate change. 30x30 supports critical, community-supported conservation to protect watersheds, wetlands, and seashores before they’re lost to development.

FALSE CLAIM: 30x30 is an effort to lock-up multiple use lands and limit traditional uses that are the lifeblood of rural communities.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
Every 30 seconds, a football field worth of America’s natural areas disappears to roads, houses, pipelines, and other development. 30x30 recognizes that nature is the backbone of rural communities and we need to be supporting efforts to safeguard lands, waters, and wildlife. By relying on local experts who use and love our public lands—from ranchers and fishers to conservationists, recreationists, hunters, and anglers—30x30 can meet the scale of the challenges facing nature while preserving these traditional and sustainable activities. Together, we can safeguard the jobs, livelihoods, cultures, and recreation access our communities rely on for future generations.
FALSE CLAIM: A national goal to conserving 30% of lands and ocean by 2030 is not compatible with our energy needs as a nation.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

While the United States transitions to a clean energy economy, our national public lands will undoubtedly continue to play a central role in energy production. But we don't have to choose between meeting our nation's energy needs and safeguarding natural areas. Through a collaborative planning process to meet our future energy needs, land managers and community stakeholders must work together to determine which lands are most appropriate for energy development and which lands are still in natural condition and should be managed to preserve biodiversity. With the help of smart and collaborative planning, we can reduce the land-use footprint needed for energy sources and work together to meet a 30x30 goal.

Quick Tip!

referring to 'lands, waters and ocean' can help visitors understand that ocean areas are included too!

FALSE CLAIM: The Biden administration’s renewable energy goals are in conflict with its biodiversity goals. How can the administration achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050—which scientists say may require solar panels and wind turbines on more than 225,000 square miles of land—while conserving 30% of lands by 2030?

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

The administration's commitments to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and protect 30% of our lands and ocean by 2030 are visionary goals that will work in concert to ameliorate the impacts of climate change and save nature as we know it. To meet these ambitious standards, land managers and community stakeholders should work together to determine which lands are most appropriate for renewable energy development, which lands are still in natural condition and should be managed to preserve biodiversity, and where renewable energy and conservation might be compatible. It will require thoughtful and collaborative solutions to ensure that America meets its energy needs while safeguarding traditional livelihoods and preserving our plant and animal life for future generations.

FALSE CLAIM: 30x30 is part of a politically partisan agenda

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

While the goal was adopted by the current administration, support for it has been broad and nonpartisan. In polling, four out of five voters nationwide express support the goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our land, waters and ocean by 2030 (including 90% of Democrats, 72% of Republicans and 68% of Independents). This public support was recently echoed by elected officials from communities across the country, with more than 70 mayors and 450 state and local officials—Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike—signing letters to applaud the adoption of the goal and the vision for achieving it, with the emphasis on a collaborative and locally driven process under the "America the Beautiful" initiative.

FALSE CLAIM: A national goal to conserve 30% of the ocean by 2030 would undermine America’s commercial fishermen, who already work hard to manage fisheries sustainably.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

U.S. fisheries are indeed among the best-managed in the world. In the last 15 years, we have made significant progress in reducing overfishing and rebuilding depleted fish populations and we have maintained the amount of fish caught by America's fishers, all while expanding strongly protected areas from less than 1% to 23% of America's ocean. Thriving fisheries and marine protected areas can co-exist—and already do. We need strong fisheries management as well as strong marine protected areas for enhanced food security, biodiversity conservation, and climate outcomes. Marine protected areas serve as a savings account to protect vulnerable and ecologically important places and help rebuild populations outside of the protected area—a result that benefits fishermen, coastal communities, and ocean animals alike. The effort to ensure 30% of America's ocean is conserved by 2030 should be driven by local stakeholders, including commercial fishermen who are strong conservationists and whose livelihoods rely on the health of the ocean.

REFERRING TO ‘LANDS, WATERS AND OCEAN’ CAN HELP VISITORS UNDERSTAND THAT OCEAN AREAS ARE INCLUDED TOO!
All across #AmericaTheBeautiful, communities are working on locally-led solutions to help conserve our lands, water and ocean and reach the goal of #30x30. And we're proud to be part of [INSERT A LOCAL CONSERVATION PROJECT THAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOUR ZOO/AQUARIUM/MUSEUM], here in [YOUR COMMUNITY]. Together with you we are #SavingSpecies and can #SaveMoreNature!

Opportunity: an event related to a local conservation collaboration

Opportunity: an event associated with your animal conservation efforts, such as the birth of a new animal, a milestone in a local conservation effort, or even the celebration of a special day

Opportunity: showcase and share posts by your visitors, special guests and/or community members about their interests and involvement!

- All across #AmericaTheBeautiful, communities are working on locally-led solutions to help conserve our lands, water and ocean and reach the goal of #30x30. And we're proud to be part of [INSERT A LOCAL CONSERVATION PROJECT THAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOUR ZOO/AQUARIUM/MUSEUM], here in [YOUR COMMUNITY]. Together with you we are #SavingSpecies and can #SaveMoreNature!

- Announcing the birth of a new [INSERT RELEVANT SPECIES] at [YOUR ZOO/AQUARIUM/MUSEUM]! We are committed to #SavingSpecies like [INSERT RELEVANT SPECIES] and to the goal to #SaveMoreNature all across #AmericaTheBeautiful #30x30

- The conservation efforts of [YOUR ZOO/AQUARIUM/MUSEUM] and other @zoos_aquariums across #AmericaTheBeautiful got a big boost with [INSERT RELEVANT EVENT], showing that through local, inclusive and collaborative efforts we can meet the national goal of conserving 30% of the lands, waters and ocean of #AmericaTheBeautiful by 2030 #30x30

- #WorldSeaTurtleDay is a reminder of the need for #SavingSpecies, and the importance of conserving at least 30% of our ocean by 2030 in keeping with the goal of #30x30, nationally and globally!

Quick Tip!
Adapt these ideas to match with what you know works best on your various platforms
Consider complimenting your post with photos, graphics or short videos, and using images that show not only the animals, but also visitors or the public interacting with staff or observing animals, as inclusion is an essential element in this initiative. You may also wish to link to an action page, such as the one shown here, as a way to enable your audiences to share their opinions directly with their representatives. Examples shown here are "evergreen," and more can be found here.

Additional ideas and imagery will be provided around specific events and opportunities.
BANNER, POSTER, AND POSTCARD TEMPLATES

These designs and others were created specifically to help zoos, aquariums and museums raise public awareness and gather public feedback. Please note that there are print ready PDFs, as well as design files into which organizations can easily insert their own photos and logos. Alternative wording is also available for those who want to highlight what is happening in the context of the global movement for 30x30 or in connection with AZA SAFE, while remaining consistent with the overall messaging.

Go to theoceanproject.org/30x30 to download these files and more.

Quick Tip!
These designs also can be adapted for use on social media!
(WELCOME)

(This Exhibit) represents a thriving (ECOSYSTEM TYPE) and is home to many amazing animals! You might be familiar with (SPECIFIC ANIMAL - E.g. "...our largest resident Myrtle the green sea turtle.") Today I would like to share how together we can help protect ecosystems like (ECOSYSTEM TYPE) and animals like (SPECIFIC ANIMAL). My friends _____ and _____ are coming around with some postcards that look like this.

This card will be your tool for joining (YOUR ORGANIZATION) and your fellow community members in support of our ocean! (OR IF NOT USING POSTCARDS, REFERENCE OTHER COLLECTION METHOD HERE: E.G. In a few minutes, I'll be asking you to take out your phones, as that will be your tool for joining (YOUR ORGANIZATION) and your fellow community members in support of our ocean!)

(PIVOT TO OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION)

One way people are successfully protecting wild places on land for the benefit of animals and people alike is with national parks! Who here has heard of a national park? Okay great! Now who here has heard of a marine protected area? Just like national parks provide protection for land animals, marine protected areas provide a sanctuary for ocean animals like (SPECIFIC ANIMAL) by creating a safe place away from harmful activities. People haven't always been good to the ocean and its animals, but by conserving important areas we now have a way to help. Thanks in part to support from people like you, (RELEVANT MPA - E.g. "...the newly created Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument") is now allowing threatened populations of (RELEVANT SPECIES), as well as other animals time to recover.

The creation of (RELEVANT MPA) was important, but not enough. Currently only a very small portion of the ocean is part of a marine protected area. Scientists tell us we need to conserve at least 30% of our lands, waters and ocean by the year 2030, if we want to continue to receive all of the benefits that nature provides, from clean air and drinking water to food and natural resources. This goal is known as "30 by 30." The good news is that as a nation we recently adopted this goal of 30 by 30, with a compelling vision for collaborating to conserve and restore America the Beautiful, and by showing our support today, and working together going forward, I am confident we can achieve it!

(MAKE THE ASK)

If you agree that it's important to protect 30% of our land, waters and ocean by 2030, please (SIGN THE POSTCARD / TAKE ACTION) before leaving here today. [Hold up card.] If you did not already receive a card, you can see _____ across from me who can also take your completed cards. We will then deliver these cards to share your support with our national leaders. (OR IF NOT USING POSTCARDS, REFERENCE OTHER COLLECTION METHOD HERE E.G. New Mode ....please take out your phones, and go to ______. HOLD UP PHONE. CONTINUE TO EXPLAIN PROCESS, AND HOW THEIR SUPPORT WILL REACH DECISION MAKERS)

(CONCLUSION)

Working together we can help protect these special places, maintain healthy ocean ecosystems and ensure that the wonders of our ocean remain for generations to come. So on behalf of the (SPECIFIC ANIMAL) and (ECOSYSTEM TYPE), thank you!
OPTIONS FOR ADULTS AND FAMILIES

Would you be interested in signing a postcard that we will send to your representatives to support conserving our lands, waters, and the ocean? All we ask is for you to provide a little bit of information about yourself, and we’ll take care of the rest!

Thanks for visiting today! If you want to help us save wildlife, we’d love to have your support for 30x30. These postcards are being sent to your representatives to let them know that their constituents support conserving 30% of our lands, waters, and ocean by the year 2030. You can help by signing one of the postcards today. We’ll deliver it to the right people.

OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

Hi! Did you love seeing (SPECIFIC ANIMAL) today? Would you like to help protect them? Come on over and I’ll show you how!

Thanks for visiting today, I hope you liked learning about (SPECIFIC ANIMAL). There is a way for you to help these and other animals right now through this cool initiative called 30x30? It’s a global effort to protect 30% of the planet’s lands, waters, and ocean by the year 2030. The United States recently joined this effort, and we need to make sure our representatives know that this is important to us. If you sign this postcard, we’ll send it along on your behalf.

TIPS

Make it your own! No one knows your audience better than you and your staff. Test out several options, and let your staff choose the wording that works best for them, and your specific location.

Keep it simple! When you only have a few seconds, every word counts. Let them know up front what you are asking them to do.

Continue the conversation! While guests are taking action, continue to speak with them about the initiative and ask them about their interests.
GET INVOLVED!

Please join the 30x30 Community on the AZA Network, or contact us at:
30x30@theoceanproject.org