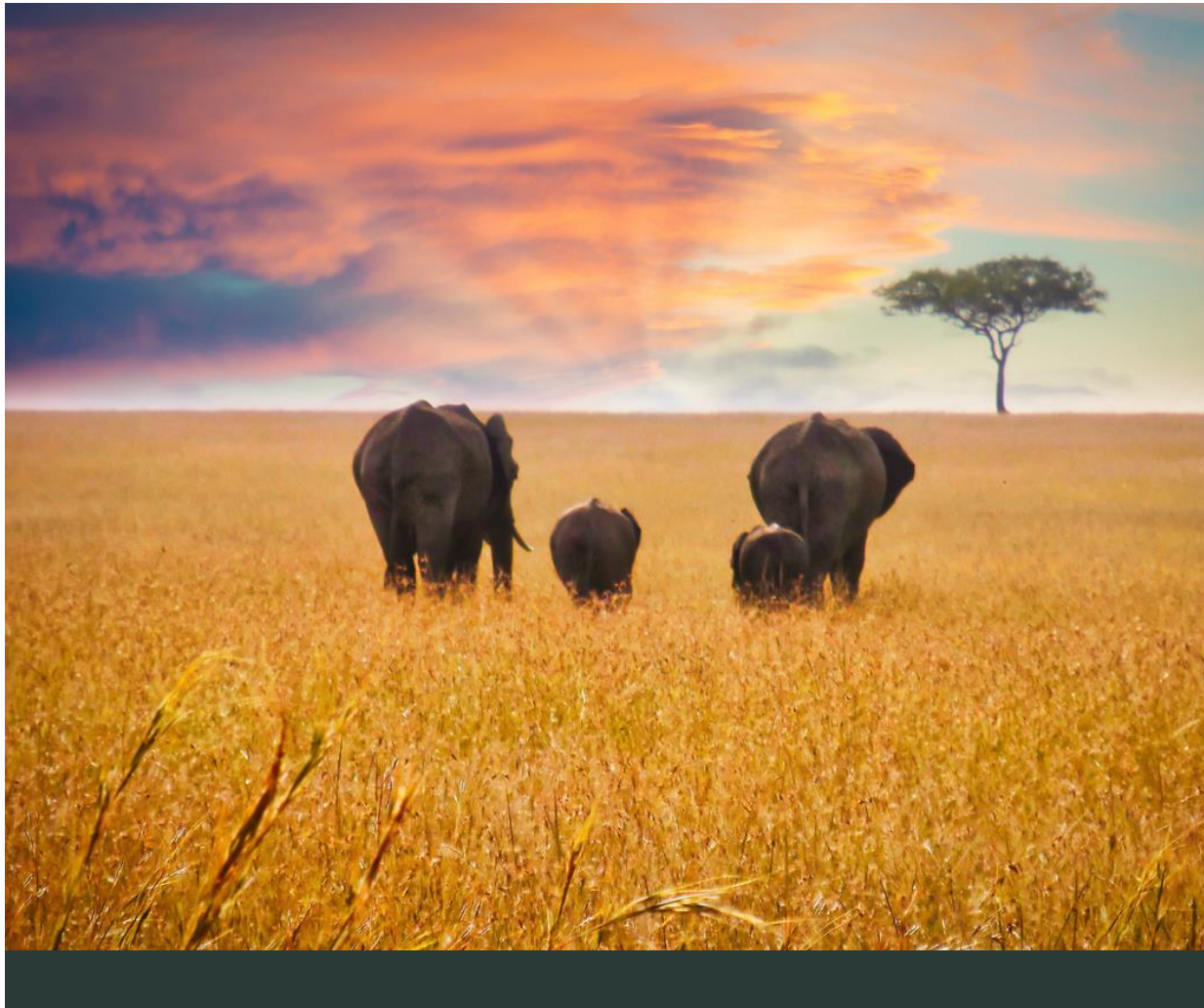


NATUREVEST 2024

# TEAM DIRECTORY



natureVest

The Nature  
Conservancy 

# NatureVest Team Directory

## Leadership

- Lauren Ferstandig, Managing Director
- Catherine Burns, Impact Management
- Jacob Davis, Senior Director, Financial Advisory
- Melissa Weigel, Managing Director, Capital Raising
- Caitlin Henning, Director, Operations and Finance
- Jeff Schutes, Director of Capital Markets and Tax, The Nature Conservancy

## Impact Investments

- Vikalp Sabhlok
- Michael Yu
- Glen Jeffries
- Paulina Tamayo
- Jonathan Truyers

## Financial Advisory

- Courtney Lowrance
- Linett Leon
- Megan Zsorey
- Brado Delgado

## Legal

- Lauren Boccardi
- Benjamin Allen
- Maria Hugues Arthur
- Maryam Khosharay

## Impact Management

- Ekaterina Alexandrova
- Neil Midlane
- Ben Dair Rothfuss
- Greg Meade
- David Schnake
- Kourtney Watkins
- Raven Shank
- Mark Rogers
- Jacquelyn Wallace
- Idil Omar
- Carol Lee
- Valerie Malter
- James DePasquale
- Chege Kinyanjui

## Capital Raising

- Elizabeth Limerick
- Todd Crimmel
- Ffion Goss-Alexander

## Finance

- Sandra Purucker

## Executive Coordination

- William Morton

## Communications

- Hayley Winson

## LEADERSHIP



### **Lauren Ferstandig**

Managing Director, NatureVest

#### **Location**

Italy

#### **Areas of Expertise**

Capital markets, private equity, transaction structuring, nature-based solutions

Lauren Ferstandig is the Managing Director of NatureVest at The Nature Conservancy. Lauren provides strategic leadership, overseeing the Impact Investing Team and post-close Impact Management Team as well as the Sustainable Financial Advisory Team, which includes dedicated Carbon Finance expertise. Collectively, these teams, under Lauren's guidance, enable NatureVest to offer a broad suite of financial solutions that yield impactful conservation outcomes in alignment with TNC's 2030 goals. Lauren's leadership is pivotal in advancing the organization's mission by integrating sustainable financial practices and innovative conservation strategies.

Lauren joined NatureVest in 2014 as the Director of Product Development, focusing on water and agricultural investments. She went on to become the Managing Director of NatureVest's Origination Team (recently renamed the Impact Investing Team), which focuses on identifying and structuring impact investment transactions across all TNC's conservation priorities. Under her leadership, the Origination Team worked collaboratively with Conservancy colleagues to structure and close deals across Africa, Asia Pacific, and the Americas.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MA in International Relations, London School of Economics (focus on issues related to East African water resource management)
- BA in American History & Literature (Minor: Economics & Art History), Middlebury College

[View online bio](#)

## LEADERSHIP



### **Catherine Burns**

Managing Director, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **Location**

Santa Cruz, California

#### **Areas of Expertise**

Environmental science, freshwater conservation

Dr. Catherine (Cat) Burns leads the efforts to bring TNC’s expertise in conservation science and practice to inform institutional investment partnerships focused on forestry, agriculture, and tourism investments—aimed at delivering conservation impact alongside returns.

Cat is currently focused on establishing direction for the team and building out the team to meet new programmatic needs. Two key focus areas are:

- Building and sustaining strong relationships with fund partners and TNC teams.
- Setting measurable goals at investment and fund levels for each of the team’s priority projects.

Cat joined TNC in 2010 and previously served as the Senior Conservation Director for NatureVest, leading a team focused on providing conservation science to inform TNC’s investment partnerships to maximize conservation impact. Cat served as Associate Director of TNC California’s Water Program and as the Director of Science for TNC’s North Carolina Chapter.

Prior to joining TNC, Cat held Ecology faculty positions at Duke University and the University of Maine. Cat has lived and worked doing conservation on four continents, including North and South America, Africa, and Australia

#### **Education and Designations:**

- PhD in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Yale University
- National Science Foundation Fellow: Forest Management and Small Mammal Ecology
- BS in Biology, Emory University, *summa cum laude*

[View online bio](#)

## LEADERSHIP



### **Jacob Davis**

Senior Director, Financial Advisory, NatureVest

#### **Location**

Evergreen, Colorado

#### **Areas Of Expertise**

Finance, freshwater conservation, regenerative agriculture, sustainability, business innovation

Jacob (Jake) Davis leads NatureVest's Sustainable Financial Advisory Team, supporting TNC field teams and strategies as they develop business, finance, and market interventions to solve conservation challenges.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, University of Colorado, Boulder (focus on sustainability and finance)
- Army veteran

[View online bio](#)

## LEADERSHIP



### **Melissa Weigel**

Managing Director, Capital Raising, Impact Finance and Markets

#### **Location**

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

#### **Areas of Expertise**

Conservation impact investing, donor stewardship

Melissa Weigel works across the Impact Finance and Markets division within The Nature Conservancy to oversee all capital raising efforts. She is responsible for working with product leads and colleagues across The Nature Conservancy to source the capital for NatureVest's conservation impact investment products, as well as raising philanthropic capital to support the division's operations. She has extensive experience in nature-based solutions, corporate sustainability efforts, and structuring investable products.

Previously, Melissa led investment fundraising efforts for the NatureVest Team, where she successfully raised more than \$130M of investment capital for the Cumberland Forest Project among other deals. Earlier in her career, Melissa worked as a member of TNC's development teams in Pennsylvania and New York, where she successfully stewarded major donors in support of TNC's global work. Prior to TNC, she worked at Schultz & Williams, a consulting firm that specializes in non-profits.

Melissa currently lives in Pittsburgh with her husband and two children, where she tries to spend as much time outdoors as possible.

[View online bio](#)

## LEADERSHIP



### **Caitlin Henning**

Director, Operations and Finance, Impact Finance and Markets

#### **LOCATION**

Charlottesville, Virginia

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Financial management, team operations, human resources

Caitlin Henning leads the financial management and operations for The Nature Conservancy's Impact Finance and Markets division, with a focus on donor reporting, budget creation/control, and human resources.

Before joining The Nature Conservancy, Caitlin worked in R&D acquisition and project management at the National Institutes of Health.

Growing up in the Appalachians, Caitlin has a long-standing passion for environmental conservation.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, West Virginia University
- MS in Finance, West Virginia University

[View online bio](#)

## LEADERSHIP



### **Jeff Schutes**

Director of Capital Markets and Tax, The Nature Conservancy

#### **Location**

Arlington, Virginia

#### **Areas of Expertise**

Financial services, investment management, private equity

Jeff Schutes is the Director of Capital Markets and Tax at The Nature Conservancy, where he oversees the majority of corporate finance roles for the organization.

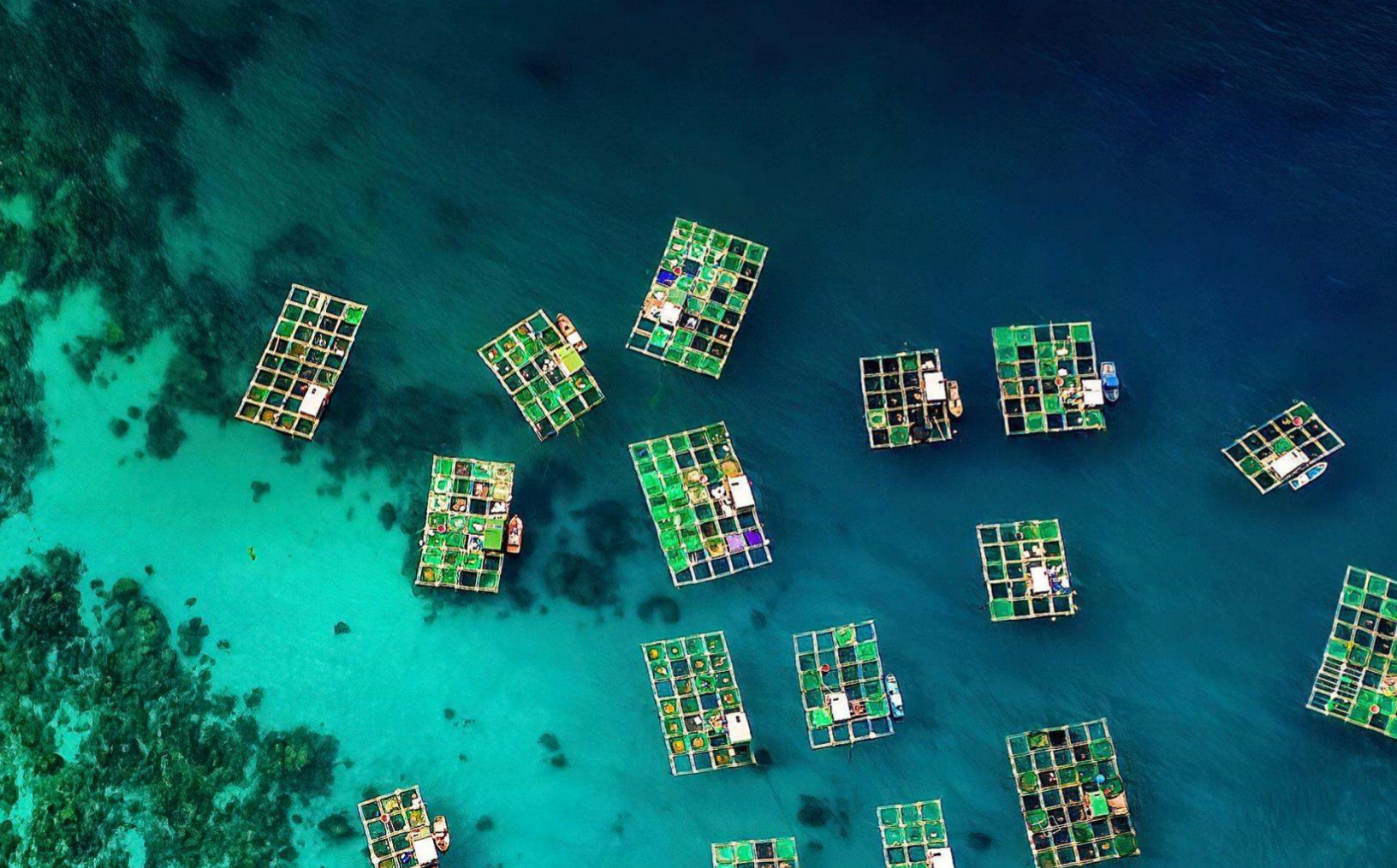
Jeff is an accomplished senior executive and thought leader with more than 30 years of success in the financial services, investment management, and private equity industries. Leveraging extensive experience providing change management for clients on a global scale, he is a valuable asset for late-stage startups in need of a turnaround and/or reorganization to optimize company performance and profitability. His broad areas of expertise include strategic planning and implementation, profit and loss management, operational development and improvement, and mergers and acquisitions.

Before joining TNC, Jeff provided similar services through JJS Capital Advisors. Jeff is the past Chair of a private equity advisory committee for a financial services firm, along with other private equity advisory roles.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- BS in Management and Finance, Purdue University
- Listed among the world's most influential investment consultants three times by Chief Investment Officer's Magazine





## MEET THE IMPACT INVESTMENTS TEAM

### Objectives include

Supporting all TNC conservation priorities

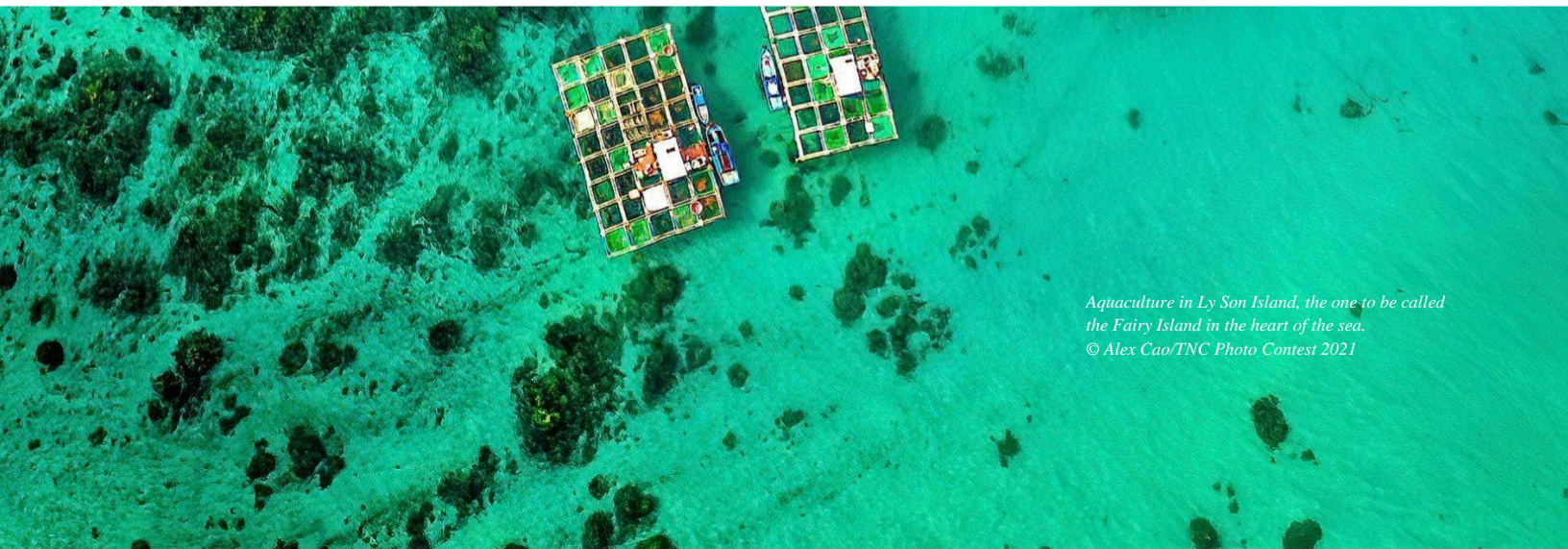
Sourcing deals

Structuring transactions

Negotiating with stakeholders

Engaging investors

Close transactions



*Aquaculture in Ly Son Island, the one to be called  
the Fairy Island in the heart of the sea.  
© Alex Cao/TNC Photo Contest 2021*



### **Vikalp Sabhlok**

Director, Investment Origination, NatureVest, Asia-Pacific Region Program

#### **LOCATION**

Singapore

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Deal identification and structuring, blended finance, climate-smart investment

Vikalp Sabhlok leads deal identification and structuring for NatureVest in Asia Pacific. Over the past decade, he has worked in various capacities in climate change-related sectors to support the origination, project development, and appraisal of climate-smart investment opportunities.

Prior to joining NatureVest, Vikalp was the green investment team lead at Global Green Growth Institute, an intergovernmental organization, in Indonesia where he helped conceptualize and develop blended finance instruments, and innovative projects in renewable energy, sustainable forestry, and sustainable agriculture.

Over the last 5 years, he has also closely worked with national and sub-national governments on policy and capacity-building initiatives to enable the mobilization of climate finance from the Green Climate Fund.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.
- MS in Management Sciences, MIT Sloan School of Management



## Michael Yu

Director, Impact Investments, NatureVest

### LOCATION

New York, New York

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Natural resource economics, clean energy finance, public-private partnerships, sustainability

Michael Yu is responsible for identifying, structuring, and executing investment opportunities that generate financial, environmental, and social returns.

Prior to joining NatureVest, Michael designed and developed innovative clean energy financing solutions, and has experience in investment banking with a focus on energy, telecommunications, media, and healthcare.

### Education and Designations:

- MS in Environmental Management, Duke University
- BS in Economics, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania



## Glen Jeffries

Senior Director, Impact Investments, NatureVest

### LOCATION

London, England

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Sustainability, finance, ocean and coastal conservation

Glen Jeffries is a Senior Director in NatureVest's Impact Investing Team. This team, previously called the Origination Team, focuses on identifying and structuring impact investment transactions across TNC's conservation priorities. Glen is responsible for developing TNC's Impact Investment portfolio of deals, designed to yield impactful conservation outcomes in alignment with TNC's 2030 Goals.

In addition, Glen collaborates extensively with his NatureVest and conservation colleagues across TNC to design and support the implementation of the overall Impact Investing Team strategy.

Before joining TNC, Glen worked as a commercial lawyer, in the UK and New York.

Glen holds a BA from the University of Oxford and a LL.M. from the Arctic University of Norway, where he specialized in marine and biodiversity topics.

### Education and Designations:

- LL.M. in Marine & Biodiversity Law, Arctic University of Norway
- BA in English, University of Oxford



## **Paulina Tamayo**

Investment and Carbon Finance Associate, Impact Investments, NatureVest

### **LOCATION**

New York, New York

### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Sustainability management, business administration

Paulina Tamayo is an Associate on the Impact Investments Team; Paulina supports the deal leaders in sourcing and structuring impact investments.

Paulina's prior experience in finance, law, and entrepreneurship includes working as a financial and legal advisor for a family office; as entrepreneurship and strategy director in an agricultural venture lab in Colombia; and responsible investments intern in an NYC endowment.

### **Education and Designations:**

- BBA, EAFIT University
- LLB (JD Equivalent), EAFIT University
- MS in Sustainability Management, Columbia University



## Jonathan Truyers

Investment Associate, Impact Investments, NatureVest

### LOCATION

Frankfurt Am Main, Germany

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Green Finance, fund management, financial modeling

Jonathan Truyers is an Investment Associate on the Impact Investments Team, he supports the deal leaders in structuring impact capital transactions that generate environmental, social, and financial returns. He joined NatureVest in 2023.

Jonathan previously worked as a Fund Management Associate at a leading impact fund, as Rating Analyst for a global rating agency, and as Financial Controller for a multinational corporation.

### Education and Designations:

- Advanced MS in Microfinance, Université Libre de Bruxelles
- MS in Business Engineering, KU Leuven
- BS in Business Engineering, KU Leuven

# MEET THE IMPACT MANAGEMENT TEAM

## Objectives include

- Managing projects, post-close
- Establishing minimum standards for investments to avoid negative environmental impacts
- Identifying opportunities for investments to deliver impact alongside returns
  - Advising on best practices for land and water management
  - Measuring and reporting climate and biodiversity outcomes



*Chris O'Bryan and Eddie Game prepare data loggers that will monitor waterhole health in Western Australia's Martu Country.  
© Justine Hausheer/TNC*

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Ekaterina Alexandrova**

Project Director, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Bend, Oregon

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Conservation planning, facilitation

Ekaterina (Ekat) Alexandrova is the project director for the Sustainable Water Impact Fund. Ekaterina joined TNC in 2014 and has held several roles including the Director of Board Relations for TNC's global board of directors and Conservation Planning Advisor for the Africa region.

Ekaterina began her career in environmental consulting and then spent several years working with local conservation organizations in Mexico and Belize.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MS in Conservation Leadership, Colorado State University and El Colegio de la Frontera Sur
- BA in Environmental Science and Policy, Barnard College-Columbia University



## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Neil Midlane**

Conservation Tourism Director, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Cape Town, South Africa

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Large carnivore conservation, transboundary conservation, finance

Dr. Neil Midlane is the Conservation Tourism Director for NatureVest's Impact Management Team, working to assist conservation tourism operators in Africa impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Neil's work aims to revive and grow the contributions of the tourism industry to biodiversity conservation and community empowerment in some of Africa's most important wild landscapes.

Neil brings expertise across the spheres of conservation, tourism, and finance. He is a qualified Chartered Accountant and an accomplished safari guide, he has worked in the banking industry, and he founded and ran the Kafue Lion Project in Zambia's Kafue National Park. His work in Kafue earned him a PhD in Zoology through the University of Cape Town, his thesis produced the first scientific estimate of lion numbers in this critical landscape and identified the key threats to the population. Neil's findings also helped to establish a fund to combat poaching in key areas of Kafue.

More recently, Neil held management roles in the conservation and impact space at Singita and Wilderness Safaris, two leading African conservation tourism companies.

Neil is a member of the African Lion Working Group, the Mozambique Carnivore Working Group, the KAZA Elephant Working Group, the KAZA Carnivore Working Group, and the Transfrontier Specialist Group.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- PhD in Zoology, University of Cape Town
- MPhil in Environmental Management, University of Stellenbosch
- Chartered Accountant (South Africa)
- Honours B. Accounting, University of Stellenbosch

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Ben Dair Rothfuss**

Program Manager, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Portland, Oregon

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Conservation finance, forestry, renewables

Ben Dair Rothfuss joined the Conservancy in 2022 in the role of Program Manager for NatureVest's Impact Management Team. He supports the implementation of the Sustainable Water Impact Fund and collaboration with BTG Pactual Timber Investment Group.

Ben is currently focused on the following:

- Bringing an economic lens to restoration and stewardship goals
- Connecting projects with sources of conservation finance and funding
- Evaluating supply chain sustainability certifications

Ben's professional highlights include guiding a water utility during a five-year property acquisition funded by the Forest Legacy Program. He also worked on piloting soil carbon sampling protocols for a new regenerative grazing program that will be launched by Country Natural Beef. Ben won the National Renewable Energy Laboratory "SunShot" prize for teamwork in crowdfunding solar for community facilities.

Prior to joining TNC, Ben worked across the Forest, Rangelands, and Energy Programs for a Portland-based conservation non-profit, Sustainable Northwest. Prior to this, Ben consulted on various projects for Earth Economics, Greenwood Resources, and spent a year in Ho Chi Minh City with WWF Vietnam and the WWF Asia Pacific Growth Strategy Team.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MEM in Economics, Yale School of the Environment, Connecticut
- BA in Biology, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania

**Greg Meade**

Cumberland Forest Project Director, Impact Management, NatureVest

**LOCATION**

Abingdon, Virginia

**AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Forestry, carbon, finance

Greg Meade directs the 253,000-acre Cumberland Forest Project in Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Greg provides oversight to the operations, protection efforts, financial returns, and community programs. Greg joined TNC in 2007 and previously held the Clinch Valley Conservation Forestry Program Director position. He brings over 25 years of professional forestry experience across private industry, state government, and the non-profit sector.

Greg has been involved in the forest carbon space since 2012 and led the development of The Nature Conservancy's first U.S.-based Improved Forest Management projects, which would go on to become the organization's first regulatory forest carbon projects registered in California's Cap and Trade program.

Greg was named Young Forester of the Year by the Society of American Foresters (SAF).

On his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, Greg joined the Virginia National Guard (so young that his parents had to sign the application). He spent the next two summers at Ft. Benning, Georgia training to become an infantryman.

**Education and Designations:**

- MS in Forestry, Virginia Tech
- BS in Forestry, Virginia Tech
- SAF Certified Forester (CF)

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **David Schnake**

Natural Climate Solutions Forester, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Durham, North Carolina

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Silviculture, forest management, forest modeling

David Schnake is the Natural Climate Solutions Forester for NatureVest's Impact Management Team. His work focuses on developing forest management plans, forest carbon projects, conservation easement sales, and other tools and methods to enhance forest carbon sequestration, forest restoration, and long-term forest protection.

David joined TNC in 2021 after over a decade of managing the State of North Carolina's system of Research Station forests. He has also been an instructor of forest biometrics, silviculture, and forest management and planning at North Carolina State University.

David spends his free time playing ice hockey, fishing, hiking, and biking. His favorite place to escape to is the Selkirk Mountains in North Idaho and Northeast Washington.

#### **Education & Designations:**

- MS in Forestry, Mississippi State University
- BS in Forestry, Colorado State University
- North Carolina Registered Forester
- Society of American Foresters Certified Forester

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Kourtney Watkins**

Portfolio Operations Manager, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Apex, North Carolina

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Investment operations and oversight, portfolio accounting, operational due diligence

Kourtney Watkins is the Portfolio Operations Manager for NatureVest’s Impact Management Team, supporting the governance, oversight, and management of NatureVest’s closed impact portfolio.

Kourtney is currently focused on establishing the operations and oversight structure for all closed investments. She is also integral in coordinating impact and financial reporting for the NatureVest portfolio.

Prior to joining TNC, Kourtney focused on investment operations and oversight, portfolio accounting, operational due diligence, compliance, and reporting in the alternative investment and donor-advised fund industries.

#### **Education & Designations:**

- MBA, North Carolina State University
- BS in Accounting, North Carolina State University
- Chartered Alternative Investment Analyst



## Raven Shank

Geospatial Analyst, Impact Management, NatureVest

### LOCATION

Columbus, Ohio

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

GIS, spatial ecology, conservation biology, land-use planning, prioritization

Raven Shank joined the Conservancy in August 2017. They provide geospatial and data science support to the Sustainable Water Impact Fund by conducting geospatial analyses, producing cartographic products, building, and maintaining a database for tracking assets and a suite of conservation metrics, and developing interactive web-based products. Most importantly, they strive to bring thoughtful and innovative approaches when applying the principles of geospatial and data science to inform decision-making.

### Education and Designations:

- MS in Science, University of Queensland
- BS in Zoology, Colorado State University

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Mark Rogers**

Central Appalachian Forest Manager, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Caryville, Tennessee

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Forest management, silviculture, timber marketing

Mark Rogers directs the forest management planning, operations, and Forest Stewardship Council® certification across the 253,000-acre Cumberland Forest Project in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. A native of East Tennessee, Mark has over 25 years of forest management experience working with the forest industry in Virginia, and the Tennessee Division of Forestry.

Mark is currently focused on the following:

- Managing forestry and land management programs to accomplish appropriate levels of timber harvesting to meet projected cash flows of the Cumberland Forest investment model.
- Ensuring the Cumberland Forest meets or exceeds third-party Forest Stewardship Council® certification criteria each year.
- Collaborating with internal and external partners on projects to improve elk habitat, forest connectivity, and resiliency in the Cumberland Forest.
- While in college, Mark worked at a residential high school for the deaf and had the opportunity to tutor the American citizenship exam to an international exchange student from China.

Outside of work, Mark enjoys woodworking (collecting old barn wood and rough lumber to repurpose into furniture), gardening, cooking, and any outdoor activities—but especially spending time with his wife Lori and two grown children, Connor, and Elaina.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MS in Forest Resource Management, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- BS in Forestry, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Jacquelyn Wallace**

Conservation & Community Impact Lead, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Winthrop, Washington

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Land conservation, water transactions, community development

Jacquelyn Wallace is the Conservation & Community Impact Lead for NatureVest’s Impact Management Team. Jacquelyn works to weave meaningful conservation and community outcomes into investment decision-making—and to deliver healthier ecosystems to support humanity in the era of climate change.

Before joining TNC, Jacquelyn spent 15 years protecting farms, forests, and water resources in ways that bolstered community development in the Pacific Northwest, the U.S. South, and Indonesia.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MNR in Natural Resource Policy & Administration, North Carolina State University
- BS in Biology, University of the South, Sewanee



## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Idil Omar**

Portfolio Coordinator, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Chantilly, Virginia

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Financial reporting, communications, ethnographic analysis and research methods

Idil coordinates the impact and financial reporting on NatureVest's closed impact portfolio and provides support to the related entities' management and governance process.

Idil is currently focused on the following:

- Serving as corporate secretary to NatureVest's related entities and supporting their management
- Coordinating NatureVest's impact and financial reporting
- Supporting the Deal Review Committee and the governance process

Prior to joining NatureVest, Idil worked as an anthropologist and later spent four years in finance and communications.

Outside of TNC, Idil enjoys traveling, cooking, and photography. She is an avid reader and is constantly searching for the best coffee shop in the DC area, to relax and enjoy a few chapters.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MA in Anthropology, Brandeis University
- BA in Global Affairs, George Mason University

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Carol Lee**

Impact Investing Associate, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Brooklyn, New York

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Impact management, impact monitoring, impact reporting

Carol works on impact management and conservation outcome creation with NatureVest's impact funds. She supports the implementation of the Sustainable Water Impact Fund and the collaboration with BTG Pactual Timber Investment Group.

Carol is currently focused on the following:

- Building and implementing impact management systems and strategies
- Managing and creating conservation outcomes on LAR assets for the Sustainable Water Impact Fund
- Tracking and monitoring impact on fund performance
- Supporting impact due diligence for new investments

Before joining TNC, Carol worked at Tideline – a specialist consultant for the impact investing industry – advising institutional investors, foundations, and nonprofits on impact management strategy and best impact practices.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- BA in Environmental Studies, Yale University

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Valerie Malter**

Director of Strategy, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Washington DC

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Strategic leadership, investment management, financial management

Valerie Malter is the Director of Strategy at NatureVest. She provides strategic leadership as well as expertise and support to the Impact Management Team on business strategy, financial and management controls, and approaches to achieving impact alongside financial returns. She also supports the origination process for new deals, in close partnership with NatureVest’s Impact Investments Team, by serving as the primary liaison with those at TNC developing new investment partnerships.

Valerie joined TNC in 2022 after nearly 40 years of experience in the Investment Management Industry where she held a variety of roles including those of Analyst, Portfolio Manager, and Entrepreneur. She was a founding partner and the Managing Principal of Matarin Capital Management which grew to be one of the largest women-owned Investment Management firms in the U.S. and spent several years at JP Morgan Investment Management and elsewhere designing, growing, and managing investment strategies primarily for institutional investors. Valerie was also the founder of the Social Impact Initiative at the Wharton School. She has decades of strategy, business creation, and management experience.

She has two grown children and lives in Washington, DC with her husband, Stuart, with whom she co-authored a book titled “How to Be a Growth Investor” (McGraw Hill. 1999).

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, University of Virginia
- Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA)

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **James DePasquale**

Forest Spatial GIS Analyst, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Palmer, Alaska

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

GIS, spatial analysis, cartography, hydrography, forestry, LiDAR, land management

James DePasquale provides geospatial, science, and planning support on NatureVest forestry projects with a focus on carbon and climate-related conservation outcomes. He brings over two decades of experience in developing novel and resilient solutions to sustainable forest management with a focus on remote sensing and cartography.

James is currently focused on using spatial analyses to develop new ways of strengthening the climate resiliency of commercial forests in the U.S.

James has received several awards during his career as a GIS analyst and cartographer. He developed a new, technical process for mapping streams and rivers in Alaska for which he received a Special Achievement in Hydrographic Mapping award from the USGS. He won first place in the map competition at the Annual Esri International User Conference and his work has been published on the cover of the annual Esri Map Book as well as in TNC's annual Geospatial Atlas.

Prior to joining NatureVest, James worked for TNC's Alaska program for nine years.

Little-known facts about James include that he plays the digeridoo and has also recently acquired a small flock of chickens.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- GC in GIS, Penn State University
- BA in Economics, Clark University
- AAS in Forestry, Paul Smith's College
- Certified Geographic Information Systems Professional

## IMPACT MANAGEMENT



### **Chege Kinyanjui**

Environment & Social Officer, Impact Management, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Nairobi, Kenya

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Environmental and Social Impact

Chege Kinyanjui is the Environment & Social Officer for NatureVest's Impact Management Team, working to assist conservation tourism operators in Africa impacted by the COVID pandemic. The team works to facilitate and grow the contributions of the tourism industry to biodiversity conservation and community empowerment in some of Africa's most important wild landscapes.

Chege is currently focused on assisting the team in supporting, monitoring, and advising on conservation and community-related commitments. The main goal is to ensure that operators meet their conservation targets and community commitments in their near and long-term business plans.

Over the last decade, Chege has participated in various Environmental, Natural Resources Management, and Corporate Social Responsibility projects. Notably, working with various players in the conservation and tourism arena, promoting responsible/ sustainable tourism best practices. Among some of the key highlights include a long-term volunteer-ship in the Eco rating Programme run by Ecotourism Kenya which is GSTC accredited. Additionally, as an environmental consultant, Chege has worked with tour operators, assisting them to integrate environmental sustainability into their business model.

Prior to joining TNC, Chege worked as an independent environmental consultant but kept close ties with conservation and tourism organizations like Ecotourism Kenya, the Institute of Water and Environment (Gender and Climate Change Working Group), and the Kenya Forest Working Group (EAWS) among others.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- BS in Environmental Sciences, Kenyatta University (Nairobi-Kenya)



## MEET THE FINACNIAL ADVISORY TEAM

### Objectives include

Offer a broad suite of financial solutions

Support all TNC conservation priorities

Identify new market solutions for conservation

Develop financial tools



## Courtney Lowrance

Director, Durable Protection Finance, Financial Advisory,  
NatureVest

### LOCATION

London, England

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Capital markets, private equity, debt structuring  
and project finance

Courtney Lowrance is the Director of Durable Protection Finance, for NatureVest's Financial Advisory Team. She is tasked with scoping and designing Project Finance for Permanence (PfP) strategies that integrate public, private, and blended sources of capital for conservation initiatives within a host country.

Courtney has over 20 years of experience in the finance sector, spanning capital markets, impact investing, and risk management. Prior to joining TNC, she was a Managing Director at Citi where she led an investment banking business focused on sustainability and corporate transition.

### Education and Designations:

- BA, Boston University
- MS in Biological Sciences, Florida Institute of Technology

## FINANCIAL ADVISORY



### **Linett Leon**

Program Manager, Financial Advisory, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Miami, Florida

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Consulting, finance, data analysis, regenerative agriculture, business modeling, sustainability

Linnet Leon is part of NatureVest's Financial Advisory Team, supporting TNC field teams and strategies as they develop business, finance, and market interventions that integrate the cost and value of natural assets to tackle conservation challenges.

Prior to joining NatureVest, Linnet worked at PwC for 5 years and consulted Federal agencies on business initiatives including, strategic alignment, financial analysis, process reengineering, and data analytics. She brings a passion for addressing the climate crisis in the food and ocean space, enhancing community well-being, and advancing business initiatives so nature and people can thrive.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA and MS in Environmental Science, University of Michigan
- BA in Business Administration, Florida International University





## **Megan Zsorey**

Program Coordinator Financial Advisory, NatureVest

### **LOCATION**

Arlington, Virginia

### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Project management

Megan Zsorey is a Program Coordinator for the Sustainable Financial Advisory Team. In this role, she provides project management and research support to TNC field teams as they develop business, finance, and market interventions to solve conservation challenges.

### **Education and Designations:**

- Currently pursuing an MA in International Economic Relations, American University
- BA in Political Science and International Studies, Illinois Wesleyan University



## **Brado Delgado**

Sustainable Financial Senior Advisor for Latin America, Financial Advisory, NatureVest

### **LOCATION**

Lima, Peru

### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Capital markets, private equity, debt structuring and project finance

Brado Delgado is the Sustainable Financial Senior Advisor for Latin America. He has a background in Investment Banking and Private Equity. Throughout his career, he has structured, advised, and invested over US\$2 billion in several industries, such as real estate, financial, project finance, and energy. He is familiar with TNC work, having previously served as the Regional Finance Manager for Latin America.

Most recently, Brado was the Vice President of Investments at TC Latin America Partners, a private equity firm focused on real estate investments. In this role, he led the asset management and execution team in Peru.

### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, INSEAD (France)
- BA in Business Administration, Universidad del Pacifico, Peru



## **CAPITAL RAISING, LEGAL, FINANCE, COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Objectives include**

Connect TNC with donors and investors

Structure legal agreements

Engage prospective partners

Support team strategy

## CAPITAL RAISING



### **Elizabeth Limerick**

Manager of Investment Fundraising, Impact Finance and Markets

#### **LOCATION**

Maine, New England

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Conservation impact investing, investor relations

Elizabeth (Beth) Limerick works in the Impact Finance and Markets division raising investment capital. She is responsible for working with product leads and colleagues across TNC to source the capital for NatureVest's conservation impact investment projects.

Before joining NatureVest, Beth worked and consulted in the field of principal gift philanthropy and charitable estate planning, where she successfully raised over \$75 million in gifts.

Prior to her non-profit career, Beth worked at State Street, managing relationships for the bank's mutual fund clients. She is also a partner in Opus Ventures. She currently lives on a small island in Maine with her husband and their dog, Rue, and spends as much time in and on the water as possible.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- BA in Political Science, Kenyon College
- CFRE designation Certified Fund Raising Executive

## CAPITAL RAISING



### **Todd Crimmel**

Associate Director of Development, Impact Finance and Markets

#### **LOCATION**

Denver, Colorado

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Conservation impact investing, investor relations

Todd is a member of the Capital Raising Team within the Impact Finance and Markets Division, where he focuses on raising philanthropic and investment capital to support and enhance TNC's market-facing solutions for conservation.

Before joining the Impact Finance and Markets Team, Todd served as a philanthropic fundraiser for TNC's Colorado and Alaska business units, concentrating on major and principal gift philanthropy.

Prior to his nonprofit career, Todd worked in the sports industry with organizations such as the Pittsburgh Steelers, the Denver Broncos, and the University of Colorado Boulder. He currently resides in Denver, Colorado.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MBA, West Virginia University
- MS in Sport Management, West Virginia University
- BS in Sport Management, West Virginia University

## CAPITAL RAISING



### **Ffion Goss-Alexander**

Development Specialist, Capital Raising, Impact Finance and Markets

#### **LOCATION**

Denver, Colorado

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Conservation impact investing, donor stewardship, data management, financial coding

Ffion is the Development Specialist on the Capital Raising Team of the Impact Finance and Markets division (IFM). She joined TNC in June 2022 and supports the capital raising efforts of the IFM division through data management and financial coding.

Before joining The Nature Conservancy Ffion worked in development and operations roles at different non-profits and served as a direct support worker for people with disabilities.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MA in Game Design, American University
- BA in Religious Studies, American University

## FINANCE



### **Sandra Purucker**

Finance Specialist, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Arusha, Tanzania

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Financial administration

Sandra provides financial administrative, and operations support to the NatureVest Team and stakeholders with a focus on financial reporting, disbursements, related entity administration, and human resources.

Sandra has worked with the Nature Conservancy since 2011, previously supporting the African region in a similar position and with similar responsibilities.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- BBA in Accounting, Texas Tech University



## **Lauren Boccardi**

Senior Attorney, NatureVest

### **LOCATION**

Chevy Chase, Maryland

### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Impact Investing, Complex Transactions, Corporate Law

Lauren Boccardi is a Senior Attorney supporting TNC’s impact investment portfolio. Before joining The Nature Conservancy, Ms. Boccardi spent seven years at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where she most recently served as the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for USAID’s Bureau for Food Security and the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. Her work at USAID covered private sector engagement, legislation and policy, and Middle East issues.

Prior to USAID, Ms. Boccardi worked on a wide range of corporate transactions as a corporate lawyer at Debevoise & Plimpton, focusing on energy and environmental work. She has worked with various non-profits, including a women’s group in Oaxaca, Mexico, and was the manager of Communications and Research for an internet software company in New York.

### **Education and Designations:**

- JD, Harvard Law School
- MA in Law and Diplomacy, The Fletcher School, Tufts University
- BA, Georgetown University





## **Benjamin Allen**

Senior Attorney, NatureVest

### **LOCATION**

Denver, Colorado

### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Investments, Corporate Governance, Regulatory compliance

Ben Allen is a Senior Attorney responsible for advising TNC on investments, including the Office of Investments and NatureVest. His legal career has focused on private fund formation, investments, corporate governance, and regulatory compliance.

Ben started his career as a corporate attorney for Winstead PC and most recently worked as in-house counsel for Acreage Holdings, Inc.

### **Education and Designations:**

- JD, Cornell Law School
- BA English Literature, Baylor University



## Maryam Khosharay

Senior Attorney, NatureVest

### LOCATION

Potomac, Maryland

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Debt finance, impact investing, Nature Bonds

Maryam Khosharay is an Attorney supporting TNC's impact investment portfolio.

With over 15 years of global finance experience, Maryam is experienced as a seasoned transactional attorney, management professional, and professor. Her expertise includes debt finance, blended finance, project finance, impact funds, and credit guarantees.

Maryam is skilled at legal structuring, managing due diligence, and preparing and negotiating diverse transactions and project documents. Prior to TNC, she was Acting VP and DVP at the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation where she led a team of 40 finance professionals. Maryam served as a finance associate at two international law firms and as Deputy Assistant General Counsel for credit programs at the U.S. Agency for International Development. She was also on the WIFIA Credit Council of the EPA, where she reviewed and approved qualifying and viable projects under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

### Education and Designations:

- Masters in Law, Georgetown University
- Law Degree, College of Law (London)
- BA, Sociology and Political Science, Boston University

## LEGAL



### **Maria Hugues Arthur**

Senior Paralegal, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

New York, New York

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Corporate law

Maria Hugues Arthur supports the legal team at TNC.

Before joining TNC, Maria was a corporate attorney at Nader Hayaux & Goebel, S.C. (NHG) in Mexico City, where she advised on various matters, including international and domestic finance and capital markets transactions. Before NHG, she was a corporate attorney at Galicia Abogados, S.C., in Mexico City.

Maria speaks Spanish (native) and French (basic).

#### **Education and Designations:**

- LLM, University of Virginia School of Law
- Law Degree, Universidad Autonoma de Queretaro
- Member of the Mexican bar
- Climate Change—Impacts, adaptation, and political constraints, Paris School of Economics.

## EXECUTIVE COORDINATION



### **William Morton**

Executive Coordinator, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Team operations, travel and event planning, human resources

William is the Executive Coordinator to NatureVest's Managing Director, Lauren Ferstandig. In this role, he supports the unit's management team, and manages team-wide travel, events, and conference planning.

William joined The Nature Conservancy in 2009 and served as the executive assistant to the New York Executive Director and as Trustee Liaison for the New York State Board of Trustees.

Prior to joining TNC, William had a 22-year career in hospitality, spanning hotel operations, sales and marketing, catering and conference services, and human resources at Orient-Express Hotels, Trains & Cruises (now branded Belmond) in New York and Charleston Place Hotel in Charleston, SC.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- MA in Game Design, American University
- BA in Religious Studies, American University

## COMMUNICATIONS



### **Hayley Winson**

Communications Manager, NatureVest

#### **LOCATION**

New York, New York

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

Marketing, communications, copywriting, graphic design

Hayley Winson serves as the Communications Manager for NatureVest, where her responsibilities focus on supporting the NatureVest Team through strategic communications, content creation, internal alignment, and maintaining brand consistency. In her capacity as Communications Manager, Hayley collaborates closely with the NatureVest team to develop and execute strategic communications. Her goal is to raise awareness about NatureVest's work in a way that will help to influence the market. She crafts compelling narratives that resonate with stakeholders, donors, and the wider public. Whether it's a thought leadership article, an impact report, a case study, or a social media campaign, Hayley's words are written to spark conversations and inspire action.

Before joining TNC, Hayley was a copywriter and project manager for a large U.S. commercial real estate firm. Her responsibilities included business development, proposal and presentation writing, mapping, and location analysis, plus researching and writing thought leadership to position the firm.

#### **Education and Designations:**

- Sustainable Investing Programme, Harvard Business School
- PGC in Urban Planning, University of Central England
- BS in Estate Management, University of Reading, England