

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2020

IUCN NL

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# FOREWORD

NOT ONLY DID THE GLOBAL COVID-19 CRISIS IN 2020 STEM FROM THE LACK OF RESPECT WITH WHICH BIODIVERSITY IS TREATED; THE CRISIS ALSO HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON NATURE CONSERVATION. ROBUST, LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION WAS PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER. TOGETHER WITH OUR MEMBERS AND GLOBAL PARTNERS, WE WERE ABLE TO ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT RESULTS AGAIN THIS YEAR.

In 2020, the impact of five years of investing in local green organisations, through the major international partnerships Green Livelihood Alliance (GLA) and Shared Resources Joint Solutions (SRJS), was demonstrated. Over the past five years, we have strengthened over 190 civil society organisations in Africa, Asia and South America, which has already resulted in numerous influential changes in legislation and policy, and 901,400 hectares of sustainably managed land.

What's more, we celebrated the milestone of 20 years of investing in the local protection of threatened nature, through our globally unique Land Acquisition Fund. In total, some 42,000 hectares have been protected in 36 countries in 20 years, with a demonstrable, positive impact on many unique endangered plant and animal species. With our partners, we also exposed the growing illegal trade in the illustrious jaguar in Bolivia and Suriname.

In the Netherlands, the IUCN membership platform continued to grow to 39 members. In association with several members we launched Onder het Maaiveld, an innovative project promoting biodiversity in our soil. Together with McKinsey & Company, we performed a quick scan of the Dutch nature system, providing recommendations for its improvement. We also examined the government's policy on international biodiversity in relation to international agreements.

For our staff, 2020 was an especially challenging year, with the end of two major programmes and the development of several new initiatives, in addition to the COVID-19 crisis. The expiry of the SRJS partnership meant that we had to say goodbye to several valued colleagues at the end of the year. We also initiated an organisational change process that will lead to a slimmed-down organisation in 2021, optimally tailored to our strategy.

We look forward with hope and longing to 2021, when the world will hopefully begin its recovery, towards a nature-inclusive, sustainable future. The new IUCN 2021-2024 Programme provides specific tools for a powerful, concerted and international approach to the new global targets for biodiversity. We will face this challenge with boundless energy, alongside our members and partners. And, of course, the indispensable support of our donors, especially the Dutch government, the Dutch National Postcode Lottery and the European Union.

*Coenraad Krijger*, Director

*Angélique Laskewitz*, Chair of the Supervisory Board



*Angélique Laskewitz*



*Coenraad Krijger*

For our staff, 2020 was an especially challenging year, with the end of two major programmes and the development of several new initiatives, in addition to the COVID-19 crisis

## 2020 IN A NUTSHELL

901,400

hectares of nature under improved management



4 areas

of 484 hectares of nature purchased



153

initiatives by local partners funded for 18.3 million euros

97

policy measures implemented to protect nature



69

organisations that have strengthened their capacity under strategic partnerships

10 business cases developed for climate-resilient landscapes



2 inclusive climate action plans at the landscape level



2020 IN A  
NUTSHELL



**7** meetings with IUCN members related to topics of shared interest

International biodiversity higher up on the agenda in The Hague



**39,000** people benefit from improved management of river basins



**12,000** people benefited directly from sustainable measures implemented in the landscape

Quick scan of the Dutch nature system with recommendations for improvements



**18,500** people benefit from sustainable sources of income

2020 IN A  
NUTSHELL**23.3 million** in income**23 million** in expenditure of which**94.1 %** was spent on objectives**5.9%** on fundraising and management and administration costs

## NEW PROJECTS

**NEW**

Forest Landscape Restoration

Ghana • € 1,500,000 - GIZ

Onder het Maaiveld -

€ 2,825,000 • NPL

Movement Building in Action

2020 • \$ 391,460 • Sustainable Market Fund

Virunga Youth Program •

\$ 75,000 • Sustainable Market Fund

Protected Wildlife Uganda •

DRC • \$ 60,553 • INL (via IFAW)

Actieplan Amsterdam

Declarations Partnership (ADP) to tackle deforestation in Paraguay • € 24,860 • Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)

Metaalconvenant 2

' Metallurgical sector • € 89,000 • RVO

Forests for a Just Future (GLA II)

• € 9,524,800 • BZ (via VMD)

Dutch Soy Platform • € 447,860

• RVO

2020 IN A  
NUTSHELL

## 39 member organisations

### 6 Supervisory Board members:

- Johan van de Gronden (Chair)
- Theo Verstrael (Vice-Chair)
- Luc Bas
- Franc van den Berg
- Daan van Cann
- Merel Soons

### 4 Management Team members:

- Coenraad Krijger, Director
- Cas Besselink
- Liliana Jauregui
- Hans van Zijl

43.79 FTEs  
average  
workforce



Average age: 44

(youngest employee: 23  
oldest employee: 63)

4 ←

new employees  
joined the organisation

55.1% female

44.9% male



2 →  
employees left the  
organisation in 2020

6 →  
employees left as of  
1 January 2021

4 interns



## 2020 IN A NUTSHELL



- ✓ Introduction of new governance model as of 1 January 2020
- ✓ Gender strategy implemented
- ✓ Safety training for female employees
- ✓ Home workplaces set up according to occupational health and safety (ARBO) rules
- ✓ Integrity policy implemented
- ✓ Absenteeism rate down to 1.34%
- ✓ Communication strategy developed

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

COVID-19 had a major impact on our work and that of the civil society partners in the countries we work. In practical terms, it meant everyone had to switch to working from home and basically all interaction was conducted digitally. Many international meetings were also cancelled or organised digitally and it was virtually impossible for us to go into the field with our partners. In the Netherlands, the pandemic required a radical change for many members, with the positive development that lots of people rediscovered Dutch nature. But the pandemic had a particularly severe impact on the work of our partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the (Indigenous) communities they work with. For example, some,

often remote, communities were restricted in their movement, making it more difficult for them to earn a living or to access information and social services. The lockdown also led to a rise in the illegal exploitation of nature and violations of human rights in a number of countries. People were hit even harder in countries with poor health care and where there are conflicts. Therefore, in 2020, IUCN NL supported partners to help them deal more effectively with the consequences of the pandemic. This ranged from capacity building in (the use of) digital communication tools and online safety, to research into the effects of COVID-19 on deforestation. Partners were thus better able to adapt to the changing reality and continue their important work.

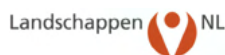
# OUR MEMBERS

## PLATFORM FOR DUTCH IUCN MEMBERS

IUCN NL serves as the platform for Dutch members of IUCN (the Dutch National Committee) and actively works with them to safeguard important nature and biodiversity, in the Netherlands and beyond. In the Netherlands, IUCN had 39 members at the end of 2020.



ARTIS



## Links

[Amazon Conservation Team](#)  
[ARK Natuurontwikkeling](#)  
[ARTIS](#)  
[Avalon](#)  
[Bears in mind](#)  
[Black Jaguar Foundation](#)  
[Both Ends](#)  
[Carmabi](#)  
[Chimbo Foundation](#)  
[Commonland](#)  
[DCNA](#)  
[EAZA](#)  
[Floron](#)  
[IBED](#)  
[IVN](#)  
[IFAW](#)  
[KNNV](#)  
[LandschappenNL](#)  
[Leo Foundation](#)  
[Milieudefensie](#)  
[Naturalis](#)  
[Natuur & Milieu](#)  
[Natuurmonumenten](#)  
[NVBT](#)  
[Nederlandse Vereniging van Dierentuinen](#)  
[Ouwehand Zoo Foundation](#)  
[Prince Bernard Chair](#)  
[Rewilding Europe](#)  
[RAVON](#)  
[Rijksoverheid](#)  
[Staatsbosbeheer](#)  
[SOVON](#)  
[Tropenbos International](#)  
[Van Tienhoven Foundation](#)  
[De Vlinderstichting](#)  
[Vogelbescherming](#)  
[Waddenvereniging](#)  
[Wetlands International](#)  
[WWF](#)  
[Zoogdiervereniging](#)

## ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

As a platform we promote knowledge exchange between our members and coordinate our joint interests. In 2020, we launched the 'Onder het Maaiveld' programme and ensured that biodiversity was placed higher on the agenda of Dutch politics.

### ONDER HET MAAIVELD

In 2020, we launched 'Onder het Maaiveld' in association with the Dutch Butterfly Conservation, and the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW). In the context of the programme, we work with other IUCN NL members, including the Dutch Butterfly Conservation, IVN Natuureducatie and Landschappen NL. The programme, which runs until April 2023, highlights vital soil as the foundation for healthy ecosystems, and develops knowledge and practical tools to promote soil biodiversity.

You can read more about Onder het Maaiveld on page 17

### RESPONSE TO THE LETTER TO PARLIAMENT ON 'INCREASING EFFORTS RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY'

Last summer, after consulting with the international member organisations, we sent a response to the [Letter to Parliament from Ministers Carola Schouten \(LNV\) and Sigrid Kaag \(BHOS\)](#) on increasing international efforts related to biodiversity. In our response we advocate for international biodiversity to be cited as an independent priority in government policy, with a targeted investment agenda. In relation to our response we had a discussion with the DG for Nature, Fisheries & Rural Affairs and for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (BHOS) and we engaged in a cooperation partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) and BHOS in order to increase the efforts of nature-based solutions.

## ANALYSIS OF NATURE CONSERVATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

In association with McKinsey & Company we produced an initial analysis (quick scan) of the Dutch nature system, all the organisations, schemes and (financing) structures that are active in protecting biodiversity in the Netherlands. Recommendations resulting from the analysis focus, for example, on clarifying national objectives, system responsibilities, increasing support in society and improving the effectiveness of consulting bodies.

A second analysis was performed by Rob van Westrienen, director of member organisations RAVON and FLORON. Commissioned by IUCN NL, he examined how Dutch IUCN members work on restoring biodiversity. After analysing the multiannual plans and discussing them at director level, the member organisations involved came up with concrete ideas for joint follow-up steps that would enable the member organisations to coordinate their work even better, such as developing a joint Theory of Change strategy for biodiversity restoration in the Netherlands. They will be jointly tackled in 2021.

### Participants Meeting

Members usually convene three times a year during our Participants Meeting. In 2020, the meetings were held electronically due to COVID-19. One of the three meetings was converted into a special meeting as a result of the news about the consequences of the pandemic on nature conservation and specifically on the work of IUCN members.

A presentation by the Wageningen researcher Tim van Hattum of his vision for a more natural future for the Netherlands in 2120 received enthusiastic support from the members and resulted, for example, in an exploratory discussion involving the development of the same future vision for the Caribbean Netherlands.

In a meeting IUCN NL organised with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) regarding the European Biodiversity Strategy 2030, members shared their advice on implementing this strategy in the Netherlands.

## ADVICE ON NATIONAL PARKS

IUCN NL is member of a group of experts that focuses on safeguarding the natural values and landscape qualities of Nederlandse Nationale Parken Nieuwe Stijl (New Style Dutch National Parks). Our input focused on alignment with the standard for international guidelines and best practices.

### MORE INFORMATION?

**Want to know more about the Dutch National Committee or about our activities with Dutch IUCN members? Visit our [website](#) or contact Carl König.**

**E-mail: [carl.konigel@iucn.nl](mailto:carl.konigel@iucn.nl)**





© Erwin Mascarinas NTFP EP Philippines



## OUR STRATEGY

**OUR ULTIMATE GOAL:**  
**Safeguarding nature as the basis for all life**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: THESE SIX PRIORITIES WILL GUIDE OUR INTERVENTIONS OVER THE 2020-2024 PERIOD:**





## OUR STRATEGY

### THE CORE ELEMENTS OF OUR APPROACH

- We follow an **integrated landscape approach** focused on long-term changes where we take into account all relevant issues and bring together all relevant stakeholders in an area.
- In the landscape, we aim to make optimal use of the myriad of goods and services provided by healthy ecosystems to address major societal challenges by embracing **nature-based solutions**.
- We link nature conservation to the **broader societal agenda** and we mainstream social justice and local economic development goals throughout our work, embracing the SDGs as the overarching framework.
- We take a **gender-responsive approach**, underpinned in IUCN's comprehensive rights-based framework, to overcome gender inequality through our conservation efforts.
- We make use of our position in the conservation arena to **build bridges from local to international levels of decision-making**, connecting local and grassroots organisations with governments, global initiatives, and platforms.
- We **embed nature conservation in local, societal agendas**, cultivating local ownership and bottom-up actions, empowering civil society organisations, raising awareness, and mobilising stakeholders.

# 1

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 1



## Vigorous policy for nature

Conserving and restoring biodiversity requires robust nature policy. Not only in our country, but also internationally. This is why we focus on Dutch nature policy that prioritises nature and biodiversity



Country: **The Netherlands**

**SDG • 2 • 13 • 15 • 17**

## Partners

**The Dutch Butterfly Conservation • Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW) & Centre for Soil Ecology (CSE) • Wij.land • LandschappenNL • IVN Natuureducatie • Stichting Steenbreek • Delta Plan for Biodiversity Restoration • EMS Films**

# ONDER HET MAAIVELD

In April 2020, we were able to launch our new Onder het Maaiveld project, thanks to a contribution of 2,825,000 euros from the Dutch National Postcode Lottery (Nationale Postcode Loterij). In this three-year programme, IUCN NL, The Dutch Butterfly Conservation, the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW) & Centre for Soil Ecology (CSE) are working together with other social partners on structural change in soil management.

**A**t least a quarter of all the earth's species live in the soil', explains project leader Casper Verwer. 'One tablespoon of soil can contain thousands of species, millions of individuals and a hundred meters of hyphae. All this life ensures the soil fulfils a number of vital functions: such as providing a source of food for plants, water storage, water purification, acting as a climate buffer, and of course, pest control. Rich, healthy soil life is essential for everything that lives above ground: plants, birds, but people too. We cannot achieve the climate and biodiversity targets without vital soil.'

Jonne Arnoldussen, Head of Charitable Organisations at the Dutch National Postcode Lottery adds: 'Through this project IUCN NL, in association with its cooperation partners, not only highlights the soil's value but also makes it tangible. Practical examples are used to work with soil managers on soil restoration, and a label denoting soil vitality will focus more on soil quality as the basis for biodiversity conservation. We are thrilled that we can contribute to this endeavour, thanks to our donors.'

## BARBARA BAARSMA AS A SOIL ENVOY

During the programme's first year, we involved Barbara Baarsma, Director of the Rabo Carbon Bank and Professor of Economy at the University of Amsterdam, as a Soil Envoy for Onder het Maaiveld. In this role she promotes the importance of vital soil with a rich soil life in the Netherlands.

Baarsma regularly speaks out about the role she believes banks can play in promoting circular farming in the Netherlands. This approach focuses on short food chains and sustainable production methods. In order to make Dutch farming future-proof it is important to focus efforts on soil quality and soil biodiversity. In her role as Soil Envoy Baarsma will expand her efforts to promote the importance of a rich soil life.



## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about Onder het Maaiveld? Visit our [website](#) or contact Fanny Verkuijlen or Caspar Verwer.

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[caspar.verwer@iucn.nl](mailto:caspar.verwer@iucn.nl)



‘In order to make Dutch farming future-proof it is important to focus efforts on soil quality and soil biodiversity’



Onder het Maaiveld  
contributed to

**7** publications and  
presentations

We built a  
network with **15**  
organisations in the  
Netherlands in our  
first year

**17,250**

soil animals were  
counted during the  
2020 Soil Animal  
Days (that's over **2x**  
more than in 2019)

Onder het Maaiveld  
partners with

**4** Dutch IUCN  
members

**Partners**

**The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) • MVO Nederland • Delta Plan for Biodiversity Restoration**

## **Report:** **DUTCH ORGANISATIONS MAINLY WORK TOGETHER ON BIODIVERSITY GOALS**

During the Biodiversity Summit, which will take place in October 2021 in Kunming, China, targets must be established for 2030 to improve global biodiversity. To this end, IUCN NL is compiling the Dutch Action Agenda for Biodiversity on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV). But to what extent does biodiversity feature on the agenda of Dutch organisations? In which areas are things improving and in which areas could we do better? This served as the basis of our analysis in the 'Dutch non-state actor contributions to the Aichi targets' report.

**T**he report provides an overview and analysis of biodiversity initiatives by Dutch organisations between 2010 and 2020. We focused on the link between the initiatives and the global biodiversity targets for 2020, the 'Aichi targets'.

The report reveals that Dutch organisations are working on various fronts to enhance biodiversity and thus contribute to the global biodiversity targets established for 2020. Many of the initiatives will continue to run after 2020, which means they are also important for the Action Agenda for 2030.

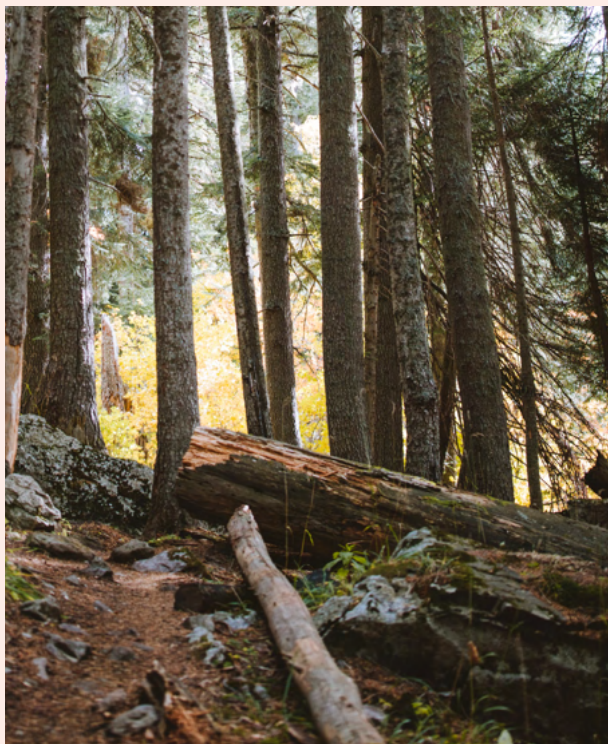


## LOCAL BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION

The vast majority of the organisations have taken area-specific action so most biodiversity restoration results are achieved at the local level. However, the collective impact of all these initiatives on biodiversity is not yet visible at the national level. 'Until now, efforts made by the authorities and other organisations are insufficient to improve biodiversity in the Netherlands', says Henk Simons, Senior Expert Nature Conservation at IUCN NL, one of the authors of the report.

## INCREASING AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

The report indicates that the initiatives contribute to raising awareness of biodiversity and to greater participation by citizens and businesses in nature conservation. 'This can act as a catalyst for other initiatives and for more ambitious policy at the provincial and national level', emphasises Henk.



European forest © Yaroslav Shuraev

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about our work for the Biodiversity Summit in Kunming? Visit our [website](#) or contact Henk Simons.

E-mail: [henk.simons@iucn.nl](mailto:henk.simons@iucn.nl)



### Working together to ensure a robust EU Forest Law

In 2020, together with over 160 nature and human rights organisations, we campaigned for a robust EU Forest Law. It was a success: almost 1.2 million people voted in the public consultation. This is a significant result, because the European Forest Law represents a unique opportunity to end Europe's involvement in global deforestation.

Together with Greenpeace and our member organisations World Wide Fund for Nature, BirdLife Netherlands (Vogelbescherming Nederland), Both ENDS and Tropenbos International, we called on Minister Carola Schouten to take the lead in Brussels and urge other Member States to support a robust European Forest Law.

 **WATCH VIDEO**

# 2

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 2



## Responsible value chains

We work with governments, companies and civil society organisations on responsible value chains, both in the Netherlands and abroad.

Countries: **Bolivia • Peru • Suriname • Guyana**

**• Kenya • Tanzania • Uganda • Burkina Faso •**

**Philippines**

## Partners

**Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia (CEDIB) • The Centre for Environment Justice and Development (CEJAD) • The Africa Centre for Energy and Mineral Policy (ACEMP) • L'Association intervillageoise de Gestion des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune de la Comoé-Léraba (AGEREF/CL) • Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM)(Burkina Faso office) • BanToxics**

**SDG • 3 • 12 • 15**

# IUCN NL SHEDS LIGHT ON THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL MERCURY TRADE



Mercury is a highly toxic metal that causes damage to both human health and the environment, yet eliminating its use has proven rather difficult. Together with local partner organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin-America, IUCN NL shed light on mercury trade routes and the mechanisms that drive the continued use of mercury in ASGM.

**T**he Minamata Convention on Mercury is regulating the formal trade and use of mercury,' Mark van der Wal, Senior Expert Ecosystems & Extractives at

IUCN NL, explains. 'The convention aims to reduce and if possible eliminate mercury in ASGM. But a long-term shift towards mercury-free techniques is hard to achieve. To understand which systems are constraining mercury-free artisanal gold, more insights into the informal mercury trade were needed.'

Together with local partner organisations, IUCN NL carried out extensive research into illegal mercury trade routes, the supply chain and actors involved in

Bolivia, Suriname, Guyana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burkina Faso and the Philippines. In 2020, these efforts culminated in the report "[Opening the black box: Local insights into the formal and informal global mercury trade revealed](#)".

## INSIGHT TO TACKLE THE MERCURY PROBLEM

'The report shows which factors hinder the understanding of mercury trade and highlights mechanisms that drive the continued use of mercury,' Mark says. 'Insight into these factors and drivers is needed to tackle the mercury problem.' IUCN NL therefore presented the key findings during various (online) conferences and expert panels.

## PRESSURE ON SENSITIVE AND PROTECTED AREAS

'In many countries, mercury use is still common practice in the artisanal small-scale goldmining, while little to no precaution measures are taken,' Mark states. 'Proper knowledge of safe and environmentally responsible practices is largely absent and miners usually have no access to appropriate technologies.' The sector is often inadequately regulated by the government and suffers from poor law enforcement. These factors, combined with the growing demand for gold, put increasing pressure on sensitive and protected areas.

## ENDING THE USE OF MERCURY

'To better inform all parties involved, from small-scale miners to government officials, we also supported the creation of an [interactive platform](#) that presents the investigation on mercury trade in the Guiana Shield,' Mark says. 'A documentary on the investigation is also on the way.'

Another documentary provides insight into the use of mercury in artisanal small-scale mining in the Philippines. 'Both documentaries will be released soon and promoted by us and our partners. We hope to reach a broad audience with our recommendations on the needed incentives, accessible alternatives and formalization of the sector to end the harmful use of mercury.'

### Links

- [Download the full report](#)
- [Visit the platform on mercury trade in the Guiana Shield](#)

### MORE INFORMATION?

Interested to learn more about our work on mercury? Visit our [website](#) or contact **Mark van der Wal** or **Barbara Hendus**.

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[barbara.hendus@iucn.nl](mailto:barbara.hendus@iucn.nl)





countries: Benin • Bolivia • Burkina Faso •

Cambodia • Philippines • Ghana • Guyana •

Indonesia • Madagascar • Mozambique •

Myanmar • Paraguay • Uganda • Suriname •

Tanzania • Zambia

## Partners

World Wide Fund for Nature • Ministry of Foreign Affairs • Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment • Association of Investors for Sustainable Development • and more than 210 local, social organisations in 16 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America

SDG • 2 • 5 • 6 • 12 • 13 • 14 • 15 • 16 • 17

# GREATER FOCUS ON THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF NATURE



© Nativa

Over the past five years, as part of the programme Shared Resources Joint Solutions (SRJS), we have supported more than 210 social organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to urge governments, businesses and local communities to engage in sustainable and inclusive landscape management. This ensures the carrying capacity of nature is embedded more effectively in policy and practice in many places.

**T**o ensure sustainable social and economic development, it is necessary to balance the interests of local communities and the carrying capacity of nature with the local, national and international economy', explains Sander van AnDEL, nature conservation expert at IUCN NL.

This is why in recent years, our local partner organisations have approached governments, businesses and local communities to work together to care for the nature on which we all depend. IUCN NL contributed to better landscape management through knowledge exchange, lobbying for legislation and regulations, funding and establishing links with international networks. Here are some of the results:

### PROTECTED AREA OF OVER 5 MILLION HECTARES

In Bolivia, the autonomous indigenous municipality of Charagua declared the Ñembi Guasu area, which spans no less than [1.2 million hectares, a protected area](#). This created a contiguous protected area of 5.6 million hectares. 'This protected status is not only good news for the many animal species in the area, but also for the indigenous tribes who have lived there for generations,' says Sander.

### BUSINESSES CONTRIBUTE TO NATURE CONSERVATION

'Five years ago, contact with businesses was unthinkable for many of our local partners', reveals Sander. 'However, various training courses have helped improve mutual understanding and trust. Moreover, a common interest has been found: businesses also depend on well-functioning ecosystems and a good relationship with local communities.'

Meanwhile, social organisations and businesses in countries like Ghana and Benin meet regularly to informally share best practices in social and environmental programmes. As a result, more and more businesses are examining ways to reduce their impact. Some frontrunners have started funding activities such as mangrove restoration, hippo and sea turtle protection and tree planting. In Uganda, the country's largest sugar cane producer is now working on ecosystem restoration.



### EMBEDDING NATURE CONSERVATION AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL

'Thanks to the efforts of our partners, governments in a number of countries are also affording greater consideration to the carrying capacity of nature. In some cases they have embedded nature conservation more effectively in their policies and are ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations. In other cases, nature policy has been prevented from worsening,' says Sander.

In Cambodia, for example, a new law recognises the contribution of indigenous groups to nature conservation, and in the Philippines, a bill recognising the contribution of indigenous groups to nature conservation is also in the process of being passed. In addition, local governments in several countries have involved nature organisations and local communities in their spatial planning. In Paraguay, for example, there is now a future-proof landscape plan that provides space for nature, and benefits from cross-party support.







Meanwhile, social organisations and businesses in countries like Ghana and Benin meet regularly to informally share best practices in social and environmental programmes

## NOT ALL PLAIN SAILING

The success stories are numerous, but the work of our partners is by no means always plain sailing. 'Conservationists regularly face intimidation, criminalisation and physical violence', says Sander. 'But even in situations where they can stand up for nature without any risks, it often takes a lot of time to build a relationship of trust and to convince parties of the common interest.'

IUCN NL supports local organisations and conservationists in standing up for their rights, by determining together with them which concrete actions can best be taken. We provide safety training, offer legal assistance and offer tools that allow people to protect their environment safely, such as risk analyses and communication protocols. For a structural solution, we advocate at national and international level for the improvement of the legal position of nature conservationists.

## PRACTICAL TOOLS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have drawn valuable lessons from these often difficult processes. They have been bundled together in various publications with [practical tools for social organisations](#). We also made [recommendations to Dutch investors](#) to prevent them from contributing to nature loss through their investments.

### Insights resulting from five years of cooperation

From 2016 to 2020, in partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Dutch Association of Investors for Sustainable Development and the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (Commissie m.e.r.), we strengthened the capacity of 191 NGOs and social organisations in low and middle-income countries to work with governments and businesses on safeguarding the water supply, climate resilience and food security ecosystem services. [These four publications bring together the insights from five years of cooperation](#) and offer useful tools for social organisations.



We helped social organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to embed sustainable and inclusive landscape management in policy and practice.

## MORE INFORMATION?

**Want to know more about the Shared Resources Joint Solutions programme? Visit our [website](#) or contact Sander van Andel.  
E-mail: [sander.vanandel@iucn.nl](mailto:sander.vanandel@iucn.nl)**





Country: **Philippines**

**SDG • 6 • 12 • 14 • 15**

**Partner**

**Alyansa Tigil Mina**

# LOBBYING SUCCESS IN THE PHILIPPINES: LOCAL GOVERNMENT CLOSES MINE

In 2020, local and indigenous communities living near a damaging mine achieved a major lobbying success: the Tampakan municipality ended its agreement with the mining company Sagittarius Mining Inc.



Lobbying by communities affected by mining led to the closure of a controversial mine.

**T**he Tampakan mine has been causing problems for years,' says Maartje Hiltermann, senior expert nature conservation at IUCN NL. It would have been the biggest copper and gold mine in Southeast Asia, at the expense of a large area of tropical rainforest. 'Pollution from mining activities affects the water and food security of the indigenous communities living near the mine, and also has an impact on a large part of the population in the wider Mindanao region, as it is the largest rice-growing area in the region,' explains Maartje.

The inhabitants of Tampakan and the indigenous Bla'an communities have been opposing the mining project for years, with the support of our local partner organisation ATM, the Philippine Anti-Mining Alliance, which defends the rights of communities affected by mining. 'It's a hazardous battle,' emphasises Maartje. 'Over the past 20 years, dozens of people have been killed for opposing the mine.'

## WARNINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Therefore, it is all the more significant that the local government has taken the warnings from the community seriously and has drawn a line under the project's extension. Maartje explains: 'The Central Mining Agency had reinstated the company's license even though it had been revoked in 2017 by the then minister of environment. The agency had also quietly drawn up a supplementary agreement, which would have allowed the company to continue its operations until 2032. Stakeholders, such as the local government and residents of Tampakan, were not aware of this, although it is a legal requirement.'

When the local government finally did get their hands on the agreement, they used their autonomy to block the plans. 'The government emphasised that the agreement was detrimental to its inhabitants, who also initiated action against the mine because of their right to a safe and healthy living environment.' In addition [in October, a local court ruled](#) that the provincial moratorium on mining is legally valid.

However, the battle is not over yet. For example, in November, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples [issued a highly controversial permit for the mining project](#) and there are now calls in the (renewed) provincial government for the moratorium to be lifted. With our new programme [Forests for a Just Future](#) we continue to support lobbying against this mining project.

### MORE INFORMATION?

Want to learn more about this project?  
Visit our [website](#) or contact Maartje Hilterman.

E-mail: [maartje.hilterman@iucn.nl](mailto:maartje.hilterman@iucn.nl)



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# 3

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 3



## Protected areas

Nature is the foundation for all life on earth. This is why we work with local partner organisations to connect, restore and conserve nature.



# 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAND ACQUISITION FUND: EXPANDING THE HABITAT OF ENDANGERED SPECIES

In 2020, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our Land Acquisition Fund. Since 2001, we have enabled over 100 NGOs to conserve and connect the – often fragmented – habitats of endangered species worldwide. This allows us to improve the chances of survival of iconic animal species, such as the endangered maleo bird, the Persian leopard and the blue-throated macaw.



© Delbar w Kooshki

PBES estimates that one million plant and animal species face the threat of extinction. Major causes include the loss and fragmentation of their habitats. 'If a habitat becomes too small, animal species are unable to find enough food and there is a risk of inbreeding', explains Marc Hoogeslag, who has been the driving force behind the Land Acquisition Fund for the past 20 years. 'For selective species such as the [blue-throated macaw](#) and the [Araripe manakin](#) there is a lack of suitable breeding sites.

 **WATCH VIDEO**



## TURNING THE TIDE FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES

But we can turn the tide: by purchasing land in strategic places local nature organisations – working closely with local residents – can restore and conserve the habitats of endangered species.

### A DREAM COME TRUE

“The Land Acquisition Fund started out twenty years ago as a dream”, Marc reveals. ‘What if we could protect endangered animal species from extinction, by safeguarding and expanding their habitat?’ We were able to make this dream come true, thanks to the Dutch National Postcode Lottery.

### POPULATION QUADRUPLD

‘Thanks to the Dutch National Postcode Lottery’s annual contribution, in recent years we have been able to provide financial support for over 100 local initiatives to conserve endangered species and ecosystems’, Marc continues. ‘For example, efforts by our local partner organisation Alliance for Tompotika Conservation in Indonesia have resulted in [the population of the endangered maleo bird on Mount Tompotika on Sulawesi quadrupling](#).’

### RETURN OF THE PERSIAN LEOPARD

Another result, of which Marc is immensely proud, is the creation of the [first nature reserve in Iraqi Kurdistan](#). The region is home to one of the most elusive predators in the world: the Persian leopard. ‘Biologists thought the leopard had become extinct in Northern Iraq’, Marc explains. ‘The news that the leopard had suddenly appeared in images from a camera trap in 2011, was fantastic.’ It is currently estimated that around 5-10 Persian leopards are using the nature reserve that was created with the support of the Land Acquisition Fund.

## PODCAST, LIVE STREAM AND ANNIVERSARY REPORT

This and other successes are described in detail in our [anniversary report](#). ‘What’s more, we organised a live stream event during which five of our passionate partners talked about their work to protect endangered species, and three inspiring stories were recounted in a podcast,’ Marc tells us.

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

During the first 20 years, we have supported 135 projects in 36 countries. ‘42,000 hectares of nature has been purchased and is now protected’, reveals Marc. ‘In the coming years, our aim is to enable many more nature organisations to safeguard and connect habitats for endangered species. This is why it is now also possible for businesses and private individuals to support the Land Acquisition Fund, such as through a one-off or periodic donation.’



### 484 hectares of nature protected thanks to participants of the Dutch National Postcode Lottery

In 2020, the annual contribution from the Dutch National Postcode Lottery made it possible for us to purchase 484 hectares of nature in Brazil, Colombia, Kenya and Nicaragua. Together with local communities our partner organisations on the ground ensure the protection of these four areas, which are crucial for the survival of the jaguar (Brazil), the Andean condor (Colombia), the Sokoke scops owl (Kenya) and the black-handed spider monkey (Nicaragua).



### An extra 15,000 euros for nature conservation

In 2020, we opened up the Land Acquisition Fund to donations from private individuals. It was a successful move, which raised almost 15,000 euros. The full amount was used to protect sea turtles in Nicaragua, primates and orchids in Ecuador, land acquisition and reforestation in South America and installing camera traps to improve monitoring.

#### MORE INFORMATION?

- Visit our [website](#)
- Download the [anniversary report](#)
- Listen to our podcasts about:
  - [Saving the endangered maleo bird on Sulawesi](#)
  - [Rediscovering the Persian leopard in Kurdistan](#)
  - [Ensuring the survival of the Araripe manakin in Brazil](#)
- Watch the [live stream event](#)
- Contact Marc Hoogeslag,  
E-mail: [marc.hoogeslag@iucn.nl](mailto:marc.hoogeslag@iucn.nl)





- Reserva Jama Coaque - credit: Third Millenium Alliance
- Emerald glass frog - credit: TMA
- Cotton-top tamarin - credit: Joao Marcos Rosa
- Brazilian Three-banded Armadillo - credit: Samuel Portela

- Choco Toucan - credit: Third Millenium Alliance
- *Meriania aurata* - credit: Lou Jost
- Mountains and ranger - credit: Association of Nature Conservation Organizations of Tajikistan
- Brown Vinesnake - credit: Johann Chretien

- Mountains with herder - credit: Association of Nature Conservation Organizations of Tajikistan
- Ridgway's Pygmy Owl - credit: Colum Muccio
- Eyelash-pitvipier - credit: Third Millenium Alliance
- Volcán Tungurahua - credit: Lou Jost



Countries: **Bolivia • Suriname • Guyana •**

**Venezuela • Peru**

#### Partners

**ARTIS • Earth League International • IFAW •  
Proyecto Sebraba • SAVIA • Scent Imprint  
Conservation Dogs**

**SDG • 15 • 16**



# REPORT EXPOSES THE CRIMINAL NETWORKS BEHIND JAGUAR POACHING IN BOLIVIA



One component of our Operation Jaguar project involves an undercover investigation into the illegal trade in jaguars, conducted by our project partner Earth League International (ELI). In 2020, we published a report containing the results of their long-term investigation in Bolivia. It reveals that the demand for jaguar parts originates from Asia and that the trade is generally run by Chinese residents of Bolivia.



© Ryan Moehring

Jaguars are being increasingly poached for their meat, fangs, bones and skin. Andrea Crosta, co-founder of ELI, says: 'The Chinese attribute medicinal power to jaguar parts and often incorporate jaguar fangs in jewellery to symbolise social status. Our team was offered hundreds of jaguar teeth for sale. Traders explained to us that large fangs are preferred over small ones, because they offer more space for decorative carving.'

## CRIMINAL NETWORKS

ELI investigated the criminal networks behind the illegal trade in jaguar products: the traders' modus operandi, their transport methods, routes and geographic hotspots. The investigation revealed that there are professional networks behind the trade in jaguar products. The people identified by ELI have robust transnational networks, which they use to smuggle jaguar products and other illegal goods from South America to China without encountering any serious problems.

## DEMAND FROM CHINA

Infrastructure developments and the influx of Chinese companies in recent years have been indirect drivers of the sharp increase in the jaguar trade in Bolivia. Previously inaccessible wilderness has been opened up and a new market interested in the jaguar was created: the jaguar trade. It is run by Chinese residents of South America, who mainly supply sellers in China or have links to wholesale dealers in China. Although the customers are all Asian, it is the Bolivians who kill and supply the 'products'.



## 'AMERICAN TIGER'

In China jaguar fangs are also sold as substitutes for tiger fangs because of their large size. The difference is virtually indiscernible. To add to the confusion, in China jaguars are called 'American tigers'. The reduced availability of tiger parts in Asia, combined with increasing demand in East and Southeast Asia and the growing Chinese presence in Latin America, appear to have created the perfect storm, resulting in a surge in the trade in jaguar products to China.

Download the report on '[Unveiling the criminal networks behind jaguar trafficking in Bolivia](#)'.

### MORE INFORMATION?

Want to learn more about our project Operation Jaguar? Visit our [website](#) or contact Liliana Jauregui.

E-mail: [liliana.jauregui@iucn.nl](mailto:liliana.jauregui@iucn.nl)







In China jaguar fangs are also sold as substitutes for tiger fangs because of their large size

Countries: **Ghana • Burkina Faso**

**SDG • 2 • 6 • 13 • 15**

## Partners

**AGEREF • NATURAMA • AGED & ORCADE •  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

# SAFE PASSAGE FOR ELEPHANTS BETWEEN GHANA AND BURKINA FASO

How do you provide space for local agriculture and livestock farming, as well as the seasonal migration of all kinds of animal species, including the elephant? In 2020, in association with our partners, local communities and the authorities, we developed a legal framework for biodiversity corridors between Ghana and Burkina Faso.



**T**he border region between Ghana and Burkina Faso is home to rich biodiversity. Most big game is concentrated in a number of nature reserves, but they are becoming increasingly isolated', explains Jan Kamstra, senior expert in nature conservation at IUCN NL. 'The areas in between the reserves are used for farming and roaming cattle. The migration of elephants, which move between one reserve and the other, is leading to growing conflict as a result.'

## CREATING CORRIDORS

By creating corridors, migratory animal species, specifically the elephant, can travel safely between the different nature reserves. 'Migratory animal species are also important for seed dispersal and thus also promote plant exchange', Jan adds. Moreover, the importance of corridors is growing due to the expected impact on the climate, to which all kinds of animal species will have to adapt.



## IDEAS TO REDUCE PRESSURE

For this reason, together with our local partners in Ghana and Burkina Faso, we engaged in dialogue with local residents about ways to reduce pressure on the corridors. 'The discussions resulted in a number of ideas for improving agriculture, organising livestock farmers and improving land rights', says Jan.

## AGREEMENTS ENSHRINED IN LAW

He continues: 'Our local partners work with local communities and government bodies in both countries to establish effective agreements on land use, and subsequently set them down in formal legislation.' This has already been achieved for two corridors in Burkina Faso. One corridor between Kaboré Tambi National Park and the Nazinga Game Reserve in Burkina Faso and one corridor from Kaboré Tambi National Park to the Ghanaian border.

## MAKING THE CORRIDORS A SUCCESS

Now that there is a legal framework, the task is to also make the safe corridors a success in practice. Jan: 'This is why our partners are now focusing on providing local communities with effective information about the corridors. Such as the clear demarcation of the corridors so people know where the boundaries are. They also develop alternatives for farmers who have to leave the corridor and they verify compliance with the agreements.'

### MORE INFORMATION?

Want to learn more about this project?  
Visit our [website](#) or contact Jan Kamstra.  
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countries: **Uganda • DR Congo**

**SDG • 6 • 13 • 15 • 16**

## Partners

**Virunga National Park • UWA • IFAW**



# BETTER PROTECTION FOR NATURE PARKS IN UGANDA AND DR CONGO

Poaching constitutes a major threat in the Queen Elizabeth National Park\* in Uganda, especially to the south of Lake Edward, along the border with DR Congo. The park ranger stations in both countries were positioned a certain distance from the border, which meant the area in between was a free-for-all. Thanks to a strategically positioned ranger station, the buffalo, hippos, crocodiles, elephants, leopards and lions now benefit from greater protection. (\*[IUCN category II: National Park](#))

**T**he Queen Elizabeth National Park\* is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Uganda', reveals Tina Lain, Senior Expert Environmental Justice at IUCN NL. 'But poaching constitutes a major threat to the buffalo, hippos, crocodiles, elephants, leopards and lions in the national park, especially to the south of Lake Edward, along the border with DR Congo.'

The park is part of a cross-border ecosystem, which also includes the adjacent Virunga National Park\* in DR Congo and several protected forests. Wildlife crime has a serious impact on biodiversity and jeopardises the safety of communities.

(\*[IUCN category II: National Park](#))

## NO MAN'S LAND

'The border area was a kind of no man's land,' Tina explains. 'Just out of reach of the Ugandan park rangers. Poachers took full advantage of this.'

So, with support from the European Union and in association with IFAW, we had a new ranger station built. 'The new station is strategically positioned, close to a base on the Congolese side,' Tina reveals. It means the Queen Elisabeth and Virunga National Park rangers can cooperate more effectively, conduct cross-border patrols and share knowledge.

## MILESTONE IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

‘The station represents an important milestone in cross-border cooperation to halt illegal activities and improve the safety of animals and people alike,’ Tina continues.

‘In the broader sense, our work with the EU in the Greater Virunga landscape has helped us build a bridge between the Congolese and Ugandan nature authorities, park rangers and communities. It has laid the foundations for effective cross-border cooperation, which means wild animals in the region are better protected against poaching and illegal trade.’



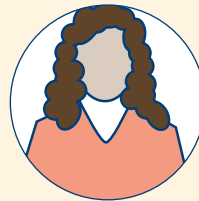
Thanks to a new ranger station, rangers in the area bordering Uganda and DR Congo can provide flora and fauna with greater protection against poachers.

### MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about this project?

Visit our [website](#) or contact Tina Lain.

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© Fanny Schertzer via Wiki Commons



# 4

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 4



## Community governance

In many cases, local and indigenous communities have been sustainably using and managing nature for generations. Together with local partner organisations, we are working on obtaining recognition of the rights and the participation of these communities, so they can continue to ensure sustainable nature management.



Countries: **Argentina • Bolivia • Paraguay**

**Partner**

**Fundación Plurales**

**SDG • 5 • 15 • 16**



# A MOBILE APP SAFEGUARDS AND CONNECTS WOMEN ENVI- RONMENTAL DEFENDERS

The COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the dangers faced by environmental defenders all over the world, including women environmental defenders in Latin America. To help them access information and report threats, IUCN NL's partner Fundación Plurales developed a mobile application.



© Fundación Plurales

**'B**ecause of the pandemic, Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in Latin America have become even more isolated and forgotten by their government,' says Mariel Cabero, expert environmental justice at IUCN NL. 'IPLCs and the environmental defenders amongst them became disconnected from urban areas with little access to health information or services,' Mariel explains.

'They are also more vulnerable to extractive activities, such as mining and intensive agriculture, and can't protest against these because of lockdowns and little communication with the outside world.' Additionally, the violence against environmental defenders continues: at least six [have been killed](#) in Latin America since the start of the pandemic. Mariel: 'Women environmental defenders are often even more vulnerable. We need to facilitate tools that enable them to report on issues, thus contributing to their safety.'

### CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Improving the security and advocacy strategies of women environmental defenders is a high priority. 'Our partner Fundación Plurales developed an app for these defenders,' says Mariel. The goal is to expand communication and action between defenders in Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay.

'These women increasingly access the internet through mobile devices, creating an opportunity to improve communication between them, their peers and the world,' explains Nicolás Avellaneda from Fundación Plurales.

### CONNECTING DEFENDERS TO UN MECHANISMS

'We took into account the specific needs of the women defenders, to make sure the app is user-friendly,' says Nicolás. Mariel: 'IUCN NL assisted in the design of the app and made sure it was adaptive to women defenders' needs.'

With the app, defenders can find and share relevant information, including data, photos, voice notes, and news on the issues of environmental justice and gender.

The app will also collect complaints and data about threats to defenders' environment. Nicolás: 'These will be forwarded to the right people, organisations and platforms, like the UN Special Rapporteurs on human rights issues.'

### AN APPLICATION JUST FOR US

'So far, the app has been downloaded more than 120 times, and has proven a useful tool for women defenders to bridge the communication gap during the pandemic,' says Nicolás. The women defenders were also positive about their first experiences with the app: 'Having access to new tools' and 'an application only for us, which allows us to grow', are some of the phrases that emerged from the rounds of consultation done by Fundación Plurales.



Thanks to a mobile application designed specifically for women environmental defenders in Latin America, they can share relevant information to close the communication gap caused by COVID-19.

### MORE INFORMATION?

**Want to know more about defending environmental defenders? Visit our [website](#) or contact Mariel Cabero. E-mail: [mariel.cabaro@iucn.nl](mailto:mariel.cabaro@iucn.nl)**



Country: Indonesië

SDG • 5 • 12 • 15

Partner

WARSI



# INCREASE IN INCOME FOR INDONESIAN WOMEN'S GROUPS THANKS TO NUT OIL SALES



Thanks to capacity building by our partner organisation WARSI, seven women's groups in Indonesia were able to increase their income by selling nut oil.

In 2020, seven women's groups managed to produce nut oil from candlenuts and thus increase their income. At the same time, the sustainable harvesting method contributes to the conservation of the forest in West Sumatra.

**T**he forest of the Indudur Nagari community in West Sumatra in Indonesia is rich in natural resources, including candlenut trees,' explains Caspar Verwer, senior expert in nature conservation. 'However, the women who harvest the nuts did not earn very much from selling them. Extracting the oil from the nuts and marketing it can significantly increase potential income from the candlenuts. However, the inhabitants had not yet fully explored this option.'

## OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE THEIR INCOME

Uni Mirna and four other women from the Indudur women's group saw an opportunity to increase their income by extracting oil from the nuts. This did not happen overnight. Initially, the majority of women could not be convinced to invest a lot of time in the idea.



## NUT OIL SOLD ON THE MARKET

However, that did not stop Uni Mirna from trying, and mastering the process of producing oil from the nuts. A training course given by a local university was organised for the group of women with the support of our partner organisation WARSI. WARSI also facilitated contacts between the local government and the women's group. The initiative was a success; seven women's groups now produce oil and the 'Indudur' oil has found its way to the market.

IUCN NL also facilitated a training course in 'storytelling,' which led to a video production. In the video, produced by our partner organisation WARSI, Uni Mirna shows what perseverance and the potential of forest products can achieve. In turn this has inspired other women's groups to explore ways of increasing their income.

 WATCH VIDEO

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about this project?  
Visit our [website](#) or contact Caspar Verwer.  
E-mail: [caspar.verwer@iucn.nl](mailto:caspar.verwer@iucn.nl)





Country: **Myanmar**

## Partners

Trip Net • Myeik Lawyers' Network • Dawei Development Association (DDA) • Green Network • Southern Youth

SDG • 10 • 16



# INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN MYANMAR



© DohEain

To ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, there must be a balance between economic, environmental and social values. We must align the interests of all stakeholders in a landscape with the capacity of the natural world, to foster inclusiveness at all levels. In 2020, we developed a workshop on inclusive community engagement for our partners in Myanmar.

Local communities are not always involved in decision-making about their landscape. Evelien van den Broek, Senior Expert Environmental Justice at IUCN NL, explains: 'Including communities in these processes is important, as they have extensive knowledge and are vulnerable to any changes made to their natural resources.'

Communities are made up of people with different positions, assets and interests. These should be taken into account when working with communities and planning for sustainable natural resource use. Failing to do so may result in injustice, conflicts or even deprivation of livelihoods.

## NATURE AND LIVELIHOODS UNDER THREAT

After decades of violent conflict in the Tanintharyi region in Myanmar, the Indigenous Karen communities are trying to rebuild their lives. For generations, they took care of their forests on which their livelihoods are built. These are under threat from the influx of investors and increased exploitation of natural resources, as a result of state policies.

IUCN NL's local partner organisations want to support communities to rebuild their lives and protect the ecosystems that are part of it. Evelien: 'They asked us for methods to effectively engage communities.'

We joined forces with Doh Eain, an organisation with a lot of experience in working with local communities and empowering marginalised groups. They emphasise the importance of early engagement of the community.

 **WATCH VIDEO**

## WORKSHOP FOR INCLUSIVENESS

Doh Eain developed a four-day workshop on inclusive community engagement for five partner organisations that work closely with communities in Tanintharyi. They reflected on the concepts of engagement and inclusion in their work and how they can facilitate the engagement process.

Partners discussed the definition of community engagement and the different ways to approach it. Participants also discussed the different phases in designing inclusive community engagement, and how to apply this in their own programs.

Wai Naing Oo of Trip Net found the workshop very valuable: 'Before, I knew how to consult the community, but not how to facilitate their participation.' Zar Phyu Maung of Myeik Lawyers' Network agreed: 'I have learnt how to engage with communities and how to run our projects more systematically.'



We helped our partners in Myanmar to involve local communities in decisions about their landscape and natural resources.

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about our work in Myanmar? Visit our [website](#) or contact Evelien van den Broek.  
E-mail: [evelien.vandenbroek@iucn.nl](mailto:evelien.vandenbroek@iucn.nl)



# 5

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 5



## Right to nature

Every person is entitled to have a say regarding their living environment, and nature itself has rights too. We advocate for the recognition of those rights and work to give citizens in developing countries a greater say by, for example, improving their security.



Country: **Ghana**

**Partner**

**A Rocha Ghana**

**SDG • 15 • 16**



# GHANAIAN NGOS CLAIM THEIR RIGHT TO NATURE

Every person is entitled to have a say regarding their own living environment, which must also be safe, clean, healthy and sustainable. With the support of IUCN NL, a coalition of NGOs in Ghana filed a lawsuit against the Ghanaian government.



© Jeremy Lindsell

In 2017, the Ghanaian government entered into a multi-billion dollar loan with China. It offered the extraction of bauxite from the Atewa Forest as collateral. Since then, A Rocha Ghana has been campaigning with local communities against bauxite mining in Atewa Forest.



## FOREST OF GLOBAL IMPORTANCE

‘The Atewa Forest is a Key Biodiversity Area: it is of global importance for the survival of biodiversity,’ explains Jan Kamstra, senior expert nature conservation at IUCN NL. ‘It is home to a large number of endangered species, including the white-naped Mangabey, one of the world’s 25 most endangered species of monkey. The forest also provides clean drinking water for five million Ghanaians.’

## FATAL BLOW TO BIODIVERSITY

Yet the Ghanaian government intends to mine bauxite there. ‘The problem is that the mineral is found close to the surface,’ says Jan. ‘The only way to extract the bauxite is to cut down the forest. That would constitute a fatal blow to the unique biodiversity.’

In addition, the industrial excavation and transport of bauxite produces a lot of dust that causes serious pollution within a considerable radius. ‘When it rains, erosion results in the toxic soil, which contains aluminium, entering streams and rivers. This all contravenes the right to a clean and healthy living environment, which is enshrined in the Ghanaian constitution.’

## SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

So, on 13 January, with the support of IUCN NL, A Rocha Ghana and other NGOs filed a lawsuit against the government, seeking to protect the Atewa Forest and their living environment.

‘We already took the scenario of a court case into account,’ says Jan. ‘That’s why we gave a training course on how the legal route can help if years of lobbying do not have the desired effect. We also helped formulate the allegation and find expert witnesses to further substantiate the claims.’

Furthermore, we put A Rocha in touch with other NGOs with litigation experience, such as the Environmental Legal Assistance Centre in the Philippines, which has been successfully pursuing the right to a clean environment through the courts for many years.

The court case is expected to be heard mid-2021.

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about our work in Ghana? Visit our [website](#) or contact **Jan Kamstra**.

E-mail: [jan.kamstra@iucn.nl](mailto:jan.kamstra@iucn.nl)



Country: **Philippines**

Partner

NTFP Philippines

SDG • 15 • 16



© Leandro Miguel

# INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES DELAY DAM'S CON- STRUCTION

In 2017, as part of a major infrastructure project, the Philippine government again announced its plans to build a dam in one of the last remaining large areas of forest in the Philippines. The dam is intended to meet the increasing demand for drinking water in Manila. However, the planned site of the Kaliwa Dam is the territory of the indigenous Dumagat-Remontado community and threatens the biodiversity of the area as well as their sources of income, water supply and sacred sites. The consent of the communities living there is required to build the dam: free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).



In 2020, indigenous communities managed to delay the planned construction of the Kaliwa Dam in the Sierra Madre, the Philippines.

## IRREGULARITIES IN THE PROCESS

**T**he authorities in charge of the FPIC process concluded that the communities agreed to the dam's construction in 2019. The communities contested this outcome: the FPIC process was marked by irregularities. 'Many residents had no, little or incorrect information about the dam or the procedure, or were not invited to important meetings. This made it difficult for them to make an informed choice,' explains senior expert environmental justice Charlotte Floors. 'In addition, there was limited documentation of the process and it led to divisions within the communities in the area.'

With the support of our partner organisation NTFP-EP Philippines, a group of Dumagat-Remontado launched a campaign against the dam. In 2020, the group highlighted the irregularities in the process and raised awareness among residents about the potential impacts of the dam. IUCN NL facilitated a training course to strengthen the [communication efforts](#) and supported legal action.

## BREAKTHROUGH IN 2020

A major breakthrough occurred when Typhoon Ulysses hit the area in November 2020. Many houses were destroyed and flooded as a result. The Dumagat-Remontado group fears that the dam would only exacerbate such effects.

'As a result of the campaign and the typhoon, a number of residents changed their minds about the dam,' explains Charlotte. The group submitted a resolution to the relevant authorities reaffirming their position on the dam. As a result, the dam's construction has been delayed. 'While a delay may not seem significant, it buys the time needed to address violations during the FPIC process through legal action, for example,' reveals Charlotte. Over the next five years, this work will continue under our new Forest for a Just Future programme.

### MORE INFORMATION?

**Want to know more about this project?**

Visit our [website](#) or contact

Charlotte Floors.

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# 6

STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 6



## Conservation finance

We bridge the gap between local entrepreneurs that contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation, and public and private investors. This is how we mobilise more money for nature conservation and restoration.



Countries: **Uganda • Cameroon • Ghana •**

**Mozambique • Indonesia • Vietnam**

#### Partners

**Tropenbos International • WWF NL • ECOTRUST  
Uganda • A Rocha Ghana • Financial Access • Form  
International • VietNature • Samdhana Institute •  
IIED • 1000Landscapes • VietNature • Nature  
Conservation Research Center**

**SDG • 1 • 2 • 5 • 7 • 8 • 9 • 10 • 11 • 12 • 13 • 14 • 15**

# FUNDING FOR LOCAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Climate change has major consequences for man, nature and the environment, especially in developing countries. Local initiatives can make a difference, but often lack access to funding for climate adaptation and mitigation. We helped local partner organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to improve the marketing strategy for their projects so they could access funding and scale up.

**'O**nly 10% of the amount available worldwide for climate solutions ends up with local initiatives in developing countries,' says Maxime Eiselin, green economy expert at IUCN NL. 'This is a missed opportunity, because these local institutions are in close contact with the communities that suffer the negative effects of climate change and often have the best idea of what is needed on the ground to turn the tide.'

#### IMPROVED MARKETING STRATEGY FOR LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Therefore, together with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the World Wide Fund for Nature, we provided our local partner organisations with support to strengthen their strategies to promote their local nature-based climate solutions and to diversify the funding needed to scale up their projects. 'More than sixty local partners worldwide participated in the learning process based on the IIED's [Money Where it Matters framework](#),' says Maxime.

One of them is ECOTRUST, a partner organisation headed by Pauline Nantongo in Uganda that supports local communities in developing their livelihoods through forest restoration and sustainable land use. 'For example, ECOTRUST provides support in developing tree nurseries and generating income through carbon payments,' explains Maxime.

## ENOUGH CONFIDENCE TO INVEST

Thanks to the learning process and support from IUCN NL over the years, ECOTRUST developed a working relationship with, a large company that grows sugar cane. Together with this company, a model is under development for the greening of sugarcane outgrowers in the Western Abertine Rift Valley, in of the most biodiverse regions in Africa.

'Together with a financial services company, we are developing a model in which local banks become the driving force for combining climate smart agriculture with on-farm forest restoration,' says Maxime. With this model we offer local lenders the possibility to invest in a consortium of farmers, rather than a single farmer. By offering such a package, combined with detailed information on the farmers and their sustainability interventions, we expect lenders to invest with more confidence.

Pauline Nantongo, CEO of ECOTRUST Uganda states: 'Channeling climate finance to local institutions like ECOTRUST Uganda is by no means an investment risk. The real risk is that money stays in the multiple layers of international intermediation and does not reach the local levels. The 'Money where it matters' framework can be used to change the risk perception of climate finance donors. It helps in communicating for local organisations such as ECOTRUST that have a track record of forest protection, linked to climate change mitigation and adaptation.'



© Henk Simons



We helped local partners obtain funding for climate projects

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about funding for climate solutions? Visit our [website](#) or contact **Maxime Eiselin**.

E-mail: [maxime.eiselin@iucn.nl](mailto:maxime.eiselin@iucn.nl)



# PEOPLE AND NATURE BENEFIT FROM CERTIFIED TIMBER PRODUCTION

Monoculture acacia plantations intended for wood pulp are disastrous for biodiversity in Vietnam. Our local partner organisation VietNature saw that things could be done differently: with gains for plantation owners from the community as well as for nature. With the support of IUCN NL, it set up a profitable project for FSC certified timber production. In 2020, the first investor came forward.



In Vietnam, you will find many millions of hectares of monoculture acacia plantations, destined for pulp. 'It's problematic,' says Jan Willem den Besten, senior expert green economy at IUCN NL. 'FSC certification is not required because the plantations are intended to produce pulp. This means they only contain acacia trees. These are alien species that are not compatible with local nature. There is simply no incentive for plantation owners to plant a minimum of 10% indigenous trees as required for FSC certification.'

## GREEN DESERTS

What's more, the trees are cut down after just a few years, long before they are fully mature. 'As a result, these plantations are a kind of green desert: hardly any insects, birds or mammals live there.'

The focus on pulp has another disadvantage: no timber is produced for the Vietnamese furniture industry. 'Therefore, this huge industry remains dependent on imports from neighbouring countries,' explains Jan Willem. 'Unfortunately, this often involves illegally felled wood from natural forests.'

Our local partner organisation VietNature believed things had to change: with gains for the plantation owners from the community and for nature.

### FOREST RESTORATION WITH ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

'We supported them in applying IUCN's *Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology*,' says Jan Willem. 'This provided VietNature with an insight into the best opportunities for forest restoration, including economic potential for sustainable forest management and protection for what remains of the natural forest.' Since then, they have developed a unique model to support local landowners to profitably make the switch from monoculture acacia plantations for pulp to FSC certified wood production.

In addition to working with local landowners, who often own several hectares of land, VietNature is committed to FSC certification and seeks out buyers who will pay a higher price for FSC certified wood.

### CAPITAL RAISED

'Through our initiative Momo4Climate and the Green Livelihoods Alliance, we supported VietNature in 2017 and 2018 in developing a profitable business case,' Jan Willem reveals. 'In 2018, VietNature presented their project during a Dragon's Den at the Global Impact Investors Forum. They won the competition, and with it the first start-up capital to turn their idea into reality.'

In the meantime, VietNature has received even more support to carry out the first FSC certification and since 2020, there has been an investor interested in further scaling up the idea.

### NATURE BENEFITS MOST

The fact that the project has now become a reality means profits for plantation owners: FSC certified wood yields more than pulp. But the initiative benefits nature most of all.

Jan Willem: 'The timber plantations according to this new model contain more indigenous tree species, which are given the opportunity to grow into mature trees. That is a gain for biodiversity. This means the plantations provide a pleasant habitat for many insects, birds and mammals.'

### FOREST CONSERVATION

Moreover, the plantations indirectly contribute to the conservation of natural forests. 'Thanks to their higher income, local plantation owners are under less pressure to cut down illegal wood. And if the country produces more wood for its furniture industry, it will need to import less from neighbouring countries, where the hardwood trade is often conducted at the expense of natural forests.'

### MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about this project?  
Visit our [website](#) or contact Jan Willem den Besten.

E-mail: [janwillem.denbesten@iucn.nl](mailto:janwillem.denbesten@iucn.nl)

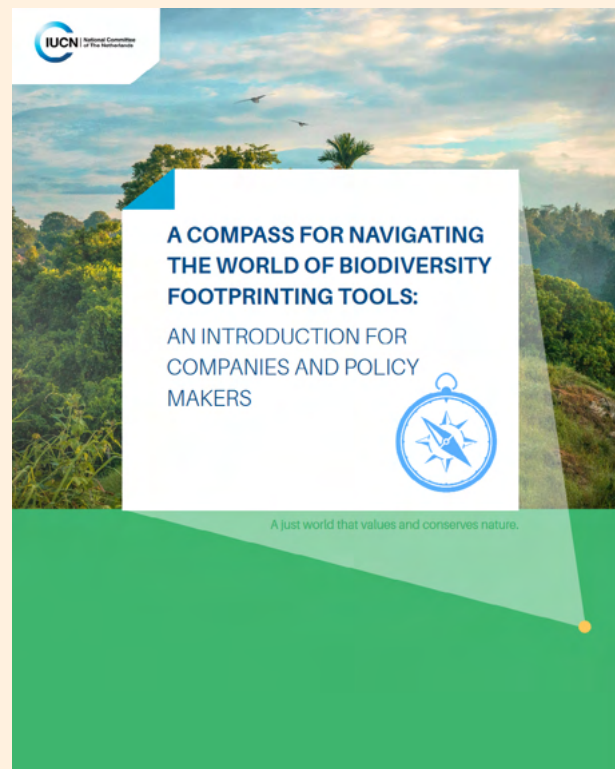






# A COMPASS FOR BIODIVERSITY FOOTPRINTING TOOLS

Biodiversity footprinting is expected to become a core element of business and government action in the years to come. Our 2020 report: 'A Compass for Navigating the World of Biodiversity Footprinting Tools' guides its readers through the world of biodiversity impact measurement.



Cover rapport biodiversity footprint measurement

There is increasing evidence that ongoing ecosystem degradation has a material impact on companies – undermining performance, profits, their license to operate and access to new markets. Today, many companies – big and small – are starting to track their performance to halt biodiversity loss, and looking into how they can make a positive contribution to restoration.

## A COMPASS FOR BIODIVERSITY FOOTPRINTING TOOLS

Our report acts as a compass to help its readers navigate through the terrain of biodiversity footprinting tools. The primary intended audiences of this document are Dutch businesses interested in understanding biodiversity footprinting and its practical applications in company decision making, as well as policy makers in the Netherlands interested in stimulating and accompanying this process.

## MEASURING BUSINESSES IMPACT ON BIODIVERSITY

Through a series of questions the report guides and informs the reader around key questions, for example: How can businesses measure their impact on biodiversity? And how can the government steer and promote business to report on their biodiversity impact in the light of the international agenda, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, China? And how have developments in the Netherlands helped shape this global movement?

Download the full report '[A Compass for Navigating the World of Biodiversity Footprinting Tools](#)'.

### MORE INFORMATION?

**Want to know more about measuring biodiversity impact? Visit our [website](#) or contact Maxime Eiselin.**

**E-mail: [maxime.eiselin@iucn.nl](mailto:maxime.eiselin@iucn.nl)**





Pantanal Paraguay © Milly Corelone



# ABOUT US

## WHO WE ARE

In 2020, 49 passionate employees (43.79 FTEs) worked in our office in the centre of Amsterdam. Our experts are trained in various disciplines, from ecology to human rights and from communication to finance. They have a wide range of work experience, from fieldwork to scientific research, and from NGOs to the business community. All these different backgrounds provide different perspectives on solutions to the challenges of our time. We value this diversity of views, just as we embrace the different opinions among our Dutch member organisations and in the global union.

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVENESS

We see diversity and inclusiveness as a great good. We are proud of the great diversity of our workforce. The age range of our employees spans almost 40 years: with ages from 23 to 63, and they come from as many as eleven different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. We have agreements to promote and monitor gender equality, for example, in the areas of performance management and recruitment & selection. We strive for an equal gender balance in all layers of the organisation. In 2020, we employed 27 women and 22 men. Thanks to targeted HR policies, there is an even gender balance in leadership positions. The balance at the top of the organisation needs to be improved: our management team consists of one woman and three men; the Supervisory Board consisted of one woman and five men in 2020. Improving the balance is a priority for the coming years.

## MORE INFORMATION?

Want to know more about our approach to gender equality? Download our [gender strategy](#)

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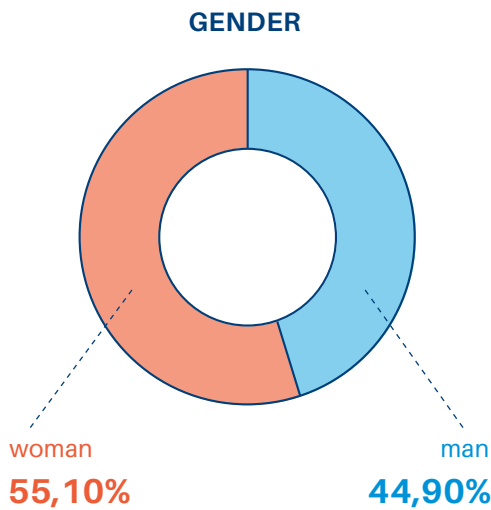
## INTEGRITY

We maintain a zero tolerance policy towards breaches of integrity, and actively work to reduce the likelihood of such breaches. Our integrity officer and two confidential counsellors play an important role in this matter. In addition, we regularly provide our employees with relevant training. For example, last year, everyone followed an online integrity training course and several female service travellers followed a female traveller training course to make them more resilient in unsafe or unpleasant situations when travelling.

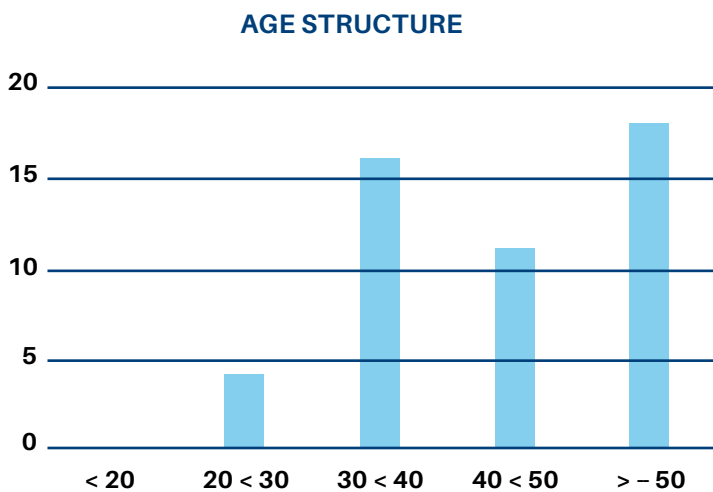
Download our [management report](#) here for more information about our organisation.



# A GLOBAL UNION

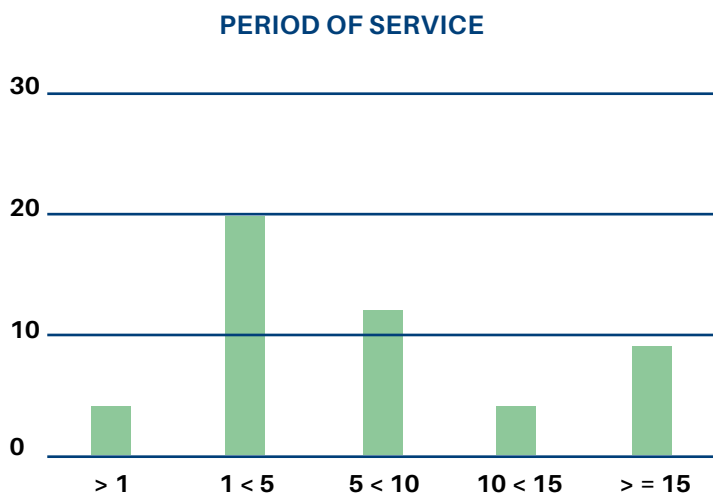


IUCN NL is part of the world's largest and oldest nature conservation union: the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). IUCN brings together the global experience, knowledge and network of 1,400 governments, social organisations, knowledge institutions, and over 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the condition of nature and the protective measures required.



Thanks to its unique composition, IUCN provides a neutral platform for working on solutions to the most pressing global problems such as the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems, climate change and poverty. The latest scientific insights and practical experience form the basis for these activities. IUCN's international headquarters is in Gland, Switzerland.

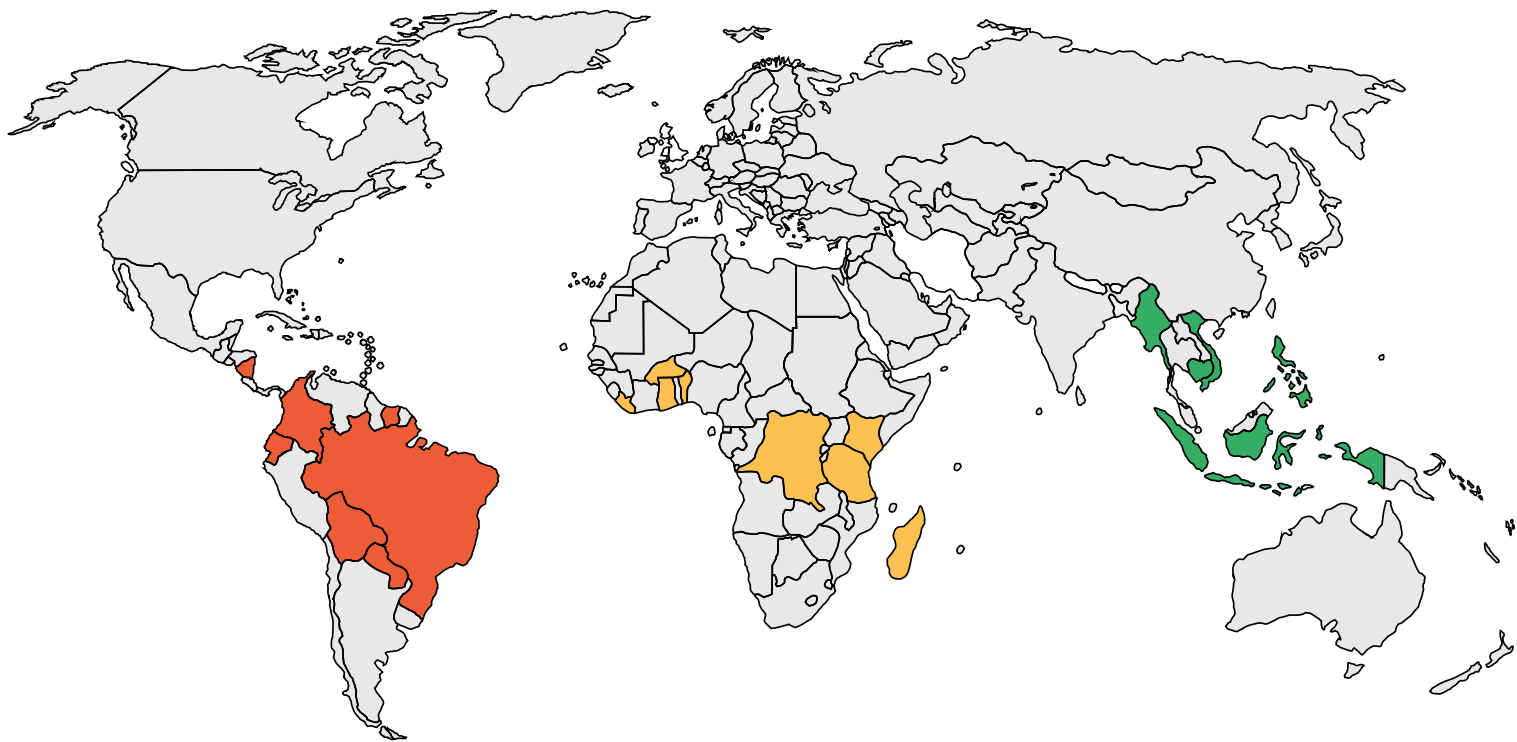
In the Netherlands, IUCN NL serves as the platform for 39 IUCN member organisations, including large and small-scale nature organisations, the Dutch government and knowledge institutions.



IUCN NL actively cooperates with local organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Dutch member organisations and other parts of IUCN to safeguard important nature and biodiversity in those regions. Together, we develop international cooperation programmes and attract funding from various donors.

# WHERE WE WORK

We worked with our partners in **9 countries in Africa**, **6 in Asia**, **8 in Latin America** and in the Netherlands.



## South and Central America

Bolivia  
Brazil  
Colombia  
Ecuador  
Nicaragua  
Paraguay  
Suriname  
Guyana

## Africa

Benin  
Burkina Faso  
Congo (D.Rep.)  
Ghana  
Kenya  
Liberia  
Madagascar  
Uganda  
Tanzania

## Asia

Cambodia  
Philippines  
Indonesia  
Myanmar  
Vietnam



## COLOPHON

**Realisation:** IUCN NL

**Design:** Margo Vlamings

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© Merlijn Van Weerd

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