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Nature Canada Director of Policy Appointed to the Canadian Environment Domestic Advisory Group (CEDAG)

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Ottawa — At the invitation of Canada's Environment Minister, Nature Canada's Director of Policy, Akaash Maharaj has officially joined the Canadian Environment Domestic Advisory Group (CEDAG). CEDAG is a body of independent, volunteer experts tasked with advising the federal government on meeting its environmental obligations under the Canada–European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Akaash has accepted this appointment to ensure that international trade law serves as a shield for ecosystems, rather than a justification for environmental degradation.

"To protect both our democratic and economic sovereignty, Canada must urgently diversify our international trade relationships and dilute the coercive economic influence that any single foreign market can wield over our domestic choices," said Akaash Maharaj, Director of Policy at Nature Canada. "We must preferentially expand trade with partners like the European Union that share our broad national ideals, including a fundamental commitment to caring for nature."

Akaash will use his position within CEDAG to ensure Chapter 24 is rigorously applied to defend Canada's at-risk ecosystems. His immediate focus includes holding international trade partners to account on forest conservation and neutralising policy frameworks that accelerate biodiversity loss. This legally binding chapter dictates that neither Canada nor Europe may grant domestic industrial actors an unjust price advantage by lowering conservation bars, poisoning lands and waters, or pillaging shared natural heritage.

"The stakes are clear," added Akaash Maharaj. "If we make this treaty succeed, we will increase prosperity for all Canadians while systematically lifting environmental standards across our country. If it fails, Canada remains highly vulnerable to the coercive trade policies of states prepared to lay waste to their own ecosystems and demand that we do the same."

Looking forward, he will ensure these trade mechanisms are actively deployed to protect Canada's biodiversity and hold both governments accountable to their international environmental commitments.

— 30 —

Editors' Notes
A charity since 1939, Nature Canada has been the voice for nature. Our mission is to cultivate and strengthen the connections and conditions needed for species and habitats to flourish. Our vision is a Canada where nature is restored, thriving, and an integral part of everyday life, rooted in all the decisions that shape our shared future.

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