# Nish Kumar backs rewilding as calls for 30% nature restoration grow

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Comedian, writer, and activist Nish Kumar has added his voice to calls for major rewilding of Britain's land and seas.

The stand-up comedian and presenter spoke out ahead of hosting a special fundraiser event held in London on 27 November to mark charity Rewilding Britain's 10th anniversary.

The event was attended by a range of guests from culture, communities, politics, land management and conservation. It celebrated a "decade of wild hope" while warning that nature recovery in Britain was being held back by inadequate policies, laws and funding.

"The future I want to see is one where the incredible diversity of nature replaces polluted waters and silent landscapes. Where wildlife, from busy beavers to vibrant red squirrels, is thriving – helping repair broken ecosystems and creating a greener, richer, healthier future for us all," said Nish Kumar.

"I believe rewilding is a key piece of the puzzle to help make this future possible, bringing with it fantastic opportunities in job creation, economic re-growth, and improved health and wellbeing."

Rewilding – large-scale nature restoration – offers hope for tackling the nature and climate emergencies, and can create a cascade of benefits for people, says Rewilding Britain.

With Britain one of the world's most nature-depleted countries, calls for rewilding 30% of the country's land and seas have been growing.

Nature restoration at this scale can be achieved by restoring habitats including peatlands, native woodlands, wetlands, rivers and seas, while maintaining and benefiting productive farmland, Rewilding Britain says.

The charity says the past 10 years have seen rewilding grow from a niche idea to a growing movement – but is warning that far greater investment and political support is needed to realise rewilding's potential, for biodiversity, climate action, and benefits from jobs to health.

"It's inspiring to see how far rewilding has come in the last decade," said Rebecca Wrigley, founder and chief executive of Rewilding Britain.

"We've witnessed remarkable transformations in landscapes, and a growing understanding of nature's power to heal itself. But we now need to significantly scale up this story of hope, so we can breathe new life into our landscapes and seas."

The Rewilding Britain-managed Rewilding Network – which brings together communities, charities, farmers, landowners, and public bodies across Britain – now includes more than 1,000 projects, covering over 206,500 hectares of land and 1,000 square kilometres of sea.

Through its Innovation Fund and Challenge Fund, Rewilding Britain has supported over 70 projects with more than £1.1 million in funding. In Scotland, rewilding has led to a five-fold increase in jobs, and a doubling in England and Wales. Public support has surged – with 83% of the British public now backing rewilding.

Species once lost from Britain's landscapes — from storks to beavers — have been making a comeback. Rewilding now features in UK government plans, including Environmental Land Management schemes, and in official nature targets for Scotland and Wales.

A campaign led by the Scottish Rewilding Alliance, calling on Scotland to declare itself the world's first Rewilding Nation, has been supported by thousands of people, with backing from actors Brian Cox and Alan Cumming, musician Nathan Evans, Hollywood A-lister Leonardo DiCaprio, and activists Laura Young (Less Waste Laura) and Somhairle.

Yet despite this progress, less than 1% of Britain is currently rewilding, many politicians are failing to seize the opportunities or keep pace with public support, and Rewilding Britain says appetite for rewilding

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is now seriously outpacing resources available.

The latest round of applications for the charity's Rewilding Innovation Fund, which has run twice a year since 2021, was its most oversubscribed funding opportunity so far – with nearly six times more projects applying for funding than was available.

"With more resources and greater investment in rewilding, Britain could do so much more to restore biodiversity, protect habitats and connect people with nature," said Rebecca Wrigley.

"We all deserve a future where nature offers opportunities for flourishing livelihoods and quality of life, where elk, lynx and beavers inhabit wild and healthy landscapes again, and where communities are protected from extreme weather events by restored seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, peatlands and native woodlands."

Rewilding Britain's anniversary 'Our future is wild' fundraising appeal to upscale rewilding, with a matched funding campaign, runs until today. See rewildingbritain.org.uk/appeal.

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