

B. FORESTS & WATER

IUCN NL strengthens Indigenous Peoples' and local community-led forest and water governance in tropical forest landscapes where nature is under threat. We apply a unique bottom-up approach towards protecting and restoring forested watersheds to sustain water supply for healthy ecosystems, productive landscapes and to ensure access to sufficient and good quality water for local communities.

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Forests play an essential role in the stable provisioning of clean, fresh water and related ecosystem services. In fact, climate change is primarily a water crisis: its impacts are felt through worsening floods, rising sea levels, wildfires and droughts. Inclusive and just water governance is central to building the resilience of societies and ecosystems and to reducing carbon emissions.

The ecosystems that supply humanity with fresh water are disappearing at an alarming rate and many of the world's freshwater systems are under (extreme) stress. Agriculture consumes more water than any other source and agro-chemicals too often end up polluting waterways. Likewise mining requires significant amounts of water and mine waste often contaminates water in nearby communities. Climate change is altering patterns of weather and water around the world, causing shortages and droughts in some areas and floods in others.

OUR COMMITMENT

IUCN NL

- works towards sustained water supply for healthy ecosystems, productive landscapes & fair access to good quality water for local communities
- takes a landscape approach - we link water to biodiversity, climate and the needs of local populations (IP&LCs, women and people living in urban areas)
- pushes for water policies & investments that take nature, biodiversity, climate, fair access to water into account
- addresses and helps solve water conflicts around water extraction & pollution
- supports community-based forest governance to protect and restore watersheds, rivers and creeks

USPs

- ability to link water to international processes and commitments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, and bringing water issues into national UPR reporting
- legal action if needed
- promotion of civic space and support to Environmental Human Rights Defenders who work towards water justice
- proven experience in supporting communities to address and solve water conflicts
- know-how on how to set up water committees

FORESTS & WATER: SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK



Beyond the Amazon: Chiquitania, a forest gem navigating a water crisis

The Chiquitania forest, located in the eastern lowlands of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, and extending into Mato Grosso, Brazil, represents one of the most unique and critically important ecosystems in the world. Chiquitania is a tropical dry forest, a biome that does not have the same global recognition as the Amazon Rainforest, but that plays an essential role in biodiversity conservation and climate regulation

The devastating effects of tropical storms made people on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines painfully aware of the urgent need for more sustainable land use management. To ensure a river basin-wide approach for protection and restoration of the environment, a coalition of local civil society organisations pushed for the set-up of a river basin council uniting representatives from government, businesses, civil society and indigenous peoples. Their efforts resulted in an ordinance ensuring that all citizens of Cagayan de Oro City pay indirectly for the restoration and protection efforts by different stakeholders in the upstream areas.



Multi-stakeholder effort mobilizes tax money for conservation and restoration



Sustainable forest management in West Sumatra

The Batang Laweh river forms an essential water source for the life of the Minangkabau people in Sirukam village in the Solok district of West Sumatra, Indonesia. A healthy forest ecosystem is needed to protect the water catchment area and secure a year-round water flow. 'We should not leave a legacy of tears but of springs' says Jasmir Jumadi, who is a member of the Village Forest Management Group (VFMG) patrol team. 'Protecting the water source is therefore like protecting life for us.'

JOIN US IN PROTECTING FORESTS



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