

January 22, 2021

Dear Review Committee,

On behalf of Nature United I am pleased to offer our support for the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) and the ongoing recognition of Clayoquot Sound as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Since 2012, Nature United and our global affiliate, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), have been supporting local First Nations to develop and implement new land use visions for their territories. This work, being advanced under the leadership of the Tla-o-qui-aht, Ahousaht, and Hesquiaht Nations, has resulted in the articulation of new land use arrangements for the region that better align with the Nations interests and priorities for economic development and community well-being. Each Nation's vision is unique and the result of extensive community engagement but collectively the implementation of these visions would result in new protected areas, new forestry tenures, and new management regimes that better reflect the Nations inherent rights and prioritize their role in decision making.

Since the articulation of these visions our work with the Nations has transitioned towards implementation. The Nations and Nature United have begun engagement with tenure holders, and Nations have established, or are establishing, government-to-government tables to explore and implement their land visions.

The UNESCO designation provided important recognition of the unique ecological and cultural qualities that exist in the region and has set the stage for more expansive conversations regarding the future of the region. These conversations are now happening under the leadership and direction of the Nations who have inhabited the area since time immemorial. As the rightful stewards and occupants of the lands and waters of Clayoquot Sound, it is imperative that future land use designations align with and compliment their unique interests and recognize their rights throughout the region.

The CBT has a role to play in the evolution of work in the region and we look forward to their continued efforts to engage with and support the Nations on this journey. Thank you for your attention and consideration of this important story.

Sincerely,



Hadley Archer
Executive Director
Nature United