

The Church Commissioners for England, who manage assets worth £8.7bn, including large land holdings in the UK, are the first investor to join a new Program to develop a framework that will help businesses tackle nature loss in line with science.

As a member of the Science Based Targets Network Corporate Engagement Program, the Church Commissioners will play a role in co-designing the nature targets to ensure they are as impactful, cost-effective and easy to implement as possible.

The Church Commissioners for England support the work and mission of the Church of England through ethical and responsible stewardship of its assets. They are in the process of assessing their own impacts and dependencies on nature and will be looking for companies in their portfolio to do the same to fully understand the risks nature loss poses.

When finalized in 2022, science-based targets for nature will provide companies with a clear pathway to changing their impacts and dependencies on nature right across their value chains to play their part in protecting and restoring our land, oceans, water and biodiversity.

The Science Based Targets Network was established in 2019 to identify ways for companies and cities to play a critical role in halting the alarming loss of nature, recognizing our societies' and economies' dependency on nature for survival.

Erin Billman, Executive Director of the Science Based Targets Network, said: "We warmly welcome the Church Commissioners for England to our Program. By joining, they are sending a strong signal to business and the investment community that nature-related risk must now become as much of a focus as climate. We have to address nature loss and climate change in tandem. We invite all businesses to get ready now for science-based targets for nature as the most comprehensive way to reduce risk, attract investment and help build a net-zero, nature positive future and all the opportunities it offers."

Harry Ashman, Engagement Analyst of the Church Commissioners for England said: "Having committed to managing a net zero emissions portfolio by 2050, we must also tackle nature loss in a meaningful way. We encourage other investors to join us in supporting the development of science-based targets for nature to facilitate improved management of our holdings' impacts and dependencies on natural resources and systems. As exploitation of the natural world continues, and the scale of dependencies and damage become clear, regulatory, public and investor pressure will only increase. We urge companies to start understanding their reliance on nature now, in preparation for setting science-based targets for nature."

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