OUR MISSION

Rainforest Trust saves endangered wildlife and protects our planet by creating rainforest reserves through partnerships, community engagement and donor support.

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For Rainforest Trust, as for every person and organization, 2020 was a strange and challenging year. But for us it became a year of finding strength through adversity, and we emerged stronger and with greater impact than ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic stressed our implementing partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America, slowing land purchases, preventing community meetings and cutting tourism income. We, and our donors, responded with a COVID-19 Emergency Conservation Fund to replace lost income and support critical activities such as patrols. Our partners established new protection of over 3.5 million acres through the year, down from a record 11 million in 2019 but better than 2017 or 2018. In spite of COVID, projects stayed on track, and we have already seen substantial protected area creation in 2021.

Our supporters stood by us through the year, enabling us to raise a record $26 million and allocate it to the largest portfolio of new projects in our history. They also provided a record level of unrestricted support allowing us to end the year in the black and to maintain our commitment that all gifts not specifically unrestricted go entirely to conservation. We are deeply grateful.

During the summer of 2020 our board and staff met eight times by Zoom to hammer out a powerful new strategic plan—pledging to raise and allocate at least $200 million during 2021-2025, protect 125 million acres including habitat for half the world’s threatened birds and mammals, and safely lock up 15 billion tons of carbon, three times the U.S.’s entire annual emissions.

I joined the organization in April 2020, attracted by our mission of creating protected areas to save species and protect our planet. A friend at another conservation organization, encouraging me to take the job, called our mission “the silver bullet in conservation.” Indeed, no other organization provides donors with as cost-effective and impactful a way to fight biodiversity loss and climate change.

Thank you for standing with us through this challenging year. Together we have shown that we can weather adversity and help save the world. Our work is cut out for us.

With sincere thanks and deepest respect,

James Deutsch, CEO
The COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down. For Dr. Abdullahi Ali of the Hirola Conservation Programme in Kenya, this applied to both local communities and the wildlife his organization works to protect. The government-imposed restrictions to reduce the spread of the virus were especially hard-hitting on economies like those in Kenya which depend heavily upon revenues from tourism. “With the restrictions in place, things were incredibly difficult psychologically and economically for the local communities and even worse for conservation organizations as we tried to adjust to what seemed to be a new normal for us,” he said. “The high demand for alternative ways to reduce prevailing poverty, hunger, and malnutrition led to unprecedented poaching which was further aggravated by suspected commercial poachers taking advantage of the chaos to conduct cross border bushmeat trade.”

Many of Rainforest Trust’s partners experienced similar unprecedented challenges and threats to natural resources. For the first time in our history, Rainforest Trust mobilized to provide extraordinary support outside our projects by launching the COVID-19 Emergency Conservation Fund to provide additional financial support to our partners to meet the changes caused by the virus.

COVID-19 Emergency Conservation Fund grants have focused on increasing forest patrols, staff safety, operations and the use of technology. The following are examples of some of the work supported by the fund through 2020:

- Hirola Conservation Programme in Kenya increased patrols and training in response to their poaching crisis, and purchased protective equipment such as masks so their staff can work safely.

- Yayasan Adudu Nantu Internasional (YANI) in Indonesia implemented a total of 109 days of forest protection patrols in their Nantu Wildlife Sanctuary, removing more than 60 snares set by poachers and even saving a Babirusa.

- Daluhay Daloy ng Buhay Inc. in the Philippines organized a wildlife rescue and environmental law enforcement group called SBKAL’N that ensures the safety of biodiversity and maintains the integrity of their reserves through increased patrols.

- Madagascar Primate Study and Research Group (GERP) launched 16 new community-led forest patrols in their reserves and provided hygiene kits to communities and local hospitals.

- Reserva Ecológica de Guapiaçu (REGUA) in Brazil retained key staff members who would have lost their jobs due to the tourism collapse. Now that their jobs are secure, those employees are working on plans to safely accept tourists again when travel is safe.

- Misión Tiburón in Costa Rica dedicated three people to continue patrols during the pandemic, along with boat fuel and protective equipment to ensure their team is safe while out conducting this important work.

Despite the many challenges, COVID-19 united us. Vaccinations have slowly restored some pre-pandemic normalcy, but coverage in the Global South remains low. Virus variants continue to pose threats globally, resulting in even greater pressure on natural resources and fragile ecosystems in many of the places where we work around the world. Rainforest Trust remains committed to our conservation goals and will continue to evaluate the situation on the ground with our partners to meet the evolving and emerging needs of our projects.

The COVID-19 Emergency Conservation Fund remains open and continues to fund requests from our partners. We are grateful to all who have generously supported this fund and for the leadership support of Edith McBean and The Louis Stewart Foundation.

PHOTOS
Top: Shark tagging by partner Misión Tiburón, Costa Rica.
Middle: The Vulnerable Babirusa of Indonesia. Photo by Craig Russell.
Bottom: Partner, Hirola Conservation Programme, removes snares in Bura East Conservancy, Kenya.
Nearly 60% of Peru’s landscape is covered with Amazon rainforest. These biodiversity-rich forests are home to hundreds of indigenous communities, who rely solely on this land to survive. The local benefits are obvious, but the Peruvian Amazon is also vital in the global fight against climate change. The region is one of our planet’s most important carbon stores, containing over 48.2 billion metric tons of carbon.

Despite the critical importance of the Amazon, deforestation to harvest natural resources and convert land to agricultural plantations is rampant. Millions of tons of carbon are released, habitat is destroyed and countless people are left with no refuge.

Over 25 years ago, Rainforest Trust began investing in the protection of the Peruvian Amazon, partnering with the Center for the Development of an Indigenous Amazon (CEDIA) on multiple projects. CEDIA guides and supports local indigenous communities through the process of gaining legal title to their land, which prevents commercial developers and land grabbers from obtaining the land and destroying the forest.

In 2020, 1,164,735.91 acres - an area roughly the size of Grand Canyon National Park - were protected by Rainforest Trust and CEDIA. This protection has expanded to over 11 million acres, an area roughly the size of New Hampshire and Vermont. When our current projects are complete, an additional 5 million acres will be titled.
I became a Rainforest Trust Fellow because I am passionate about working with people and conserving biodiversity to improve their living conditions.

Alberto Romero (right)
CEDIA Director

Saving the Peruvian Amazon is critical for species, communities and our planet, the pillars that underpin Rainforest Trust’s mission.

Species: 3,940 unique threatened species live in the Peruvian Amazon, and 2,705 or 68% of the total are protected within our reserves including the Endangered White-bellied Spider Monkey, Amazon River Dolphin and Giant Otter.

Communities: 156 communities have gained legal title to their land and will continue to sustainably manage their ancestral forests.

Planet: 2.8 billion tons of carbon remain locked in trees and soil to the benefit of our entire planet.

Our work in Peru has been supported by our generous donors to the project including leadership gifts from Luanne Lemmer and Eric Veach, The Hugh C. and Thomas Lord Fund, Metabolic Studios, Ross and Florence Jennings; the Conservation Action Fund and the SAVES Challenge. Thank you.
Côte d’Ivoire’s Grand-Béréby coastline and nearshore area hosts some of the most significant marine life in West Africa. Sadly, encroachment from commercial fisheries has led to the over-exploitation of fish stocks, damaging the fragile marine ecosystems.

To halt this destruction, Rainforest Trust worked with our local partner, Conservation des Espèces Marines (CEM) to create the first ever Marine Protected Area in Côte d’Ivoire. The Grand Béréby Marine Protected Area spans 640,000 acres of coastal, mangrove and marine habitat and hosts vibrant sea life. Critically Endangered Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks, Endangered Blue Whales and many others have been spotted in these waters. The beaches are one of West Africa’s most important sea turtle nesting areas, hosting Endangered Green Turtles, Vulnerable Olive Ridleys and Vulnerable Leatherbacks during the breeding season. The shallow rocky reefs just offshore provide nutrition and safety for turtle hatchlings.

The new protected area is also vital for communities. CEM has incorporated the natural resource needs of the local community into the management plan for the Grand Béréby Marine Protected Area. They are educating and assisting local communities with sustainable fishery practices and increasing eco-tourism to bolster the local economy.

Rainforest Trust is continuing our work to protect this vulnerable coastline with CEM on another 1.1 million-acre Marine Protected Area.

*This project was supported by our generous donors with leadership gifts from EnviroBuild, que, Don and Karen Stearns; the Conservation Action Fund and the SAVES Challenge. Thank you.*
RAINFOREST TRUST GUARDIAN SPOTLIGHT

Being a Guardian makes me very proud. I am giving back to the planet and supporting my community through conservation.

Nemlin Vernest
CEM Ecoguard
SAFEGUARDING PEATLAND IN INDONESIA

Peat ecosystems take centuries to form and are a key component of Earth’s carbon cycle. These wetlands safely absorb and store carbon at a higher rate than other types of forest while also hosting a wealth of biodiversity.

The majority of tropical peat habitat is found in Southeast Asia, and unfortunately, this habitat is being cleared, drained and burned for agricultural development and palm oil plantations. When they are intentionally burned, peatlands release centuries’ worth of stored carbon into the atmosphere.

Rainforest Trust has made protecting the peat ecosystems of Southeast Asia, and the beautiful wildlife they support, a conservation priority. In January 2020, we worked with our local partner, Yayasan Konservasi Rare Aquatic Species of Indonesia (YK-RASI) to establish the 106,544-acre Aquatic Reserve of Pesut Mahakam Habitat. The new protected area encompasses both critical terrestrial habitat, like peat swamps and forests, as well as riverine ecosystems.

The diversity of the landscape ensures protection for a wide range of species, including at least 298 bird species, 147 endemic fish species, 27 reptile species and 5 primate species, such as the endemic Endangered Proboscis Monkey and Critically Endangered Bornean Orangutan. Most importantly, nearly the entire population of a Critically Endangered subspecies of the Irrawaddy Dolphin that exists only in the Mahakam River will find safety in the reserve.

Our partner is also working with local communities to sustainably maintain the natural function of the swamps and riparian forest, allowing improved water quality and safe management of aquatic resources.

This success is a huge step in our work to conserve threatened peatland and is pivotal in keeping carbon stored, protecting species and ensuring the health of communities.

This project was supported by our generous donors with leadership gifts from Gerald and Rosemary Bradley, Lawrence Thompson, the Conservation Action Fund and the SAVES Challenge. Thank you.
"Working in the field can sometimes be a risky job, but I want to fight to preserve my children's future and ensure they have a healthy and safe planet to live and grow."

Darwis Jaya Putra
YK-RASI River Guard
Rainforest Trust launched a new partnership with the Chubb Charitable Foundation to support our important conservation work. In December, Chubb Charitable Foundation announced a $500,000 grant to the Conservation Action Fund to focus on urgent initiatives to protect critical habitats that would otherwise be used for development, agriculture or natural resource extraction.

Our organizations were drawn together because of our shared goals and commitment to saving species, fighting the climate crisis, and supporting local people. Having the strength of a global brand like Chubb behind our work adds to the urgency and impact.

“Chubb is pleased to support Rainforest Trust. Their mission is aligned with Chubb’s commitment to strengthen the resilience of communities and protect biodiversity against the effects of climate change,” said Lori Dunstan, Vice President, Global Corporate Giving at Chubb.

Chubb, its employees and its charitable foundation continue to demonstrate their support for a wide range of environmental philanthropies and volunteer activities in local communities around the world. Their grants have helped preserve sensitive lands and habitats, finance green business entrepreneurs, and support educational programs that promote a healthy and sustainable environment, both domestically and globally.

Together we have already had positive results in Indonesia and Brazil. We look forward to protecting much more of the planet and saving biodiversity together in the future.

Only 7% of the Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest remains today. With Chubb’s help, new properties will soon be protected.
“Rainforests are one of Earth’s most critical natural resources, not only for the diversity of life they support but because they provide valuable services to people and communities, such as erosion prevention and flood control. Protecting rainforests is also one of the most effective ways to prevent the release of carbon that causes climate change.”

– Lori Dunstan, Vice President, Global Corporate Giving, Chubb

With the support of Chubb, we were able to purchase important rainforest habitat in the Leuser ecosystem, the only place on earth where orangutans, tigers, rhinos and elephants coexist.
Scaling Impact through the SAVES Challenge

In 2016 an anonymous benefactor of Rainforest Trust recognized that the scale and speed of our efforts to save habitat and species were insufficient to stem the twin catastrophes of our time, biodiversity loss and climate change. They offered $50 million over 5 years, but only if we could raise a matching $50 million and invest the $100 million in new projects. Together we called this the SAVES Challenge—Saving Areas Vital to Endangered Species.

This was a heavy lift for an organization which had previously been raising and allocating only a few million dollars a year to several projects. But thanks to the extraordinary support of all of our donors and the hard work of staff, board, and partners, we completed this task in September 2020. The result was more than $107 million invested in projects that will ultimately protect 30.3 million acres under SAVES, and will have an extraordinary impact on species.

The world will forever owe a debt of gratitude to this extraordinarily far-sighted and generous individual, and indeed to all our donors and partners. We salute and thank you!

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<td>$115.5M</td>
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<td>SAVES Challenge Combined Investment</td>
<td>Total Acres in Progress</td>
<td>Total SAVES Acres Protected</td>
<td>Total SAVES Acres Protected</td>
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Our Supporters

Thank you to the many people who supported our work in 2020. Our success was powered by your kindness and generosity. We especially would like to thank the following for their leadership support:

Aaron & Lisa Bloch  
Alan & Patricia Koval  
Alicia Streger  
Ann E. Sullivan  
Anna McWane Charitable Foundation  
Annette & Stuart Levey  
Beaver Family Foundation  
Bob & Peg Ridgely  
Callie Broaddus  
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Catherine Marie Warner & Luiz André Barroso  
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Christopher Bonavico  
Clarice & Richard Weinberg  
Clifford Beltzer  
Col. Charles & Jacqueline Probst  
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Daniel Pike  
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Dermot Cooper  
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Doolin Foundation for Biodiversity  
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Elliotte Harold  
EnviroBuild  
Eric Goode  
Fisher Family  
Gale Page & Frank Smith  
George Loening  
George M. Jett  
Harvey Family Charitable Foundation  
Huang Chen Foundation  
Hunden Hawes Family Fund  
In Loving Memory for Richard R. Bates MD  
J. Edson Pinto  
Jared & Mayte Bluestein  
Jeffrey Zack  
Jen & Don Reynolds  
Jen & Matt Gaarder-Wang  
Jennifer Puck & Robert Nussbaum  
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John R. Zey  
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Kira Brayman  
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Lynn A Glesne  
Marcus Peinado  
Mara Epstein  
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Mark M. Rich  
Melissa Barshop  
Meredith James  
Michael & Jessica Wilson  
Michael & Sophie Hayes  
Michael Shafir  
Mike & Brigit Grimm Charitable Fund  
Myron Chadowitz  
Nick Rosenthal  
Nina Geneson  
Norma & Jim Ewing  
Nuri & John Pierce  
P. Ann Kaupp  
Parod Family Fund  
Patience & Tom Chamberlin  
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Philip C. & Joann Hawley  
Philip Spory  
Pooja Sheth  
Pramod Thammaiah  
Professor Paul F. Torrence  
Randolph & Shengchih Yeh  
Rebekah Emanuel & Michael Shafir  
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Robert & Nita Sell  
Robert & Rita Colwell  
Robert Ferguson & Julie Evans  
Robert Stolzberg & Paula Berman  
Ron & Linda Barchet  
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Ronald R. Ciceroello  
Ronnie & Steve Kanarek  
Ross & Florence Jennings  
Sally F. Davidson  
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Stanley Watt & Karen Guo  
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Susan Masta & Jay Withgott  
Suvarna & Atul Tushibagwale  
Terry & Soni Baltimore  
The Draper Foundation  
The Louis Stewart Foundation  
The Quisel Snyder Family  
The Reissing Family  
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TRA Fund  
Wayt & Toni Thomas

Though not listed here, we are also extremely grateful to over 65 additional major supporters who wish to remain anonymous, as well as the many supporters who gave through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).
Rainforest Trust believes that we are all stakeholders in protecting our planet’s most threatened tropical forests and endangered wildlife. Our corporate partners are committed to conservation, sustainability and a greener world, and significantly support our work by helping to purchase and protect real acres of tropical rainforest.
FOUNDATIONS

Rainforest Trust is so grateful for the generous support from foundations. Our critical work would not be possible without these foundations continuing to demonstrate their commitment to species, communities and the planet.

Actions@EBMF Charitable Trust
Aristotelian Foundation
Bobolink Foundation
Capital One Foundation
Carl E. Kessler Family Foundation
Chubb Charitable Foundation
Earth Alliance Foundation
Finley’s Green Leap Forward Fund
Global Conservation
Hawaii Community Foundation
Hugh C. and Thomas Lord Fund
Infinity Foundation
James M. and Margaret V. Stine Foundation
Leaves of Grass Fund
Little Feet Foundation
Louis Stewart Foundation
March Conservation Fund
Marin Community Foundation
Nina Abrams Fund
Re: wild (formerly Global Wildlife Conservation)
Ryan Memorial Foundation
Shekels Charitable Foundation
Sierra Club Foundation
Smoke Rise Foundation
The Barrett Family Foundation
The James and Rebecca Morgan Family Foundation
The Marshall-Reynolds Foundation
The Moses Feldman Family Foundation
The Ohrstrom Foundation
The Rose and David Dortort Foundation
The Spurlino Foundation
Troper Wojcicki Foundation
Whispering Bells Foundation
$27,998,809
TOTAL 2020 INCOME

- Individuals: $14,918,793 (53%)
- Foundations, Institutions & Organizations: $9,683,959 (35%)
- Corporations: $1,480,386 (5%)
- Other: $1,915,671 (7%)

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)*
In-kind Contributions
Investment Income
PPP Loan Forgiveness

* Rainforest Trust would like to thank our supporters who gave through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). You generously donated $88,336 to support our work. (Rainforest Trust’s CFC #11257)

$30,567,194
TOTAL 2020 EXPENDITURES

- Conservation: $28,879,132 (94.5%)
- Fundraising & Administration: $1,688,062 (5.5%)
34.3M ACRES SAVED 1988-2020
3.5M ACRES SAVED IN 2020

PROTECTED AREAS DESIGNATED OR PURCHASED IN 2020
188

PROTECTED AREAS DESIGNATED OR PURCHASED 1988-2020
188

CO₂

7.3 BILLION mT
OF CO₂ EQUIVALENT STORED

1988-2020

461 BIRD SPECIES PROTECTED 1988-2020

194 BIRD SPECIES PROTECTED IN 2020

387 MAMMAL SPECIES PROTECTED 1988-2020

180 MAMMAL SPECIES PROTECTED IN 2020

242 AMPHIBIAN SPECIES PROTECTED 1988-2020

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