

ANNUAL REVIEW

2022

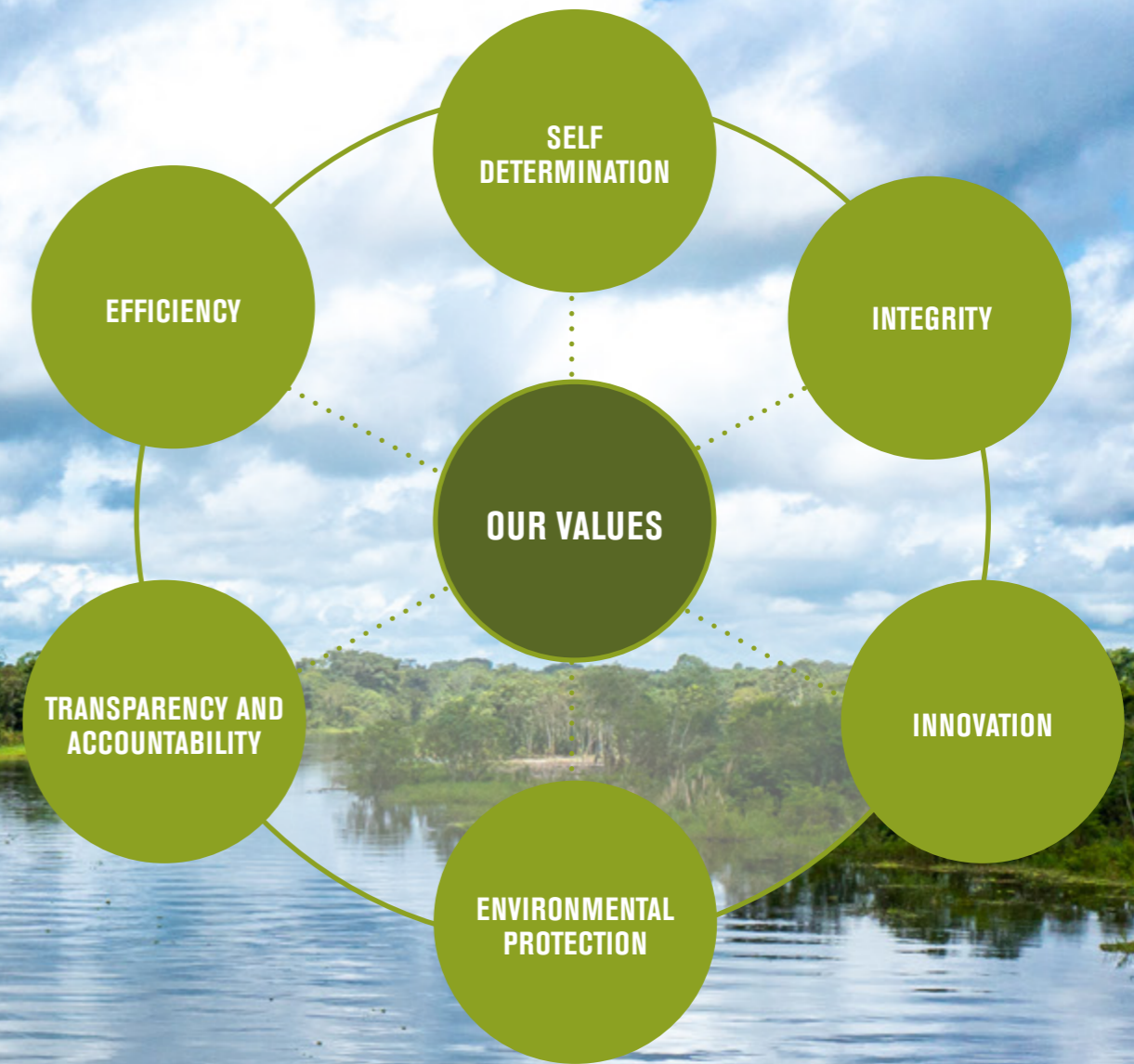




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OUR MISSION IS TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND OTHER COMMUNITIES OF THE WORLD'S RAINFOREST IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PROTECT THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND FULFIL THEIR RIGHTS TO LAND, LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD.



THE RAINFOREST FOUNDATION FAMILY

The Rainforest Foundations: With more than 30 years of on-the-ground experience, RFUK, RFUS and RFN are the foremost global organisations that prioritise social justice and indigenous rights as preconditions for enduring forest protection. With over 100 long-term indigenous and other local partners throughout the Amazon, Congo Basin, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Central America, this partnership provides technical support and tens of millions of dollars annually, directly to local organisations for rights-based forest protection. Together, we support them to protect more than 84 million hectares of tropical rainforest, a forest area roughly the size of Scandinavia.

DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

I am proud to share with you the Rainforest Foundation UK's Annual Review of 2022, a year in which we made important strides in empowering frontline defenders of the world's rainforests.



The theme of this year's edition is turning theory into practice. The overwhelming body of evidence now supports our founding principle that the most effective, and just, way to protect forests is to bring them under the control of the communities

who call them home. As policy makers grapple with how to turn commitments on Indigenous Peoples into practical investments on the ground, RFUK and our local partners are showing the way.

For example, our MappingForRights initiative is putting hundreds of otherwise 'invisible' forest communities on the map - a crucial first step to legal recognition of their lands. Our Community Forest and Indigenous Livelihoods programmes show how forests can flourish in ways that do not compromise local livelihoods, cultures and needs. Our ForestLink system is unlocking the potential of hundreds of forest communities to monitor and reduce illegal deforestation.

Getting these kinds of real-world solutions into the hands of local communities will be more crucial than ever this year with looming threats from logging and fossil fuel development on the horizon in DRC but also growing opportunities to scale up recognition forest communities' tenure rights, notably through a new groundbreaking Indigenous Peoples law in there.

At this critical period for rainforests, I am pleased to say the organisation is rising to these challenges and opportunities. Our team is growing, we are on a solid financial footing and we are expanding into new countries and territories.

We are hugely grateful to the many individuals and organisations who have given so generously over the last year and who continue to make this work possible in 2023 and beyond.

I would also like to pay special tribute to our network of committed and inspiring local and Indigenous partners who represent the future of tropical forest protection.

As ever, together we will be fighting the good fight.

Thank you for your all of support.

Joe Eisen
Executive Director

WHERE WE WORK



A FRESH NEW LOOK

We were incredibly excited to launch our brand new website at the end of 2022. We feel this revamped site really reflects what Rainforest Foundation UK are about, our mission, values and impact.

Please do take a look at rainforestfoundationuk.org



COMMUNITY FORESTS

Community Forests are a robust, fair and sustainable forest management solution that benefits both communities and forests. RFUK has played a leading role in the development of Community Forests, particularly in DRC where we have supported national-level implementation.

The momentum around this process is as strong as ever with over three million hectares in DR Congo now under the control of local communities – an area the size of Belgium. We remain highly vigilant on the whole process, from start to finish, to mitigate threats to communities’ rights and ensure success.



We feel stronger to defend our land. We have rejected the illegal incursion of a logging company on our territory, as well as a carbon company that wanted to force us to sign a completely abusive contract. Before we had our Community Forest we were used to working individually, but we have learnt to collaborate, to get organised to sell our products and we are happy with the results.”

Gustave Embele,
community leader from Ilinga in Équateur province

The theory:

Community Forests are a rights-based, sustainable and highly scalable model for protecting forests, which in turn bring improved local governance and livelihoods. One of our major priorities this year was to consolidate the general consensus around this idea.

How we put this into practice in 2022:

In DRC:

- We continued to support communities to map and secure legal rights to their forest home, to drive improvements in their livelihoods by connecting them with buyers for their produce and to enhance their forest protection activities
- We gained **international recognition** of Community Forests as a solution to the climate and biodiversity crises at COP27 and COP15
- We **strengthened national consensus** on Community Forest development, including through national and provincial roundtables and thematic working groups
- We **trained local, provincial and national government officials** on how to support and administer Community Forest processes
- We continued to **monitor threats to Community Forests**, supporting communities to successfully fight back against land grabs by loggers and ‘carbon cowboys’

2022 IN NUMBERS:



3,000,000

hectares of forest in DRC now under the control of local and indigenous communities, viewable on the **national community forest atlas** that RFUK’s co-manages



14

number of community forests directly supported by RFUK and our partners, covering nearly 120,000 hectares



6.5

metric tons of cocoa sold directly by community members to a buyer in Kinshasa at almost double the local price



10,000

Indigenous Bayaka and Bantu people benefitting across 24 communities in CAR

A look ahead to 2023:

- Develop a new national Community Forest strategy in DRC to guide and scale-up implementation across the country
- Explore synergies between Community Forests and the new Indigenous Peoples law in DRC
- Scale up mapping of community lands through MappingForRights to support the establishment of new community forests
- Further develop and test Community Forest enterprise models in target concessions
- Deploy our ForestLink real-time forest monitoring system to defend Community Forests against illegal logging, poaching and other threats

In the Central African Republic:

RFUK, CADD and other local partners continued to pilot and promote Community Forest approaches in CAR, achieving great results despite the many challenges the country faces with political instability, conflict and corruption.

Locally, farmer Field Schools supported local communities to **improve agricultural production techniques and access to markets**, benefitting nearly 10,000 Indigenous Bayaka and Bantu people across 24 communities. Nationally, we also pushed for greater recognition of Community Forests, advocating for its inclusion in the ongoing revision of the country’s 2008 Forest Code.



INDIGENOUS LIVELIHOODS IN PERU

Indigenous communities, such as the Asháninka we work with in Peru, are actively working to defend their territories. Through participatory processes, strong social organisation, and stable political representation, this is leading to healthier forests and livelihoods.

The theory:

Forests under the effective control of Indigenous and other local communities benefit more people, store more carbon and harbor more biodiversity.

How we put this into practice in 2022:

Together with our partners Central Asháninka de Río Ene (CARE) and Kemito Ene, we supported Asháninka communities in the Ene River basin to **vastly improve control over their ancestral territories** through the development of participatory land use plans.

The plans, which combine satellite imagery with community-generated data, **regulate the access, use and protection of 130,000 hectares of forests belonging to five communities**. These were developed with the strong participation of women and youth, and also reflect the needs of Indigenous families in the area living in voluntary isolation. Two of these communities, Quempiri and Yaviro, have already finalised their plans while the other three are due to be finalised by early 2023.

In parallel, the Asháninka have also **formed Indigenous Self-Defence Committees** to respond to land incursions and who have been trained to monitor the implementation and enforcement of the land use plans. This includes using ForestLink to monitor their livelihood activities, such as cocoa production, and thus promote better management and planning of crop activities. It also serves as a tool for Kemito Ene to have real-time information, and thus provide more effective support to farming families.

Producing crops such as environmentally-friendly cocoa generates a sustainable income for the Asháninka people. Our work with CARE and Kemito Ene empowers the Asháninka by building their capacities to manage their farming business efficiently, sustainably and autonomously, enhancing their income and overall wellbeing.

A look ahead to 2023:

As well as scaling up cocoa production, we aim to develop seven more land use plans to cover all of the Asháninka communities, and in each of these, establish groups of Indigenous self-defence committees to support the defence and control of these territories.

2022 IN NUMBERS:



5

number of Indigenous land use plans developed and recognized



130,000

number of hectares of Indigenous lands with a recognized land use plan



53

forest defenders in Peru trained in ForestLink



AID EFFECTIVENESS

Over the past year, we have worked more closely than ever with our sister organisations in the US and Norway to shape international commitments on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and other local communities including a breakthrough USD1.7 billion pledge made at COP26.

Drawing on more than 30 years' experience of working with local and indigenous groups in 16 tropical forest countries, we launched **'Realising the Pledge'** – a briefing for climate funders and policy makers on what it will take to ensure funding commitments reach the ground in a way that is truly transformational. The paper gives insights into how to strengthen the global funding architecture for forest communities, highlights key principles of working with Indigenous and local organisations so that they are able to receive an increasingly larger portion of these funds, and identifies the investments that are most likely to lead to tangible results for people, climate and biodiversity.

We built on this briefing with a further publication – **'Unlocking System-level Change in the Congo Basin'** – which identifies key needs and opportunities to advance the rights of forest communities in the region including through mapping, Community Forests and the new Indigenous Peoples law in DRC.

REAL-TIME MONITORING

Our community forest monitoring initiative unlocks the potential of forest guardians to protect their forests, connecting them with law enforcement agencies to improve detection and enforcement of illegal deforestation.

At the heart of this is 'ForestLink' - a breakthrough system that enables communities to transmit highly accurate and low-cost alerts of illegal forest activities and other crimes in real-time, even in remote areas with no connectivity.

The theory:

Equipped with the right tools and support, local communities are the most effective defenders of forests.

How we put this into practice in 2022:

RFUK with our partners in Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, DRC, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Ivory Coast and Peru launched a **first-of-its-kind webmap that includes thousands of illegal deforestation alerts** sent by local community monitors using the ForestLink system. This provides proof of their vital role in tackling illegal deforestation and is a model for how to improve transparency and accountability in forest governance from the ground up.

2022 also saw the **expansion of the highly versatile and low-cost ForestLink** to cover new territories and issues. In Peru, our partner FENAMAD supported the Indigenous community of Flor de Ucajali to monitor drug trafficking on its lands.

In **Kenya**, we launched a major new programme with the Kenya Land Alliance and TMG Research deploying the system to monitor women's tenure rights. The initiative will team up with frontline responders who do inspiring work supporting women's access to justice and gender equality, to tackle abuse, homelessness and poverty that women can suffer due to insecure tenure rights.

The project will also break down technological barriers to community monitoring and civic participation more generally by developing a simple text message interface for users who do not own smartphones. This could significantly amplify the reach of ForestLink not only in Kenya, but in all the countries where we work.

2022 IN NUMBERS:



868

number of illegal logging alerts received across Cameroon, DRC, Ghana and Peru



2

Two new counties in Kenya where ForestLink to be used to monitor and report on violations of women's land rights: Taita Taveta and Kakamega county

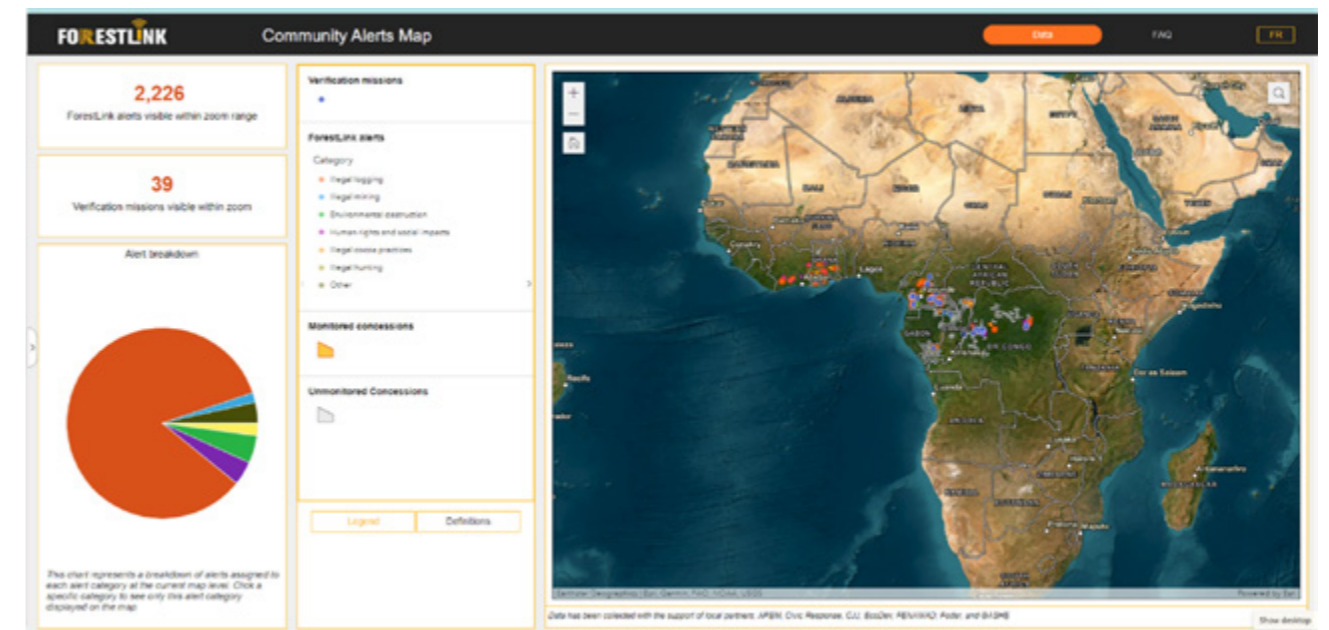


53

Number of new community monitors trained in Peru

A look ahead to 2023:

- A major new AFD-funded programme in the Republic of Congo that will deploy ForestLink to monitor human rights and provide legal support to forest communities
- Continued development of the system to enhance two-way communication between partners and communities and improve data flows to support advocacy and campaigning
- Expansion of the system to monitor threats from agribusiness, logging and the extractive industries



Visit the site at: forestlink.org



THE USE OF THE FORESTLINK TOOL HAS GIVEN PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES A RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO DEFEND THEIR LANDS. NOT ONLY DOES IT OFFER PROTECTION TO THE COMMUNITIES' WELLBEING, BUT IT ALSO REDUCES LEVELS OF DEFORESTATION IN THE AREAS WHERE IT IS USED, PROVEN BY ANALYSIS OF DATA BETWEEN 2002 AND 2020.

TACKLING THE DRIVERS OF DEFORESTATION

Building on our grassroots monitoring work, RFUK's high-impact research and international campaigning tackles the root causes of forest loss, challenges false solutions to these threats and promotes a human rights-centred approach to forest protection.

The theory:

Forest protection programmes do not sufficiently tackle industrial threats, and often wrongly target the broadly sustainable subsistence activities of local communities. Enabled by corrupt political systems, these industries are leading causes of climate change, biodiversity loss and poverty in rural areas.

How we put this into practice in 2022:

Reframing the debate around deforestation

Following extensive research and advocacy by RFUK, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) completed a major remote sensing study into the drivers of the deforestation in the Congo Basin. The study, supported by RFUK and other experts, confirms our long-held position that the underlying causes of forest loss are far more complex than previously thought, particularly concerning indirect impacts of industrial developments. The results should now inform future forest investments in the region.

Building on this study, RFUK developed and tested tools to ground-truth remote sensing data in pilot sites in Cameroon and DRC, which confirmed that logging, mining, commercial agriculture and infrastructure development, were the leading drivers of deforestation in these areas.

Tackling industrial logging

In DRC, following a major international campaign to stop a proposed lifting of the national logging moratorium, the government's Inspectorate of Finances called for the suspension of a dozen industrial logging concessions in the country, covering nearly two million hectares of forest. While this is a positive development, we estimate that this accounts for only a fraction of the total number of illegal concessions in the country. Efforts are ongoing to ensure the cancellation of all illegal concessions and to extend the moratorium.

2022 IN NUMBERS:



115,000

number of people who signed a petition against fossil fuel development in DRC



2,000,000

hectares of logging concessions the DRC committed to suspending, an area the size of Wales



6

number of communities who pilot-tested our drivers of deforestation tools in Cameroon and DRC

In Gabon, we supported the community of Massaha to stop industrial scale illegal logging on its ancestral lands and to get a commitment from the government to create the country's first community protected area.

Action on oil and gas threats

RFUK and our allies launched an international campaign in response to the DRC government's auction of 30 oil and gas blocks that threaten tens of millions of hectares of forests, community lands, several protected areas and the Cuvette Centrale peatlands – the largest terrestrial carbon sink on earth.

- We launched a joint petition with over 115,000 signatures that was delivered to President Tshisekedi
- We published 'Congo in the Crosshairs', a research collaboration with Earth InSight mapping out the social and environmental risks of fossil fuel expansion in the Congo, that was widely picked up in the international media

- We lobbied the international community on the plan that undermines DRC's image as a so-called 'solutions country' to the climate and biodiversity crises

A look ahead to 2023:

- Continuing our campaign against chaotic oil and gas development in the Congo Basin as well as the proposed lifting of the DRC national logging moratorium
- Upgrading our MappingForRights platform to highlight the direct and indirect risks to forests from poorly planned infrastructure development in the region
- Monitoring the increase in dubious carbon projects in tropical forests that fail to reduce deforestation while permitting polluting activities elsewhere



HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONSERVATION

RFUK's work is aimed at changing the conservation paradigm, bringing change at the local, national and international levels.

The theory:

A forest cannot be conserved if the fundamental rights of the very people that live there are eroded and abused. We are pushing for change in the way 'traditional' conservation is executed - moving away from the failed and rights-abusing 'fortress' model of a protected area, and ensuring that people are put front and centre of conservation policy and practice.

How we put this into practice in 2022

At the global level:

We brought global attention to flaws in a UN plan to place 30 percent of the planet under 'protected' status by 2030 ("30x30") that could have led to the displacement of millions of people least responsible for climate change and biodiversity loss whilst distracting from the real drivers of these crises such as overconsumption. Thanks to an international campaign, the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) adopted in Montreal in December contains **important provisions on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and other local communities**. Our focus is now to ensure that "strict" protected areas become the exception, and rights-based, community-led approaches the rule.

Our exposes, on the Salonga National Park in DRC specifically, have been pivotal in prompting a **progressive bipartisan bill on conservation and human rights in the US Congress**, now awaiting passage in the Senate. Our work also forced WWF to account for its human rights failings at a House Committee hearing, and has sparked wider changes in the US Appropriations framework.

2022 IN NUMBERS:



30%

The percentage of the national territory the DRC government committed to protecting by 2030 via community forests and other rights-based approaches rather than strictly protected areas



1

New draft law in the US Congress on strengthening human rights provisions in conservation projects



2

Community forests established in the buffer of Lomami National Park, setting a major precedent for other community-based conservation areas to be established around protected areas

In DRC:

With our support, our partner APEM has continued leading national-level advocacy efforts to push for positive change in DRC. A key focus has been advising on and contributing to the **draft national guidelines for the establishment of grievance mechanisms around protected areas** across the country. This is a key step towards accountability and redress for the harms caused by coercive conservation.

Following the historic sentencing of five park rangers for their involvement in an egregious gang rape case against women living around Salonga National park, RFUK and APEM also kept up lobbying and legal efforts to **support the survivors**. RFUK is also working alongside local partners GeoFirst and APEM to address issues between the managers of Lomami National Park and local communities, who lost part of their traditional territories when the park was created in 2016, and have been largely excluded from the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

A major breakthrough in 2022 was also achieved with the **award of two community forests in the "buffer zone" of Lomami National Park**, paving the way for other communities across the country to claim control over their lands and sustainably manage their resources around protected areas. A key focus of our wider community forest programme is to show that handing communities control over their lands and resources is the best way to achieve sustainable conservation outcomes while also improving local livelihoods.

A look ahead to 2023:

With the GBF now in force, we will work to **ensure that the implementation of 30x30 does not lead to more displacements and hardships for local and indigenous communities**. This means advocating for strong protections for communities living in and around existing and future protected areas, but also actively supporting alternative forms of conservation that are genuinely led by communities. Prospects on this are good in DRC, where the government has committed to pursuing the 30x30 target solely through community forests and other rights-based models.

We will also push for **accountability and redress** for the now widely acknowledged human rights abuses linked to conservation programmes across the region. One of our key objectives is to ensure that communities neighbouring parks have **access to credible and effective grievance mechanisms** and obtain reparation for harms endured. We will also continue pushing conservation actors to adopt **robust protections and oversight mechanisms** to avoid future abuses.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY 2021

Income and endowments

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds 2021	Prior period total funds 2020
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	280,370	-	280,370	302,764
Events & other income	17,349	-	17,349	18,367
Investments	49	-	49	287
Charitable activities	-	1,745,281	1,745,281	1,619,799
Total income and endowments	<u>297,768</u>	<u>1,745,281</u>	<u>2,043,049</u>	<u>1,941,217</u>

Resources expended

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds 2021	Prior period total funds 2020
	£	£	£	£
Raising funds	37,126	7,000	44,126	32,202
Charitable activities	151,700	1,790,631	1,942,331	1,787,197
Other	23,838	5,000	28,838	25,417
Total expenditure	<u>212,664</u>	<u>1,802,631</u>	<u>2,015,295</u>	<u>1,844,816</u>

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds 2021	Prior period total funds 2020
	£	£	£	£
Net income	85,104	(57,350)	27,754	96,401
Other gains/(losses)	5,996	-	5,996	1,095
Transfer between funds	(3,834)	3,834	-	-
Net movement in funds	87,266	(53,516)	33,750	97,496
Total funds brought forward	195,007	344,762	539,769	442,273
Total funds carried forward	<u>282,273</u>	<u>291,246</u>	<u>573,519</u>	<u>539,769</u>

Balance Sheet

Balance sheet as of 31st December 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	3,034	7,514
Investments	-	2
Current assets		
Debtors – due within one year	243,891	80,394
Cash at bank and in hand	564,463	740,500
Current liabilities		
Creditors – due within one year	(77,869)	(88,641)
Creditors – falling due after one year	160,000	200,000
Total net assets	573,519	539,769
Reserves		
Unrestricted	282,273	195,007
Restricted	291,246	344,762
Total charity funds	573,519	539,769



THANK YOU!

Institutional donors, trusts and foundations:

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Anna Guyer

Thanks to the many hundreds of supporters who give regularly, as one-off donations or who so kindly gave to our appeals.

The Rainforest Foundation UK

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