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PRESS RELEASE: Her Majesty The Queen hosts Reception to showcase dedications to The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy

Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, tonight hosted a Reception at Buckingham Palace to acknowledge the dedications from 20 countries across the Commonwealth to The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy (QCC).

The Reception was attended by high-profile guests including Sir David Attenborough, Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, Boris Johnson and the Deputy Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Shawn Richards.

Speaking at the event, Sir David Attenborough said: "Preserving the world's green corridors, forests, jungles and botanic gardens is the simplest and most effective way to keep breathing life into planet earth. Over my nine decades, I have witnessed the devastating effect of the destruction of our forests and disregard for the importance of trees. I do believe that we have an obligation to nurture and replenish our natural environment for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. I am immensely grateful to Your Majesty for showing great leadership by putting your name to this initiative. I am also pleased to see so many Governments here tonight responding to the call. We all have a role to play. And, in your 90th year Your Majesty, we are fortunate that you are still thinking about the future and how to make this a better world."

Her Majesty presented a certificate of QCC partnership to the High Commissioners of each of the 20 countries, from Antigua and Barbuda to Zambia, that have dedicated projects to the QCC since it was conceived in 2015. It is anticipated that all 52 Commonwealth countries will have made commitments by the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Spring 2018.

Claire Whitaker OBE, Chair of The Royal Commonwealth Society said: "The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy demonstrates the great potential of the Commonwealth network, as its 52 member countries unite to preserve indigenous forests and wildlife for future generations. Created in The Queen's name, the QCC will construct a lasting legacy to honour Her Majesty's service as Head of the Commonwealth."

On Sunday His Royal Highness Prince Harry will embark on a tour of the Caribbean region where he will unveil QCC dedications in Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of The Queen. Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge launched British Columbia's dedication, the Great Bear Rainforest, during Their Royal Tour to Canada in September.

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Notes to Editors:

The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy (QCC) was launched in 2015 with the goal of uniting the Commonwealth's 52 members in conserving forests for future generations. The initiative, in The Queen's name, will raise awareness of the Commonwealth's 2.3 billion citizens of the value of saving forests and facilitate knowledge exchange between Commonwealth members, sharing best practices and creating new, collaborative initiatives for forest conservation. www.queenscommonwealthcanopy.org

The 20 Commonwealth countries recognised at the reception are: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Belize, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Fiji, Jamaica, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and Zambia.

The QCC Partners:



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS)

is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. www.thercs.org



Cool Earth is an award-winning, UK-based charity that works alongside indigenous villages to halt rainforest destruction. www.coolearth.org



The Commonwealth Forestry Association links foresters, scientists, students and policy-makers throughout the Commonwealth to seek ways of wise forest management.

www.cfa-international.org

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