HISTORIC NEW PROTECTION
CREATED IN THE PHILIPPINES
Safeguarding threatened species and indigenous tribes

NEW TECHNOLOGY ASSISTS VITAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS
Leveraging camera traps and drones in the field

RECORD YEAR: 5.9 MILLION ACRES SAVED
In 2008, I joined Rainforest Trust and a small team of people with deep passions for protecting the world’s greatest treasures: our planet’s rainforests and endangered species. I came to lead the organization three years later and am proud to say that, since then, our desire for preserving the world’s most important habitats, wildlife and indigenous peoples remains as strong as ever.

What has impressed me over the years is our great progress and conservation success at massive scale, moving the needle in the right direction against ever-increasing threats to the health and sustainability of our planet. With just a few million acres protected up to 2013, we’ve made huge leaps forward over the past three years that have transformed our impact and doubled the number of acres we’ve protected for imperiled wildlife. In fact, we’re now celebrating a tremendous accomplishment of securing more than 5.9 million acres of tropical habitat in 2016 alone - a record year for Rainforest Trust.

One of our greatest victories this year, thanks to local conservationists and communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was our creation in July of the 2.2 million-acre Lomami National Park. This expansive new park now safeguards vital habitat in the Congo Basin, which is the most under-protected rainforest wilderness on Earth, for rare wildlife such as Endangered Bonobos and Okapis.

Earlier this year in Cambodia, we protected a further 1.2 million acres of one of Southeast Asia’s last great rainforests from increasing pressures of logging and agricultural expansion. We acted quickly with our local partners to seize this exceptional opportunity by establishing two major national parks, Prey Preah Roka and Southern Cardamom, that now secure habitat for remaining populations of the Asian Elephant.

While these two accomplishments alone are reason enough to celebrate, we made additional great strides in many other places this year thanks to friends like you. I invite you to learn more about them on our website, RainforestTrust.org.

Looking ahead, there are many threatened tropical habitats and species remaining around the globe that urgently need protection. I’ve never felt as strongly as I do now about our growing capacity to move swiftly, marshal resources and engage on-the-ground partners toward real, substantive conservation action. I’m delighted with what we’ve achieved to date, and I’m even more thrilled that your support has allowed us to scale up our work and make even more of a difference in recent years.

Thank you for allowing us to share in your passion for protecting our natural world, and please contact us at any time for more information about any of our work.

For the rainforests,

Dr. Paul Salaman, CEO

A Message from the CEO

The recently established Lomami National Park is a safe haven for endangered species such as Okapis, which are found only in the Congo.

Over 5.9 million acres of rainforests and tropical habitats have been safeguarded this year alone from threats such as deforestation, thanks to the efforts of Rainforest Trust, local partners and supporters.

Dr. Paul Salaman, CEO

At a young age, Paul met Sir David Attenborough and became enthralled by international wildlife conservation. As a teenager, he managed a nature reserve in London and traveled across the UK and tropics bird watching. A graduate of Oxford University, Paul led a series of conservation expeditions and helped establish new parks and reserves in South America. He has discovered four bird species new to science.
New National Park Provides a Safe Haven for Elephants in Liberia

The new 219,609-acre Gola Forest National Park – only the second national park in Liberia – protects vital habitat in the Guinean Forest of West Africa, which contains astonishing levels of endemic plant and animal life.

Rainforest Trust worked with a local partner in Liberia to help establish Gola Forest National Park. Declared on September 22, the new park is part of an international conservation plan to create one of the largest protected area complexes in West Africa. By connecting to the neighboring Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone, the two areas are in effect establishing a crucial transboundary peace park spanning a total of 395,226 acres, an area almost as large as Houston, Texas.

“Rainforest Trust is proud to have played a key role in the creation of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, which not only protects many endangered species but establishes a bi-national peace park that strategically brings together Liberia and Sierra Leone – two countries greatly threatened by large numbers of oil palm, mining and logging initiatives in the region,” said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman.

“Rainforest Trust is proud to have played a key role in the creation of the Gola Forest National Park in Liberia, which not only protects many endangered species but establishes a bi-national peace park that strategically brings together Liberia and Sierra Leone — two countries greatly threatened by large numbers of oil palm, mining and logging initiatives in the region.”

Rainforest Trust thanks all of its supporters who helped to make possible the creation of Gola Forest National Park, especially Luanne Lemmer, Eric Veach, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, European Commission, Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation as well as an anonymous donor.

The Pygmy Hippopotamus, which is endemic to West Africa, can be found in four countries: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea.

The population of Western Red Colobus Monkeys is estimated to have declined by 50 percent over 30 years, due to hunting and habitat loss.
Historic Rainforest Protection for Endangered Wildlife and Indigenous People in the Philippines

Over 95,000 acres of rainforest encompassing and surrounding Cleopatra’s Needle, one of Palawan’s highest peaks, were recently declared as a Forest Reserve due to the collaborative efforts of Rainforest Trust and local conservation partner Centre for Sustainability-PH working with the Puerto Princesa city government.

This forest harbors incredible concentrations of endemic and endangered wildlife, and until the recent declaration, it was one of Palawan’s most threatened ecosystems as a result of pressures from logging, hunting and rapid urbanization. Of the species that reside only on the island of Palawan and nowhere else in the world, 85 percent are found on and around Cleopatra’s Needle. With such a great amount of rare species dependent on Palawan’s natural environment, the protection of its rainforest has been a conservation priority of global importance.

The southern and eastern hills of Cleopatra’s Needle are now a secure refuge for a population of the Endangered Palawan Horned Frog, and nearby creeks safeguard the largest remaining population of the Vulnerable Philippine Flat-headed Frog. The Endangered Palawan Toadlet, rediscovered in 2015 in Cleopatra’s Needle after not being observed for over 40 years, is now safe as well.

Nearly 60 terrestrial mammal species have been recorded in Palawan, including the Endangered Philippine Pangolin as well as the Vulnerable Palawan Bearcat and Asian Small-clawed Otter. Of 279 bird species found on Palawan, 27 are endemic to the Philippines, such as the Palawan Hornbill whose population has declined from hunting and loss of lowland forest habitat elsewhere on the island. In total, 31 threatened wildlife species inhabit the forests of Cleopatra’s Needle.

In addition to providing a haven for species that are at risk for extinction, the reserve will protect territory for a local indigenous group, the Batak tribe. Originally from Papua New Guinea and thought to be among the first humans to settle in the Philippines, the Batak people now reside in small villages and sustainably harvest a variety of forest products such as tree resins and honey.

“The reserve will protect the Philippine’s last 200 members of the Batak tribe and will safeguard the area from outside logging, maintaining their traditional lands and clean water supply,” said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman.

As part of the declaration process for Cleopatra’s Needle Forest Reserve, a long-term management plan was created, forest guard training courses were implemented and ecotourism activities are to be introduced to improve the livelihood of the Batak tribe.

This project was made possible thanks to the efforts of our local partner in Palawan as well as the generous support of Luanne Lemmer, Eric Veach, Brett Byers, Leslie Santos and many other friends of Rainforest Trust and in partnership with Global Wildlife Conservation.

The Batak tribe can now count on the new reserve to protect their territory from outside threats.
Over the past 16 years, Rainforest Trust has helped to establish and expand Buenaventura Reserve in Ecuador. After 15 land acquisitions, the final property has just been secured to consolidate the most important cloud forest reserve in southern Ecuador.

Rainforest Trust recently received notice from partner Fundación Jocotoco that it has purchased the Guzman property, growing Buenaventura Reserve by an additional 469 acres. The reserve, which now totals 6,266 acres, provides necessary habitat for the Endangered El Oro Parakeet and Ecuadorian Tapaculo, as well as the Critically Endangered Ecuadorian White-fronted Capuchin.

Discovered 36 years ago by Robert Ridgely, approximately half the global population of El Oro Parakeets resides entirely within Buenaventura Reserve today. Since the reserve was established in 2000, the El Oro Parakeet population has rebounded by 43 percent. The few dozen remaining Ecuadorian Tapaculos have lost much of their range due to deforestation and depend on the reserve for their survival.

“AAfter 16 years of purchasing private properties to build this amazing gem of a nature reserve, we are delighted to have helped secure the final piece of this critical conservation puzzle.”

Buenaventura Reserve also protects a stronghold site for the Endangered Gray-backed Hawk. This species is typically found only in pairs but is commonly observed in greater numbers in the reserve. Other threatened birds within the reserve include the Rufous-headed Chachalaca, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Red-masked Parakeet and Pacific Royal Flycatcher. More than 330 species of birds have been recorded at Buenaventura, of which 34 are local endemics.

Buenaventura Reserve also provides habitat for 33 amphibian and 29 reptile species, five of which are globally threatened. Remarkably, a new nonvenomous snake species (Synophis zaheri) was discovered at Buenaventura Lodge and described in 2015, while the Buenaventura Rainfrog (Pristimantis buenaventura) was described this year.

To gauge the impact of Rainforest Trust’s efforts to protect the planet’s most at-risk species from extinction, we have worked with biodiversity experts to overlap the known distribution ranges of all bird, mammal and amphibian species with the sites we have already protected as well as those areas we are presently working to secure. The result of this analysis provides a critical metric to assess the real impact of our efforts on the world’s wildlife.

Since 1988, our conservation work has safeguarded more than 15.7 million acres of vital tropical habitat, and we currently plan to purchase another 6.5 million acres to allow us to increase this total to over 32 million acres in the coming years. Although the size of our reserves and protected areas represents only a small fraction of our planet (less than 0.1 percent of the Earth’s surface), the implications are staggering.

Our strategically identified protected areas now provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth’s wildlife, including an estimated 46 percent of all bird species, 30 percent of all mammal species and over 19 percent of all amphibian species. When considering the additional areas we are currently working to secure, these proportions leap to 63 percent for all bird species, 42 percent of all mammal species and 25 percent of all amphibian species on Earth. These statistics are evidence of the incredible importance of our protected areas to conserve the planet’s biodiversity.

Endangered Ecuadorian White-fronted Capuchin.

El Oro Parakeet and Ecuadorian Tapaculo, as well as the Critically

The Umbrellabird, Red-masked Parakeet and Pacific Royal Flycatcher. This species is typically found only in pairs but is commonly observed in greater numbers in the reserve. Other threatened birds within the reserve include the Rufous-headed Chachalaca, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Red-masked Parakeet and Pacific Royal Flycatcher. More than 330 species of birds have been recorded at Buenaventura, of which 34 are local endemics.

Buenaventura Reserve also provides habitat for 33 amphibian and 29 reptile species, five of which are globally threatened. Remarkably, a new nonvenomous snake species (Synophis zaheri) was discovered at Buenaventura Lodge and described in 2015, while the Buenaventura Rainfrog (Pristimantis buenaventura) was described this year.

To gauge the impact of Rainforest Trust’s efforts to protect the planet’s most at-risk species from extinction, we have worked with biodiversity experts to overlap the known distribution ranges of all bird, mammal and amphibian species with the sites we have already protected as well as those areas we are presently working to secure. The result of this analysis provides a critical metric to assess the real impact of our efforts on the world’s wildlife.

Since 1988, our conservation work has safeguarded more than 15.7 million acres of vital tropical habitat, and we currently plan to purchase another 6.5 million acres to allow us to increase this total to over 32 million acres in the coming years. Although the size of our reserves and protected areas represents only a small fraction of our planet (less than 0.1 percent of the Earth’s surface), the implications are staggering.

Our strategically identified protected areas now provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth’s wildlife, including an estimated 46 percent of all bird species, 30 percent of all mammal species and over 19 percent of all amphibian species. When considering the additional areas we are currently working to secure, these proportions leap to 63 percent for all bird species, 42 percent of all mammal species and 25 percent of all amphibian species on Earth. These statistics are evidence of the incredible importance of our protected areas to conserve the planet’s biodiversity.

Especially considering the very modest funds that Rainforest Trust and our supporters have committed over the years to creating new protected areas, Dr. Paul Salaman, “We are grateful to the many supporters of our land purchase campaign who have helped us and our local partner to create a permanent cloud forest safe haven for the Endangered El Oro Parakeet and other spectacular species.”

In addition to the El Oro Parakeet and Ecuadorian Tapaculo, Buenaventura Reserve also protects a stronghold site for the Endangered Gray-backed Hawk. This species is typically found only in pairs but is commonly observed in greater numbers in the reserve. Other threatened birds within the reserve include the Rufous-headed Chachalaca, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Red-masked Parakeet and Pacific Royal Flycatcher. More than 330 species of birds have been recorded at Buenaventura, of which 34 are local endemics.

Buenaventura Reserve also provides habitat for 33 amphibian and 29 reptile species, five of which are globally threatened. Remarkably, a new nonvenomous snake species (Synophis zaheri) was discovered at Buenaventura Lodge and described in 2015, while the Buenaventura Rainfrog (Pristimantis buenaventura) was described this year.

The recently described Synophis zaheri species was named after a renowned Brazilian herpetologist.

25% of all Amphibian Species

41% currently protected

8% in future sites

16% of all Threatened Amphibian Species

7% currently protected

9% in future sites


19% currently protected

6% in future sites


19% currently protected

6% in future sites

Global Expansion of Protected Areas

Since 1988, Rainforest Trust has helped safeguard over 15.7 million acres of tropical habitat around the globe. By partnering with local conservation organizations and communities to strategically identify priority ecosystems upon which the world’s most threatened species depend, we have helped create over 100 new protected areas toward our goal of saving 50 million acres of vital habitat by the year 2020.

This is a record year for Rainforest Trust, having protected nearly 6 million acres of tropical habitats across Latin America, Africa and Asia. These protected areas are established through direct land purchase and acquisition, the designation of national parks and reserves, or the creation of community conservation areas whose borders are managed and maintained by forest guards to ensure lasting protection.

Some of the 2016 successes of which we are most proud include the creation of the nearly 2.2 million-acre Lomami National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and securing more than 1.2 million acres of essential wildlife habitat in Cambodia. These significant conservation wins were made possible because of the incredible dedication of our local partners, the investment of communities in preserving their environments and the continued assistance from supporters like you.

In the next few years, we are on track to save additional millions of acres. We strongly believe that flourishing tropical ecosystems are imperative to maintaining a healthy planet for humans and the millions of species that reside here, and we invite you to join us in making a lasting conservation impact.

---

### 2016 Achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected Area Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lomami National Park</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>2,193,948 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itombwe Reserve</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>1,436,320 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cardamom National Park</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1,014,100 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngandja Natural Reserve</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>783,324 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prey Preah Roka National Park</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>223,287 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gola Forest National Park</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>219,609 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleopatra’s Needle Forest Reserve</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>95,610 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesoro Escondido Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>122,26 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goode’s Thornscrub Tortoise Reserve</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>999 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cardamom National Park</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>601 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenaventura Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>469 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado Bird Reserve</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>344 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerro Chucanti Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>260 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoge’s Side-necked Turtle Reserve</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>236 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narupa Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>226 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guapiaçu Ecological Reserve</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>150 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracula Orchid Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>149 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Araucaria Forest</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>116 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamana Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>59 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayampe Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>23 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesoro Escondido Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>122,26 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goode’s Thornscrub Tortoise Reserve</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>999 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cardamom National Park</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>601 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenaventura Reserve</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>469 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado Bird Reserve</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>344 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerro Chucanti Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>260 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoge’s Side-necked Turtle Reserve</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>236 Acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Completed Project Sites

- **Lomami National Park**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 2,193,948 Acres

- **Itombwe Reserve**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 1,436,320 Acres

- **Southern Cardamom National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 1,014,100 Acres

- **Ngandja Natural Reserve**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 783,324 Acres

- **Prey Preah Roka National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 223,287 Acres

- **Gola Forest National Park**
  - Liberia
  - 219,609 Acres

- **Cleopatra’s Needle Forest Reserve**
  - Philippines
  - 95,610 Acres

- **Teso Roque Reserve**
  - Ecuador
  - 122,26 Acres

- **Goode’s Thornscrub Tortoise Reserve**
  - Mexico
  - 999 Acres

- **Southern Cardamom National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 601 Acres

- **Buenaventura Reserve**
  - Ecuador
  - 469 Acres

- **El Dorado Bird Reserve**
  - Colombia
  - 344 Acres

- **Cerro Chucanti Nature Reserve**
  - Panama
  - 260 Acres

- **Hoge’s Side-necked Turtle Reserve**
  - Brazil
  - 236 Acres

---

### 2016 Achievements

- **Lomami National Park**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 2,193,948 Acres

- **Itombwe Reserve**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 1,436,320 Acres

- **Southern Cardamom National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 1,014,100 Acres

- **Ngandja Natural Reserve**
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
  - 783,324 Acres

- **Prey Preah Roka National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 223,287 Acres

- **Gola Forest National Park**
  - Liberia
  - 219,609 Acres

- **Cleopatra’s Needle Forest Reserve**
  - Philippines
  - 95,610 Acres

- **Teso Roque Reserve**
  - Ecuador
  - 122,26 Acres

- **Goode’s Thornscrub Tortoise Reserve**
  - Mexico
  - 999 Acres

- **Southern Cardamom National Park**
  - Cambodia
  - 601 Acres

- **Buenaventura Reserve**
  - Ecuador
  - 469 Acres

- **El Dorado Bird Reserve**
  - Colombia
  - 344 Acres

- **Cerro Chucanti Nature Reserve**
  - Panama
  - 260 Acres

- **Hoge’s Side-necked Turtle Reserve**
  - Brazil
  - 236 Acres
Strategic Land Purchase in Panama Protects a “Sky Island” for Threatened Amphibians

Cerro Chucantí Nature Reserve in Panama has been expanded by 260 acres and safeguards critical habitats for newly discovered species, thanks to Rainforest Trust’s local partner Asociación Adopta de Bosque Panamá (ADOPTA), the International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC), donors and other supporters. In December 2016, Rainforest Trust’s partner ADOPTA secured 260 acres to expand Cerro Chucantí Nature Reserve in eastern Panama. Three land properties were purchased to establish an important buffer zone that will act as a barrier to prevent squatters from moving into extensive public wilderness areas and to discourage poachers from hunting in the vicinity. “This initiative that first started with 100 acres of rainforest purchased has grown to almost 1,500 acres of rainforest that we’re protecting now,” said Guado Berguido, Executive Director of ADOPTA. “With the help of Rainforest Trust, we have been increasing more and more of the protected areas.”

Cerro Chucantí, an isolated massif or “sky island” in eastern Panama, rises from sea level to 4,721 feet in elevation and sustains a diverse cloud forest as well as other tropical forest ecosystems. The closest peaks with similar elevation and vegetation are found at least 90 miles away; the geographic isolation of the Cerro Chucantí mountaintop has allowed its flora and fauna to differentiate considerably, such that it contains a number of locally endemic rainforest species found nowhere else on Earth. “This site of Cerro Chucantí has turned out to be far more exceptional than we ever dreamed.”

Cerro Chucantí is home to a number of species recognized as being at high-risk for extinction, including the Great Green Macaw, Baird’s Tapir, Giant Anteater and the Critically Endangered Black-headed Spider Monkey. Despite their incredible biodiversity, the rainforests in Cerro Chucantí are under significant threat from slash-and-burn activities, logging and cattle ranching. During this year’s long dry season, forest destruction and conversion to pasture land continued near Cerro Chucantí Nature Reserve. The new strategic expansion of the reserve secures a section of the forest and prevents further clearing, especially as new colonists are encroaching on thousands of acres of unclaimed land. As a gateway to over 60,000 acres of public lands, Cerro Chucantí Nature Reserve is laying the foundation for the designation of government protected areas, an effort ADOPTA is working hard to achieve with the support of Rainforest Trust.

The expansion of Cerro Chucantí Nature Reserve safeguards vital cloud forest for many rare and newly discovered species from threats such as logging, cattle ranching and slash-and-burn activities.

Learning by Hart: Exploration and Conservation in the Congo Basin

Rainforest Trust collaborates with passionate conservationists around the world who dedicate their lives to protecting threatened species and their habitats. Two inspiring partners are Terese and John Hart, who work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and who, with support from Rainforest Trust, played a key role in the recent declaration of the new Lomami National Park.

The time had come to wake up the forest.

The Mbuti Pygmies’ deep, echoing vocals announced the presence of something out of the ordinary from their daily experience of forest life. Conservationist Terese Hart recalled listening to these songs: “The Mbuti were very protective of where they drilled their ‘dink’ call, and this specific species’ sound was more reminiscent of a whistle.”

“This site of Cerro Chucantí has turned out to be far more exceptional than we ever dreamed. More than 20 new species of plants and animals have been found at this location that are found nowhere else on Earth.”

T erese and John met at Minnesota’s Carleton College in the autumn of 1969, a time when the Vietnam War seeped into the consciousness of many young Americans. Amid the political turmoil, John, an avid bird watcher, viewed the world from a different perspective: through the lenses of binoculars. Terese joined John on his birding trips, and while never sitting together in the field, they passionately discussed politics once back on campus. With a shared interest in community relations, Terese and John took an anthropology class where they learned about the姆buti Pygmy communities of the Ituri Forest in what was then Zaire, and is currently the DRC. This, too, added a different angle to the pressing war sentiment.

“The Mbuti communities lived in an apparent peace so different from the West: close to nature, material simplicity, non-aggressive,” Terese wrote. “This was a perfect vision for a generation that doubted the material wealth we grew into and felt threat into a war on the other side of the world.”

The Mbuti Pygmies’ deep, echoing vocals announced the presence of something out of the ordinary from their daily experience of forest life. Conservationist Terese Hart recalled listening to these songs: “The Mbuti were very protective of where they drilled their ‘dink’ call, and this specific species’ sound was more reminiscent of a whistle.”

John described to Terese how he had immersed himself in the forest to see how life had changed for the Mbuti Pygmies during the time of political instability. He witnessed how certain impacts, such as road closures, had swept through the region, making life more difficult for the inhabitants, but not directly influencing Mbuti culture. Instead, John had begun to see changes coming from external population expansion into the forest. Encroachment, not war, seemed more likely to threaten the Mbuti way of life.

John stayed in Bukavu for a few weeks before returning to the Ituri Forest, and reunited with Terese in 1975. The couple embarked on a two-month bicycle trip along the biodiverse Albertine Rift during Terese’s school break, overwaling in and out of the lowland and montane forests. One evening, as the two sat under the stars and poked at embers in the fading fire, John proposed.

After the end of John’s grant and Terese’s Peace Corps assignment, the couple returned to the U.S. and enrolled in Michigan State University. Terese’s graduate studies focused on the dominant trees of the Ituri Forest, and John’s research concentrated on game animals hunted by the Mbuti, specifically small forest antelopes called duikers. While they were “part-time students, part-time laborers and plotting full-time a return to the Congo,” Terese and John were married, their first daughter, Sarah, was born and their Ituri Forest flora and fauna dissertation projects received funding. The Harts were back to Zaire, in a section of town that still showed the grandeur of the colonial period with its stucco houses and stately gardens. A month into her assignment, and more than a year and a half since they had last seen each other, John rode from the Ituri Forest atop a cargo truck transporting beans and cassava flour to visit.

John described to Terese how he had immersed himself in the forest to see how life had changed for the Mbuti Pygmies during the time of political instability. He witnessed how certain impacts, such as road closures, had swept through the region, making life more difficult for the inhabitants, but not directly influencing Mbuti culture. Instead, John had begun to see changes coming from external population expansion into the forest. Encroachment, not war, seemed more likely to threaten the Mbuti way of life.

John stayed in Bukavu for a few weeks before returning to the Ituri Forest, and reunited with Terese in 1975. The couple embarked on a two-month bicycle trip along the biodiverse Albertine Rift during Terese’s school break, overwaling in and out of the lowland and montane forests. One evening, as the two sat under the stars and poked at embers in the fading fire, John proposed.

After the end of John’s grant and Terese’s Peace Corps assignment, the couple returned to the U.S. and enrolled in Michigan State University. Terese’s graduate studies focused on the dominant trees of the Ituri Forest, and John’s research concentrated on game animals hunted by the Mbuti, specifically small forest antelopes called duikers. While they were “part-time students, part-time laborers and plotting full-time a return to the Congo,” Terese and John were married, their first daughter, Sarah, was born and their Ituri Forest flora and fauna dissertation projects received funding. The Harts were back to
They found that while the prevailing Western assumption had been that the Mbuti were completely dependent on the Ituri Forest, the reality was much less simplistic. Though agricultural development in the 1950s. After the country gained independence, the Zairian Park's name was changed from Zaire in 1997.

Outside the station and into the Ituri Forest, the Harts followed the Mbuti’s hunting movements to collect information about forest game such as duikers. Though focused on the apes, the Harts also had the opportunity to learn about the Mbuti’s relationship to the forest, and they formed close bonds with the indigenous community. They found that while the prevailing Western assumption had been that the Mbuti were completely dependent on the Ituri Forest, the reality was much less simplistic. Though agricultural development in the 1950s, after driving an aged Land Cruiser through the dirt roads and villages of Zaire, the Harts settled in northeastern Epulu near the Ituri Forest, an area used as an Okapi capture station by the colonial Belgians in the 1950s. After the country gained independence, the Zairian Park’s Institute maintained the station to house Okapis, herbivores closely related to giraffes that are of the size of horses with zebra-like markings on their legs. Epulu, with its proximity to the station and Ituri Forest, was the ideal location for John’s studies of how hunting pressures and diet affected wildlife in the area.

“Mbuti” was an anthropological term used to describe a tribe consisting of many small, closely related groups that shared a common language, culture, and way of life. The term was derived from the Kuba language spoken by the Mbuti. The Mbuti were also known as the Baka Pygmies or the “People of the Forest.”

“...the ancestors – agreed to support the creation of Lomami National Park. As done through the new park’s establishment process, the creation of the Balango Forest Reserve will include the voices of local communities. Reserve stipulations will clarify that the indigenous groups living in the protected area will have land tenure rights, with controls on hunting and immigration as well as a management system that addresses the needs of the various ethnic groups. Wildlife and anti-poaching patrols in the region, the proposed Balango Forest Reserve will provide additional security for endangered wildlife such as Okapis, Forest Elephants and threatened primates in the Congo Basin. Elevated signs delineating the borders of the new national park can be seen across the vast expanse of wild grass, spilling out from the forest edge. Drawing closer, gates are raised skyward to read the lettered marker: PNL (Parc National de la Lomami). This is a testament to collaborations transcending from leafy villages to the president's desk, and a reminder of what can be accomplished through partnership and determination unite to conserve nature in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was the first national park in the Congo, and one of the few in Africa, to be established with major support from local communities.

“...the ancestors – agreed to support the creation of Lomami National Park. As done through the new park’s establishment process, the creation of the Balango Forest Reserve will include the voices of local communities. Reserve stipulations will clarify that the indigenous groups living in the protected area will have land tenure rights, with controls on hunting and immigration as well as a management system that addresses the needs of the various ethnic groups. Wildlife and anti-poaching patrols in the region, the proposed Balango Forest Reserve will provide additional security for endangered wildlife such as Okapis, Forest Elephants and threatened primates in the Congo Basin. Elevated signs delineating the borders of the new national park can be seen across the vast expanse of wild grass, spilling out from the forest edge. Drawing closer, gates are raised skyward to read the lettered marker: PNL (Parc National de la Lomami). This is a testament to collaborations transcending from leafy villages to the president's desk, and a reminder of what can be accomplished through partnership and determination unite to conserve nature in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was the first national park in the Congo, and one of the few in Africa, to be established with major support from local communities.

“...the ancestors – agreed to support the creation of Lomami National Park. As done through the new park’s establishment process, the creation of the Balango Forest Reserve will include the voices of local communities. Reserve stipulations will clarify that the indigenous groups living in the protected area will have land tenure rights, with controls on hunting and immigration as well as a management system that addresses the needs of the various ethnic groups. Wildlife and anti-poaching patrols in the region, the proposed Balango Forest Reserve will provide additional security for endangered wildlife such as Okapis, Forest Elephants and threatened primates in the Congo Basin. Elevated signs delineating the borders of the new national park can be seen across the vast expanse of wild grass, spilling out from the forest edge. Drawing closer, gates are raised skyward to read the lettered marker: PNL (Parc National de la Lomami). This is a testament to collaborations transcending from leafy villages to the president's desk, and a reminder of what can be accomplished through partnership and determination unite to conserve nature in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was the first national park in the Congo, and one of the few in Africa, to be established with major support from local communities.

“...the ancestors – agreed to support the creation of Lomami National Park. As done through the new park’s establishment process, the creation of the Balango Forest Reserve will include the voices of local communities. Reserve stipulations will clarify that the indigenous groups living in the protected area will have land tenure rights, with controls on hunting and immigration as well as a management system that addresses the needs of the various ethnic groups. Wildlife and anti-poaching patrols in the region, the proposed Balango Forest Reserve will provide additional security for endangered wildlife such as Okapis, Forest Elephants and threatened primates in the Congo Basin. Elevated signs delineating the borders of the new national park can be seen across the vast expanse of wild grass, spilling out from the forest edge. Drawing closer, gates are raised skyward to read the lettered marker: PNL (Parc National de la Lomami). This is a testament to collaborations transcending from leafy villages to the president's desk, and a reminder of what can be accomplished through partnership and determination unite to conserve nature in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was the first national park in the Congo, and one of the few in Africa, to be established with major support from local communities.
Visual technology advances in the conservation field allow researchers to gather information about rare and enigmatic species that were previously inaccessible. These images provide conservationists with invaluable data on the state of these species and the habitats on which they depend for their survival.

As a video feed streams images of undisturbed foliage, a large shape ambles into the viewing frame. At first it is difficult to make out what creature it could be, until suddenly it becomes clear: a rare and Critically Endangered Sumatran Rhino. It turns its head and stares directly into the camera, locking eyes with the viewer. This technology is aiding in the development of successful conservation strategies that rely on a continued understanding of the range, behavior and habitat requirements of wildlife needing protection. Camera trap photography can aid conservationists in confirming the presence of rare species and is a tool to track populations of endangered animals, draw distribution maps, monitor animal behavior and estimate wildlife populations.

The advantages of camera traps are numerous: their setup ease makes them less time consuming than traditional catch-and-release methods used to study animals; they are minimally intrusive, causing no impacts to wildlife, and the images they produce can be reviewed by teams of scientists, reducing the chance of individual subjective errors.

As part of a species survey, Rainforest Trust’s Cambodian partner, Wildlife Alliance, is using camera traps to collect photos of a variety of animals in the Southern Cardamom National Park, which was newly established this spring through the collaborative efforts of both organizations. Images of marbled cats wandering through the forest undergrowth and clouded leopards traveling in pairs give a glimpse into the lives of these elusive animals, sometimes providing unexpected results. For example, sightings of these rare cat duos may indicate the presence of an abundant prey base since they are usually solitary creatures, according to Wildlife Alliance’s CEO Suwanna Gauntlett.

Another advance in conservation imaging technology is the usage of drones to monitor wildlife movements and habitat change. Rainforest Trust often uses drones equipped with high definition cameras to provide an aerial view of conservation project sites. During a recent site visit in Borneo, Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman maneuvered a drone to inspect forest regeneration inside a newly protected area to ensure that oil palm plantations were not invading the protected forest. He also used the drone to count the number of Borneo Pygmy Elephants that inhabit one of the properties that Rainforest Trust helped to protect.

While aerial photography is useful to monitor large-scale movements of wildlife, small, non-intrusive cameras that are temporarily attached to animals can provide more localized insight. Rainforest Trust’s partner Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP) in Papua New Guinea recently used Crittercams (developed by National Geographic) to learn more about the Matschie’s Tree-kangaroo. In this case, gently fastening a miniature camera to the creature using a collar is preferable to a ground camera trap, as tree-kangaroos spend the majority of their time high in the tree canopy. The TKCP encourages communities as former hunters use their tracking skills to help TKCP researchers capture, equip and release the elusive tree-kangaroos. The attached camera then records short video segments throughout the day and reveals information, such as feeding behaviors, that is otherwise difficult to observe. These images are invaluable for making decisions regarding the ecological composition and size of new protected areas based on the needs of the species.

“Extremely secretive species can now be tracked via camera traps, and drones provide instant information on the true situation on the ground. Advances in photographic technology are enabling conservationists to accomplish what was once impossible.”

Camera traps stationed in the field highlight the astonishing wealth of biodiversity found within the world’s rainforests.

Drone footage updates Rainforest Trust and local partners on the status of the environment and wildlife in protected areas around the world.

Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman operates a drone to count Borneo Pygmy Elephants along the shore of a protected area that Rainforest Trust supports in Borneo.

A Crittercam collar is temporarily attached to a tree-kangaroo in Papua New Guinea so that its behavior can be studied by conservationists.

As part of a species survey, Rainforest Trust’s Cambodian partner, Wildlife Alliance, is using camera traps to collect photos of a variety of animals in the Southern Cardamom National Park, which was newly established this spring through the collaborative efforts of both organizations. Images of marbled cats wandering through the forest undergrowth and clouded leopards traveling in pairs give a glimpse into the lives of these elusive animals, sometimes providing unexpected results. For example, sightings of these rare cat duos may indicate the presence of an abundant prey base since they are usually solitary creatures, according to Wildlife Alliance’s CEO Suwanna Gauntlett.

Another advance in conservation imaging technology is the usage of drones to monitor wildlife movements and habitat change. Rainforest Trust often uses drones equipped with high definition cameras to provide an aerial view of conservation project sites. During a recent site visit in Borneo, Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman maneuvered a drone to inspect forest regeneration inside a newly protected area to ensure that oil palm plantations were not invading the protected forest. He also used the drone to count the number of Borneo Pygmy Elephants that inhabit one of the properties that Rainforest Trust helped to protect.

While aerial photography is useful to monitor large-scale movements of wildlife, small, non-intrusive cameras that are temporarily attached to animals can provide more localized insight. Rainforest Trust’s partner Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP) in Papua New Guinea recently used Crittercams (developed by National Geographic) to learn more about the Matschie’s Tree-kangaroo. In this case, gently fastening a miniature camera to the creature using a collar is preferable to a ground camera trap, as tree-kangaroos spend the majority of their time high in the tree canopy. The TKCP encourages communities as former hunters use their tracking skills to help TKCP researchers capture, equip and release the elusive tree-kangaroos. The attached camera then records short video segments throughout the day and reveals information, such as feeding behaviors, that is otherwise difficult to observe. These images are invaluable for making decisions regarding the ecological composition and size of new protected areas based on the needs of the species.

“Extremely secretive species can now be tracked via camera traps, and drones provide instant information on the true situation on the ground. Advances in photographic technology are enabling conservationists to accomplish what was once impossible.”

Camera traps stationed in the field highlight the astonishing wealth of biodiversity found within the world’s rainforests.

Drone footage updates Rainforest Trust and local partners on the status of the environment and wildlife in protected areas around the world.

Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman operates a drone to count Borneo Pygmy Elephants along the shore of a protected area that Rainforest Trust supports in Borneo.

A Crittercam collar is temporarily attached to a tree-kangaroo in Papua New Guinea so that its behavior can be studied by conservationists.
Rainforest Trust is proud to have been actively involved in direct conservation action in Colombia for two decades and invites you to join us in this magnificent country from March 25-April 1. We will begin our adventure at the walled city of Cartagena, which is one of the oldest cities in the Americas. We will then spend a few days experiencing the spectacular El Dorado Reserve that Rainforest Trust helped establish. This vital reserve is part of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain range, which boasts the highest concentration of endemic birds in the world and protects a breeding stronghold of the Santa Marta Parakeet along with a variety of rare amphibians and plants. We will leisurely explore these critical habitats and unique species, taking in breathtaking views and residing at the comfortable Sierra Nevada Eco-Lodge.

Then in early summer from June 28-July 5, Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman and Director of Biodiversity Conservation Dr. Brett Harris will lead a tour to two premier wildlife viewing locations in the Southeast Asian island of Borneo: Danum Valley and the Kinabatangan River. On this trip we will search for wild Bornean Orangutans, Proboscis Monkeys, Bornean Pygmy Elephants and Clouded Leopards, as well as a variety of birds such as Helmered Hornbills, Bornean Ground-cuckoos and Barred Eagle-owls. We will visit reserves established with the support of Rainforest Trust, boat along the Kinabatangan River, explore the forest canopy through a treerop “canopy walkway” and take a guided trek to beautiful waterfalls.

Finally, in mid-summer, we will see first-hand the flora and fauna of South Africa and Madagascar from July 24-August 5. Starting in South Africa, we will visit the Geometric Tortoise Preserve that Rainforest Trust helped create and will take the Table Mountain Cable Way to experience the spectacular views of Cape Town. We will also spend time at the Sanbona Wildlife Reserve and will have the incredible chance to go on a shark cage diving expedition. In Madagascar, we will visit multiple national parks and the proposed Mangabe protected area that Rainforest Trust is helping establish. Within these forests live unique species such as the world’s largest lemur called the Indri, nocturnal Aye-ayes, cat-like Fossas, leaf-tailed geckos and numerous chameleons, frogs and bats. Please contact Rainforest Trust today for more information or to register for one of these expeditions.

Rainforest Trust is excited to announce a new project in Cambodia and Vietnam that will safeguard invertebrate species known more for their creepy appearances than their endangered status. The limestone karst hills of Southeast Asia are biodiversity “ark” containing an extremely high number of species found nowhere else in the world. This landscape supports numerous ‘creepy-crawly’ species that are highly range restricted, some are even limited to just one or two hills. This extraordinary concentration of endemic wildlife is a result of the adaptation of species to the harsh conditions of limestone and the caves that dot the landscape. Despite their incredibly rare biodiversity, the karst landscapes of Vietnam and Cambodia are significantly understudied, unprotected and largely unexplored.

Biodiversity experts have identified the unique limestone karst hills in southern Vietnam as being home to one of the highest concentrations of threatened endemic species, higher than any other habitat of comparable size on Earth. In particular, the karst hills in the region are of immense global conservation value for invertebrates, such as endemic scorpions and millipedes. Multiple species new to science have been discovered here, including five species of Endangered and Critically Endangered snails, an Endangered springtail and an Endangered woodlouse. Experts believe that many hundreds of species that are unknown to science are still likely to be found here.

Nearby in Cambodia, a recent rapid survey of the Kampot Karst Hills found over 100 species of plants in just four days and has already revealed at least three plant species new to science. Two recent studies identified a new species of sand fly and other cave-dwelling invertebrates. While more extensive surveys will need to be conducted to determine how many globally threatened species are present, there is good reason to believe the number will be comparable to that found in the neighboring karst systems of southern Vietnam. Because the region’s karst hills are under severe threat from quarrying and habitat degradation, the establishment of protected areas is vital to save these endemic species from extinction. For this reason, Rainforest Trust is working with International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)-Vietnam and IUCN-Cambodia to support the creation and initial management of two new protected areas. The proposed 1,422-acre Kien Luong Karst Hills Nature Reserve in Vietnam and 774-acre Kampot Karst Hills Conservation Area in Cambodia will ensure that these irreplaceable biodiverse karst hills can be protected from the imminent threat of mining.

“Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. “Rainforest Trust is proud to stand for all life on Earth, especially by working to save ecosystems for invertebrates.”

To ensure the success of this urgent project, Rainforest Trust must raise a remaining $126,016. Through a generous matching gift offer, every donation to help safeguard the karst hills of Southeast Asia will be doubled.
First Protection for the Rediscovered Blue-eyed Ground-dove in Brazil

The Critically Endangered Blue-eyed Ground-dove is one of the rarest birds in the world. It disappeared for 75 years and was thought to be possibly extinct until a population was rediscovered in 2015, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. This rediscovery is one of the most amazing ornithological finds in recent memory. Unfortunately, this dove does not occur in any protected areas; the only known population is found on private land.

To ensure the long-term conservation of the Blue-eyed Ground-dove and its unique rocky cerrado habitat, Rainforest Trust is helping purchase land to create a 1,606-acre reserve, safeguarding the only known stronghold of this incredibly endangered bird.

At $260.01 per acre and with all gifts matched 1:1, Rainforest Trust seeks $208,791 to complete project funding.

Saving a Critical Hotspot for Amphibians in Cameroon

An ancient volcano called Mount Manengouba is shrouded in rainforest within the Cameroon highlands and harbors an incredible 100 species of amphibians, providing habitat for more than half of the most threatened frogs and toads in Cameroon. Despite being a global priority, this volcano is unprotected and at grave risk from deforestation that is encroaching from all sides.

Rainforest Trust is working with local partners in Cameroon to designate 5,542 acres of Mount Manengouba as an Ecological Reserve to prevent further habitat degradation and protect the mountain’s highly threatened species.

At $99.24 per acre and with all gifts matched 1:1, Rainforest Trust seeks $274,940 to complete project funding.

Paradise for Flying Foxes at Risk in Solomon Islands

Two small, remote islands – Teanu and Tinakula – are incredibly important havens for endemic wildlife within Solomon Islands. Teanu is almost entirely covered in undisturbed primary forest, which provides vital habitat for the Critically Endangered Vanikoro Flying Fox. Tinakula is a refuge for threatened species like the Endangered Temotu Flying Fox and Santa Cruz Ground-Dove, whose population has decreased due to habitat loss and hunting.

To preserve these indispensable habitats and safeguard their unique biodiversity, Rainforest Trust is working with a local partner to permanently protect the two islands through the creation of Teanu Island Biodiversity Reserve and Tinakula Island Biodiversity Reserve.

At $14.58 per acre and with all gifts matched 1:1, Rainforest Trust seeks $53,956 to complete project funding.

Please use the enclosed envelope or visit RainforestTrust.org to make a donation.