

About ICFC

Global action on biodiversity loss and climate change

Who we are

The International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) was founded in 2007 to enable Canadians to support conservation in the tropics and other priority areas in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

The Need

Tropical nature has astonishing biodiversity—the Amazon alone is home to 7,000 tree species (vs. 180 species indigenous to Canada) and a single rainforest reserve in Peru has more bird species than the entire United States. Tropical forests are crucial for addressing climate change, and they generate rainfall and supply water for agriculture and other human needs. Coastal ecosystems prevent storm damage and are vital to fisheries. Canada's migratory species depend on tropical wintering areas. Yet tropical ecosystems are being lost and degraded (95% of deforestation is happening in the tropics).

Our Work

ICFC finds opportunities for outstanding conservation returns and partners with capable local conservation organizations. Our field partners know best what needs doing and how to go about it. They excel at engaging local communities and government relations. Our work is science based, and the collective experience of our staff adds value.

The Opportunity

ICFC has the capacity to quickly expand its work to take advantage of excellent opportunities in the more than 30 countries in which we work.

Achievements

In one of the world's most important conservation efforts, ICFC works with the Kayapo Indigenous people to protect an area of the Brazilian Amazon larger than almost half the world's countries. We conserve large (hundreds/thousands of km²) protected areas in priority areas and have acquired land for more than a dozen private reserves of high conservation value. In Cambodia we have shown that marine protected areas can restore fisheries and the marine ecosystem. We have been instrumental in securing a future for several endangered species; our projects protect hundreds of officially threatened species; and we're safeguarding important wintering sites of Canada's shorebirds.

Awards and recognition

ICFC was the top ranked conservation charity in Canada in the *Financial Post's* 2017 charity ratings (the last done by FP); is rated five out of five stars by Charity Intelligence Canada; and was a winner of the Canadian Museum of Nature's 2020 Nature Inspiration Awards. Our Mali Elephant Project was awarded the prestigious Equator Prize in 2017 by the United Nations. Our project in Cambodia received the National Geographic Society's Marine Protection Prize and is a Mission Blue "Hope Spot". Project field personnel have received the Disney Conservation Hero Award, the Whitley Award (two individuals), and the Indianapolis Prize.

Please join us!

With your help, we can do more. Because ICFC's administrative and fundraising costs are covered by a core group of donors, **100% of your support is applied to projects.** [[Donate now](#) | [ICFC website](#)]

Contact

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Message from ICFC's founder

It is now fifteen years since Tom and I took the plunge and started ICFC. There has not been a dull moment since. But perhaps it's time to pause and reflect.

Our aim was to provide a way for Canadians—including us—to support conservation in the areas of the world where nature is most threatened. We knew we didn't want to take the path of large international conservation organizations that open country offices and manage from afar. We knew there were some good local conservation groups that we could partner with to carry out conservation work.

What have we learned since?

That there are *many* local conservation groups, some better than others. That they are often run by exceptionally dedicated, smart people who know their local patch of nature well and are embedded in the local society. That all they lacked was funding, which is hard to come by in developing countries.

We learned that there are many ways to achieve conservation gains depending on the specific threats to nature and on the local social and biogeographic elements. Early on we thought ICFC should leave education and research to others and focus only on direct conservation action. That is still the main focus, but we have learned how effective education and public outreach can be and that biological monitoring and data collection are things reserve guards and civil society will happily take on, yielding more science that informs conservation work. We already knew that Indigenous people were willing partners in conservation and that understanding has deepened.

A striking observation has been that local communities in the areas where we work are more attuned to nature than North Americans are. They understand its benefits and are keen to learn more and to be involved. So, we have a sense of comradeship that extends beyond our local partner organizations to the local communities we work with.

That has been inspiring and gratifying, but so have two other very important things: seeing the difference our projects have made and *having all of you join us in support of this work.*

It is exhilarating to know how much potential is out there. Let's see what more we can accomplish in the decade to come!

- Anne Lambert, May 2022



ICFC founders Tom Welch and Anne Lambert