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<td>Thank you</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our mission is to support Indigenous peoples and other communities of the world’s rainforests in their efforts to protect their environments and fulfil their rights to land, life and livelihood.
DIRECTOR’S FOREWORD

Dear friends,

I am pleased to share with you RFUK’s 2023 annual review of our main achievements and impact for the world’s tropical forests and the people that call them home.

This year marks 35 years since the Rainforest Foundation was founded on a simple but profound idea: if we want to protect the world’s tropical rainforests, we should entrust them to the people that live and depend on those forests. While many environmental organisations have been only recently subscribed to this idea, RFUK and our frontline partners have developed decades of experience and technical expertise in supporting rainforest communities to secure, manage and protect their forests. The theme of this year’s annual review therefore focuses on our blueprint for forest protection.

The first element of this is promoting the land security of Indigenous Peoples and other local communities as the foundation of forest protection, so that they can better defend these areas and invest in their futures. As you will see, we made important progress this year in promoting community forests in DR Congo, both on the ground and at the wider policy level.

Once land tenure is secured, the next step is to assist communities to plan and manage these areas for their well-being and that of future generations. Below you will hear about our pioneering participatory land-use planning programme in DR Congo and Peru, and how we are supporting vibrant and sustainable rainforest economies in these countries.

The third pillar of our strategy involves supporting communities to actively defend their forests by deploying simple, low-cost technologies to monitor and counter forest crime, and through research and campaigns that address the root causes of deforestation. This approach yielded impressive results this year including the suspension of illegal logging concessions in Cameroon, the destruction of millions of dollars of illegal mining equipment in Peru and halting extractive industry expansion in the DR Congo.

Amid growing pressures on forests, we firmly believe that this approach is a blueprint for fair and effective forest protection globally.

That we are able to keep on pushing boundaries is only thanks to our incredibly loyal and generous supporters. With your support, the organisation is in good health and is rising to the challenge of protecting these critical areas.

Thank you and onwards.

Joe Eisen
Executive Director

OUR BLUEPRINT FOR FOREST PROTECTION

Land Tenure
- Participatory mapping
- Securing lands

Forest Management
- Participatory land use planning
- Sustainable livelihoods

Forest Protection
- Forest monitoring
- Research, advocacy and campaigns

An empowered civil society and Indigenous movement
An enabling policy, institutional and business environment
Strong community governance
LAND AND LIVELIHOODS

The evidence now firmly supports Rainforest Foundation’s founding principle; that Indigenous and community stewardship is the most effective and just way to protect tropical forests. Our Land and Livelihoods programme makes this happen by putting otherwise ‘invisible’ communities on the map through our MappingForRights initiative, by pushing for laws and policy that protect forests and their inhabitants, and by aiding communities to sustainably manage these areas and develop vibrant rainforest economies.

Securing lands in the DRC through community forests

In the Congo Basin, community forests offer the most effective pathway to securing tenure rights and therefore community-led forest protection. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), home to the world’s second largest rainforest, RFUK and our local partners have been at the forefront of community forest development in the country; from pushing for an innovative legal framework, to supporting national reforms and institutions, to pioneering livelihood programmes with forest peoples.

In 2023, RFUK and our local partner GeoFirst supported the establishment of two new community forests covering over 4,600 hectares in the buffer zone of the Lomami National Park. Not only does this mean that the communities have secured rights to forests they have inhabited and protected for generations, it paves the way for other community forests to be established around the country’s other protected areas, showing how they can contribute to wider biodiversity conservation efforts. This makes 17 new community forests in DRC directly supported by RFUK.

Our work is aimed at supporting the community forests we work with to flourish, but also to create the enabling conditions for community forests to succeed more widely through capacity-building, policy advocacy and convening. In 2023, with our partner CAGDFT we continued to support community forest roundtables that brought together local communities, civil society, government, the private sector and the research community from across the country to build consensus, learning and best practices. The year also marked the end of the first national community forest strategy that has guided its development over the past 5 years with attention now turning to a new roadmap for scaling up over the next decade.

THE DRC COMMUNITY FOREST DATABASE

The national community forest database (CFDB) that we co-manage with our partner APEM and the DRC Ministry of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism plays an indispensable role in supporting and keeping track of community forest developments across this vast country, functioning as a centralised repository of detailed information on the location, management and characteristics of each concession.

Together with APEM, we provided ongoing technical support, mentoring and capacity-building to the Ministry and local administrations in forest areas, empowering them to more independently manage the platform and address data gaps.

COMMUNITY FOREST IN NUMBERS

17
Number of community forests directly supported by RFUK and partners, covering 150,000 hectares - an area the size of Greater London.

186
Number of granted community forests in the DRC.

4,138,097
Number of hectares under community forest management or in the application stage in DRC - an area twice the size of Wales.
Participatory land use planning in Peru and DRC

While mapping and legal recognition provides forest communities with tenure security, our land-use planning work is aimed at supporting them to sustainably manage these areas. Through a participatory methodology developed with our partners, communities combine their cultural knowledge with analysis of satellite and other remote sensing data to determine areas suitable for conservation activities, cultural practices and sustainable development activities, along with rules governing the use and access of these areas. This has proven to be a highly effective model, with communities devoting the vast majority of their lands to the preservation of nature for future generations.

In DRC, RFUK supported a further 3 community forest simple management plans that were approved by the government. One of these in North-Kivu, supported by our partners Reseau CREF and PREPPYG, covered almost 30,000 hectares: a vast forest territory including Indigenous Wambuti groups.

Sustaining livelihoods in Peru, DRC and CAR

Secure tenure and land use plans are key to communities’ self-determination, giving them the confidence to invest in their futures. Our livelihoods programme aims at fostering green, self-sustaining economies in rural areas, supporting grassroots expertise and associations and connecting communities with local, national and international markets.

In Peru, the thriving Kemito Ene cooperative, an award-winning model of Indigenous-led enterprise in the Amazon, continued to go from strength to strength. Since 2021, it has embarked on an ambitious action plan to enhance its organisational capacity and improve cocoa production through agroforestry systems. The collaboration has since provided technical assistance to 200 families, helping farmers improve how they grow and sell cocoa. Activities this year included the provision of better tools and fertilisers, the construction of a new cocoa collection centre and participation in international trade fairs to find buyers for their high-quality produce.

All this resulted in the remarkable yield of 740 kg of cacao per hectare, representing a 74% increase on the project baseline, as well as an incredible 702% increase in cocoa sales for the 2024 harvest. Not only did this initiative boost the livelihoods of the Asháninka people, it has also showcased the climate benefits of these agroforestry systems, with cocoa fields storing an average of 50 tonnes of carbon per hectare annually while also reducing pressures on forests.

In DRC, alongside our partner GASHE we supported several community forests to enhance their own forest-friendly cacao production through training in improved cultivation, collection and processing techniques, resulting in higher-quality cocoa beans, better market prices and increased profits for the communities. The success story in Ilebo, Equateur province, is particularly noteworthy, where farmers sold 6,500 kg of cocoa in Kinshasa for almost double the usual price. We also piloted a community entrepreneurship model, empowering 30 new producer groups (Mutuelles de Solidarité – MUSOs) to access savings and loans, and improve storage and selling facilities.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), around 6,000 Indigenous Bayaka and Bantu people across 14 communities benefited from agricultural training and support from our partner CADD.

LAND USE PLANNING IN NUMBERS

150,000

number of hectares of Asháninka lands now with land use plans, enhancing sustainable management of these areas.

9

RFUK-supported community forests with approved land-use plans in DRC.

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN NUMBERS

30

number of producer groups in the DRC established with the support of our programme.

702

percentage increase in cocoa sales for Kemito Ene Cooperative.

200

number of hectares of cocoa farms into agroforestry systems in the Ene.
MONITORING AND RIGHTS

Whereas our Land and Livelihoods programme lays the foundations for community-based forest management, our Monitoring and Rights work empowers environmental and human rights defenders to monitor and defend their forests and rights, to increase civic participation by bridging the gap between remote communities and decision-making processes, and by addressing the underlying and structural causes of forest loss.

ForestLink impacts in Cameroon, DRC, Kenya, Peru and the Republic of Congo

Our community forest monitoring initiative unlocks the potential of forest guardians to protect their forests and rights. At the heart of this is ForestLink, a breakthrough system that enables communities to transmit real-time, highly accurate and low-cost alerts of forest crime and rights abuses, and to connect with law enforcement agencies and other forms of remedy.

In Peru, where Indigenous Peoples have long served as the primary protectors of the country’s forests, our partner FENAMAD deployed ForestLink to bolster protection of forests in the biodiverse Madre de Dios region. This, together with the provision of legal support for the communities to follow up on the alerts, has proven crucial in the face of rampant illegal logging and mining, resulting in the identification and destruction of illegal camps and equipment worth millions of dollars. The community forest monitors also gained official recognition from the government, making them more secure and effective in their fearless work.

This demonstrates the vital role of grassroots, Indigenous-led monitoring in combating environmental crime. Read FENAMAD and RFUK’s new publication about how communities are harnessing technology and why this is a model that should be replicated across the Amazon and beyond.

Watch video
In Cameroon, communities used ForestLink to great effect in the dense forests of the Yoko district in the Mbam-et-Kim region. With the training and support of our partner Ecodev, community monitors sent alerts of infractions by two logging companies, prompting an investigation by the Standardised Independent External Monitoring System (SNOIE) network that ultimately led to the suspension of their permits.

These successes have inspired and empowered other communities elsewhere in the area to take up forest monitoring, resulting in the highest number of ForestLink alerts sent in recent years. Notably, follow-up investigations by SNOIE led to the suspension of logging activities by a third company in the Ngambé-Tikar district.

In Kenya an adapted version of ForestLink, Haki Ardhi, is being deployed by women to report on land rights violations in the Taita Taveta and Kakamega counties. Through our partnership with Kenya Land Alliance (KLA) and TMG Think Tank, women’s groups are now trained and able to report these abuses seek access to justice.

“I am so happy that grassroots women will finally be involved in data collection on land rights”

Violet Shivutse. Shibuye community health worker, Kenya

In the Republic of Congo, RFUK and our partner CJJ launched an exciting new project that will support communities in the Lekoumou, Likouala and Sangha regions to deploy ForestLink to monitor human rights violations linked to the natural resource exploitation and receive legal support, particularly for women and Indigenous Peoples.

In DRC, 41 community observers were trained by our partner GASHE in the use of ForestLink to monitor and defend their community forests from illegal encroachment. So far, this has led to the thwarting of a timber company planning to log one of these areas. This builds on the previous achievements of the system which led to the first ever prosecution of a timber company under the DRC Forest Code.

MONITORING AND RIGHTS IN NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Number of illegal logging concessions cancelled in Cameroon following ForestLink alerts sent by community monitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.6 million</td>
<td>Estimated value in US$ of machinery used for illegal mining in Peru that has been destroyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Number of forest monitors across nine communities in Peru have been trained in the use of ForestLink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESEARCH ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS

An integral part of what we do at RFUK is our impactful research and campaigns against looming industrial threats to tropical forests and their communities as well as the false solutions to these threats that penalise those least responsible for the ecological crisis. Through this work, we seek to amplify the voices local communities and grassroots organisations in national and international climate and biodiversity processes and promote a vision of forest protection that places local communities at its core.

Tackling oil and gas threats in DRC

Following the DRC government’s decision in July 2022 to auction 30 oil and gas blocks, RFUK and our local partners have been at the vanguard of efforts to tackle the threat this poses to millions of hectares of intact tropical forests, the carbon-rich peatlands, more than a dozen protected areas and the ancestral lands of thousands of communities.

Working with diverse coalitions of Congolese and international actors, we amplified the voices of affected local communities and organised joint statements, press conferences and information campaigns for national and international audiences to powerful effect. While the auction is still ongoing and threat remains, we can report that there is now limited interest in many of the blocks.

We cannot remain in the same logic of development where we promise change through natural resource exploitation and which is ultimately followed by greater misfortune for the Congolese people, who experience biodiversity loss and poverty. If our forests are still standing it is because the people who live therein are their best custodians.”

Bernard Adebu, APEM.

Exposing exploitative offsetting projects

While tackling threats from hydrocarbons, logging and other industries, RFUK and our partners have also worked to address the sharp rise in exploitative carbon offset projects in tropical forests that threaten communities and serve to delay necessary climate action in the Global North.

Locally, we supported local communities in the face of such projects while at the international level we continued to shape the debate around climate finance. In July 2023, RFUK published a first-of-its-kind comparative analysis of the world-leading forest offsetting and REDD+ schemes that used by some of the world’s biggest polluters. This powerful research found they are failing forests, people and the climate by allowing millions of credits to be generated that simply do not represent real emissions reductions. This work has galvanised many in the environmental movement to push for non-market approaches to forest protection that goes more directly to frontline communities and organisations.
The Rainforest Foundation UK Annual Review 2023

Sustainable conservation and human rights

Our work exposing the human costs of the ‘fortress conservation’ model that prevails across much of Africa and elsewhere has helped to transform international discourse around biodiversity conservation and human rights, with many of the main conservation funders and organisations now committing to major reforms on this issue in recent years. Our Sustainable Conservation and Human Rights campaign aims at ensuring these paper commitments translate into tangible changes in tropical forests by promoting rights-based models and greater accountability of conservation actors to local communities.

Following the signing of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that will set the stage for global conservation efforts over the decade, our attention has now turned to ensuring that its headline goal of protecting 30 percent of the planet by 2030 promotes rather than undermines the rights of Indigenous Peoples and other local communities who live in these vital ecosystems. We are now working with local partners to ensure that national biodiversity action plans contain meaningful provisions and safeguards in this regard.

We also continued efforts to expose human rights abuses that are still prevalent in many of the region’s protected areas. In the Republic of Congo, for example, RFUK and our partner CAD supported local communities to respond to alleged violations by rangers of the Ntokou Pikounda National Park, where a fact-finding mission confirmed a failure of the park’s management procedures.

2023 also saw a notable development in the DRC where the national protected areas agency ICCN published guidelines on human rights and grievance mechanisms following inputs from RFUK and our partners APEM and GeoFirst. While there is a long way to go, this is a step in the right direction towards greater accountability and justice in the protection of biodiversity in the country.

Community rights and the Lomami National Park

In 2023, we focused on bolstering community rights in the buffer zone of Lomami National Park in the DRC. Together with GeoFirst and APEM, we facilitated the creation of two new Community Forests, supported the development of Simple Management Plans (SMPs) for these areas - vital tools for community-led conservation efforts in the buffer zone of the park. We also advocated for a fair and effective grievance mechanism for the park itself following several reported incidents there.

At the national level, we advocated for the integration of Indigenous Peoples’ rights into Congolese Conservation Law to ensure their meaningful participation in national conservation efforts.

RESEARCH, ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS IN NUMBERS

30
Oil and gas blocks auctioned that the DRC government is struggling to find buyers for.

70,000,000
Hectares of intact forest kept out of timber industry hands thanks to a national moratorium on new logging concessions.

72
Indigenous, environmental and human rights organisations from the Congo Basin, Latin America and South-East Asia that signed the Three Basin Summit Statement on halting extractive industry developments in tropical forests.

22
Congolese organisations that called on the DRC government to withdraw its hydrocarbons development plans at COP28.
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024 (AND BEYOND)

Land and Livelihoods
We will:
- Reach our goal of directly supporting the establishment 20 community forests in the DRC by September 2025, covering at least 200,000 hectares.
- Push for policy and legal reforms that promote community forests including through a new road map and the harmonisation with the new Indigenous Peoples law and other land and sector reform processes.
- Sustain and expand support for community-led livelihood development in Peru, the DRC and the CAR.
- Launch an upgraded MappingForRights initiative including new mapping tools and a user interface to guide an expansion of participatory mapping in the Congo Basin.
- Enhance Impact Monitoring of community forests and Indigenous-held lands, demonstrating their climate, biodiversity and livelihood benefits.

Monitoring and Rights
We will:
- Roll out a new version of the ForestLink system that simplifies data collection and management in order to bring easier redress to communities and support wider advocacy.
- Deploy ForestLink in the DRC, the RoC and Cameroon to monitor oil, logging, extractives and agribusiness developments.
- Strengthen the use of Haki Ardhi for documentation and policy advocacy in relation to women’s land rights in Kenya.
- Invest in monitoring systems, legal consolidation of territories and strengthening Indigenous organisations in Peru.

Research, Advocacy and Campaigns Outlook
We will:
- Ramp up action against harmful plans of extractive and logging industries as well as poorly planned infrastructure projects that serve them.
- Implement a Climate Justice strategy that aims to empower local communities to understand and exercise their rights in relation to offset projects, demonstrate the extent of land grabbing and other problems caused by such companies and push for a new funding architecture for forests and the just energy transition.
- Implement a sustainable conservation and human rights strategy that seeks to promote rights-based models, justice for survivors of conservation-related abuses and greater accountability of policy makers and funders to local communities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY 2022

Income and endowments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>Total funds 2022</th>
<th>Prior period total funds 2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations &amp; legacies</td>
<td>423,574</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>423,574</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events &amp; other income</td>
<td>17,323</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17,323</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>2,251</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,559,920</td>
<td>2,559,920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income and endowments</td>
<td>443,148</td>
<td>2,559,920</td>
<td>3,003,068</td>
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Resources expended

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<tr>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>Total funds 2022</th>
<th>Prior period total funds 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising funds</td>
<td>51,008</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>63,008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charitable activities</td>
<td>206,794</td>
<td>2,162,719</td>
<td>2,369,513</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>50,870</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>57,870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>308,672</td>
<td>2,181,719</td>
<td>2,490,391</td>
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**BALANCE SHEET**

**Balance sheet as of 31st December 2022**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed assets</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangible assets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors – due within one year</td>
<td>380,136</td>
<td>243,891</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>901,383</td>
<td>564,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors – due within one year</td>
<td>(77,014)</td>
<td>(77,869)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors – falling due after one year</td>
<td>(120,000)</td>
<td>(160,000)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td>1,086,304</td>
<td>573,519</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reserves</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>416,857</td>
<td>282,273</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>669,447</td>
<td>291,246</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total charity funds</strong></td>
<td>1,086,304</td>
<td>573,519</td>
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</table>

**THANK YOU**

The Big Give
Montpelier Foundation
Earth Insight, a project of the Resources Legacy Fund
Partnerships for Forests (P4F), a Palladium International Limited Programme
AFD - Agence Française de Développement
Arcus Foundation
Langdale Trust
Ticket Tailor
NORAD - Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Otter Fonds
Rainforest Fund
The Samworth Foundation
Size of Wales
Spears-Stutz Charitable Trust
Synchronicity Earth
The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust
Helen and Michael Brown Charitable Trust
The Oakdale Trust

The Rhododendron Trust
The Swire Charitable Trust
The Waterloo Foundation
Ticket Tailor
Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund
TMG Research GmbH
Turing Foundation
USAID - US Agency for International Development
Impact Fund
Mr Ben Eyre
Alexander Maass
Dr Elizabeth Baldwin
Mr John M West
Aram Matthew
Miss Ariel Korstrom
Miss Kelly Mossman
Michele Martin