

PRESS RELEASE

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Attenborough urges us to heed the plight of the butterfly

- £25m project plans to help reverse 76% decline in UK butterfly species-

Sir David Attenborough marked the start of construction on Butterfly World, world-class pioneering project, with a stark conservation warning:

“More than three quarters of British butterfly species have declined in the last 20 years, some of them very rapidly. That is worrying, not least because these declines indicate an underlying deterioration of the environment as a whole. For the sake of future generations we must take action now.

“Butterfly World is doing just that. It is putting the issues on the agenda and is seeking to help reverse this environmental catastrophe.”

The renowned broadcaster and patron of Butterfly World Trust, was joined by an impressive line up of familiar faces at the Royal Society for the official unveiling of Butterfly World – an inspiring £25m world-class visitor attraction and an active conservation vehicle to fund research and community projects.

Project Trustee David Bellamy, actress Emilia Fox, Patron Baroness Helena Kennedy and world butterfly expert Doctor Jeremy Thomas are lending their weight to the project, planned just off the M25 near St Albans.

Within the next few weeks work is starting on the £25m ultimate butterfly experience that gives equal prominence to indigenous and tropical species and is expected to attract, educate and inspire up to 1m visitors when it is fully operational in spring 2011.

This will be the world’s biggest walk-through butterfly experience with over 10,000 tropical butterflies in flight at any one time, creating a kaleidoscope of movement and colour filling the 100m biome. Sections of the dome will be submerged to incorporate underground caverns featuring many tropical creatures including scorpions and spiders.

Phase one will see the regeneration of the 26 acre site designed – by the renowned landscape designer Ivan Hicks - in the shape of a butterfly, with the dome as its eye. It will restore bio-diversity to this low grade agricultural land and



turn it into one of the richest wild flower meadows in Britain – a perfect habitat for protecting our fragile and endangered indigenous butterfly and moth species.

A key aspect of Butterfly World is 'Future Gardens'. Future Gardens will be a true showcase for contemporary and sustainable garden design. It will become an annual event spanning from June to September. Phase two/stage 1, will see the construction of the spectacular roof of the biome in which, a huge tropical garden will be featured from June to September 2010. Phase two/stage 2 will complete Butterfly World and the planned opening set for March 2011.

Butterfly World is the vision of award-winning Lepidopterist, Clive Farrell. While he could also be described as an entrepreneur, property developer, entomologist and philanthropist, Clive is ultimately passionate about conservation and, specifically butterflies.

Clive said: "Butterflies are like the canaries in the coal mine. When their environment is under stress, they are the first to suffer and disappear. During the 20th century, five of Britain's butterfly species and sixty moth species became extinct. Drastic butterfly losses are continually being reported as we destroy their natural habitats at a frightening pace.

"Butterfly World is designed to bring the public into direct contact with some of the most fragile and beautiful wildlife in the world and send out a clarion call on behalf of this endangered treasure."

The £25m project will be self-sustaining. The economic impact on the region is conservatively forecast to be around £123,000,000 in the first five years of operation according to the London School of Economics. The project will help:

- Raise awareness of the extreme threats to the world's butterfly and moth population
- Educate the public about the conservation of all wild flora and fauna
- Preserve the natural environment for the benefit of the public
- Continually fund research into the natural environment
- Within the first few years of full operation, directly invest over £1m annually on community and charity projects in the area including advice centres, youth groups and crime prevention initiatives.

ENDS



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Notes to editors:

- The Launch of Butterfly World is supported by:
 - Wilsons Solicitors LLP
 - Jacksons Timber
 - Bank of Scotland Corporate
 - 3dvsl
 - Gap TV
 - Trimedia
- Butterfly World Project Ltd is the company responsible for developing and running the £25m visitor attraction
- Project Founders: Clive Farrell; Co-Founder John Calvert
- Project Trustees:
 - Professor David Bellamy (Chief Trustee)
 - The Dowager Lady Pamela Egremont
 - Doctor Jeremy Thomas
 - Malcolm Tucker
 - Stella Smith
- Project Patrons:
 - Sir David Attenborough CH FRS
 - The Marquess of Salisbury PC DL
 - Emilia Fox
 - The Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, The Countess Verulam
 - Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
 - Prof. John A Pickett CBE DSc FRS
 - Martin Lane Fox FRICS VMH
 - Allan Titchmarsh MBE VMH DL
 - Rosie Boycott
 - Priscilla Rattazzi-Whittle
 - Ian Worlock
- Butterfly World Trust, the charity will receive 10% of annual profits generated by Butterfly World Project Ltd to invest into research, conservation and community projects.
- www.butterfly-world.org

