



For Immediate Release

April 9, 2024

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Community Conservation Leaders are Optimistic, but Local Success Won't Stop Global Climate Failure

Rainforest Trust's Partner Survey Shows Conservationists from the Global South are Seeing Progress — But Funding and Government Support is Lagging Far Behind What is Needed

(Warrenton, VA) [Rainforest Trust](#), a leading conservation organization with over 35 years of experience in protecting tropical ecosystems and threatened species worldwide, published a comprehensive global analysis today examining the perspectives of conservation leaders in the Global South. The report, titled [Wild Optimism: Insights from the Front Lines of Global Conservation](#), sheds light on the realities faced by those at the forefront of conservation efforts. It reveals a widespread agreement among conservationists that local conservation initiatives are achieving success despite the challenges of insufficient long-term financial resources and governmental backing. The report raises an important question: Can leveraging these local victories in conservation drive broader global climate action?

The *Wild Optimism: Insights from the Front Lines of Global Conservation* report gathers insights from a worldwide survey of 137 Rainforest Trust partners from 50 countries. These partners are actively conserving a variety of ecosystems, such as rainforests, wetlands, dry forests and scrublands.

Most of the survey responses reflect a positive outlook on conservation work, focusing on local successes. Yet, confidence in the effectiveness of global conservation efforts remains notably lower, highlighting a disparity between the optimism for local progress and the skepticism towards global actions.

For instance, respondents believe the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's 30x30 Goals will have a positive impact, and they are confident in their individual organizations' abilities to achieve the 30x30 targets. Yet, 51% of respondents labeled "lack of engagement/support from local or national governments" as a top risk for not meeting the goals set out in the 30x30 framework.



The survey emphasizes the importance of building solid partnerships with local communities and Indigenous leaders and the need for increased sustained funding. "Those on the climate front lines are optimistic— and can make a difference — but they need the resources!" explains James Deutsch, CEO of Rainforest Trust.

"I would like to see our conservation model spread across the Niger Delta region, resulting in 20 to 30 protected areas for threatened species. Our past success leads me to believe this is possible—but only with continued funding and the commitment of our government."

-Rachel Ashegbofe Ikemeh, Founder and Director of SW/Niger Delta Forest Project,
Nigeria

"I have hope that our forests will finally be recognized as our greatest asset. That is because our program to protect water in Bolivia has been implemented in 87 municipalities in Bolivia and in several other countries. This success was only possible because we joined forces with Indigenous and local communities, international donors and Rainforest Trust."

-Maria Teresa Vargas, Executive Director, Fundación Bolivia

Key Findings:

1. Effectiveness of Conservation Efforts

- Despite limited government engagement and underfunding, 80% of respondents expressed optimism in their local and regional conservation efforts.

2. Protecting Forests Plays a Pivotal Role in Combating Climate Change

- The survey emphasizes the importance of protecting standing forests, with 84% of respondents identifying it as a key strategy for mitigating climate change.

3. Local Impact of Global Climate Change:

- The survey reveals that climate change is significantly impacting local habitats, with 86% of respondents highlighting immediate risks to species and 88% noting increased stress on habitats, emphasizing the urgent need for targeted conservation actions.

4. Indigenous wisdom and engagement is essential for conservation

- Survey results show a high degree of engagement (67%) with Indigenous knowledge and practices, underscoring the essential role of collaborating with Indigenous Peoples and local communities in conservation.

5. Securing Long-Term Funding Is Crucial for Sustaining Conservation Efforts



- A majority of respondents report their organizations depend on international foundations (81%) and NGOs (74%), clearly indicating the necessity for sustained financial support and long-term funding solutions in conservation.

6. Access to Sustainable Financing Through Global Markets:

- The survey shows that 73% of respondents report their organizations are actively participating or planning to engage in global carbon offset programs, reflecting a significant move towards sustainable financing in conservation.

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About Rainforest Trust

Since 1988, Rainforest Trust has been safeguarding imperiled tropical habitats and saving endangered species by establishing protected areas in partnership with Indigenous and local organizations and communities. With its partners, Rainforest Trust has safeguarded more than 45 million acres of vital habitat across Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and the Asia Pacific region. Rainforest Trust is a nonprofit organization that relies upon the generous support of the public to successfully implement its important conservation action. The organization is proud of earning a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator. Learn more about the work of Rainforest Trust by visiting www.RainforestTrust.org, [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).