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van der Linden

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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 this has been borne out.

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!

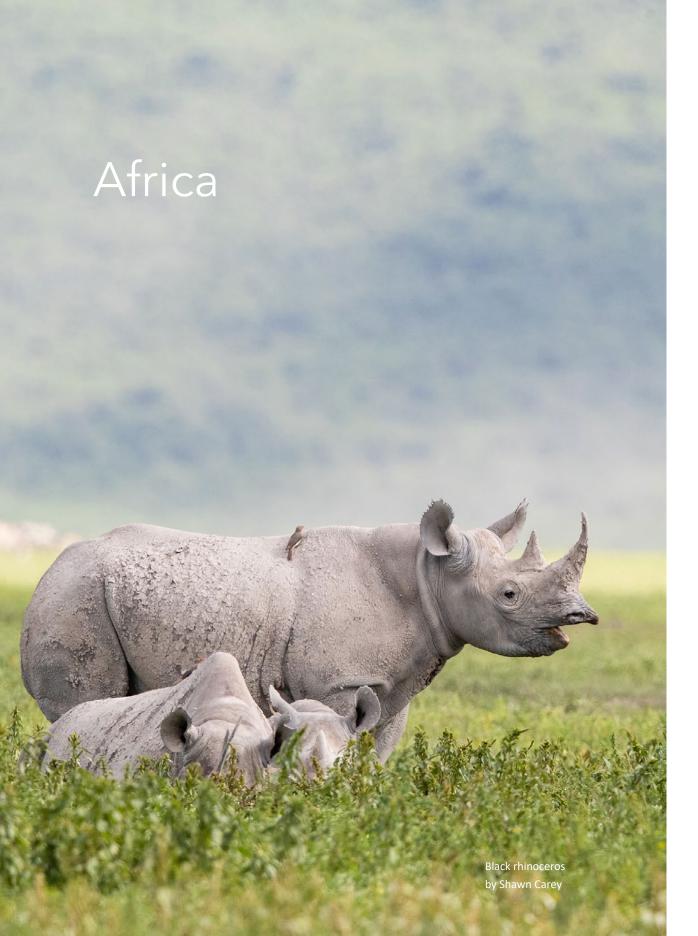
Anne Lambert, May 2022



ICFC founders Tom Welch and Anne Lambert

About ICFC

ICFC conserves nature in the tropics where biodiversity abounds and is most under threat. With our small team and dedicated field partners we are achieving lasting conservation gains and large co-benefits for climate and local communities.



New

Madagascar: Protection of the Rabondro Reserve

Conservation need

ICFC is helping a new group that has assumed management of what had been an ill-managed "paper park", but which still contains a sizeable portion of primary forest. The 3,000-ha Rabondro Reserve is in the Antongil Bay area, a region that represents 2% of Madagascar's total surface area but contains 50% of Madagascar's biodiversity. Its proximity to two large parks—Makira Natural Park and Masoala National Park—adds to its importance. The region has more than half of Madagascar's iconic lemur species and is home to many threatened species. The main threats to the reserve are the growing demand for land for subsistence farming from surrounding communities, illegal logging for charcoal and precious woods, some artisanal mining, and poaching.

What we're doing

ICFC's partner Fandroakando is working with local village associations (VOIs) to educate and involve local communities in the management of the reserve, including forest restoration of a 10-km² area.

Above: Red-ruffed lemur. Photo: Nick Athanas Below: Panther cameleon, Rabondro reserve.

Photo: Toto Jean Claret



2021 Highlights

In 2021, forest patrols conducted by five full-time rangers led to the complete elimination of illegal activities within the reserve. The reserve boundary was delineated with signs posted every 500 m. VOI membership has been growing and community engagement is clearly bringing results. A total of 85,000 native tree seedlings were planted to reforest 42.5 hectares in the reserve. This work brought employment to more than a hundred people from surrounding communities.

Size of area: 3,000 hectares
Field partner: Fandroakando NGO

2021: \$119,189





New

Kenya: Harrison's long-eared giant mastiff bats of Mt. Suswa

Conservation need

Harrison's large-eared giant mastiff bat (*Otomops harrisoni*) was described as a new species in 2015 and has been found in two locations in Kenya. One is Mount Suswa (2,356 meters), an iconic shield volcano, where the bats are threatened by disturbances from uncontrolled access to the caves. Conservation of this species will benefit other cave-dwelling fauna and species such as zebra, giraffe, mongoose, turtle, hyena, and leopard.

What we're doing

Some people love bats. Our project coordinator, biologist David Wechuli, is one such person. David leads an effort at Mount Suswa that includes the community organization Angaza Vijiji, Mount Suswa Conservancy, Maasai Mara University and the IUCN Bat Specialist Group. The team is investigating the bats' population status and how they use the Mount Suswa caves in order to improve management of the cave system while promoting sustainable ecotourism and roost protection.

The project got underway at the end of 2021 and will engage communities in the protection and restoration of 5,000 hectares of forest that serves as foraging habitat for bats and for other species.

Size of area: 5,000 hectares
Field partner: Angaza Vijiji



Above: Entrance to a lava tube cave on Mt. Suswa. Photo: Jackson Shonko

Left: Harrison's large-eared giant mastiff bat is insectivorous, feeding primarily on moths.

Photo: Paul Webala



New

Kenya: Maasai owned and protected Vulture Sanctuary

Conservation need

The world's vultures are in trouble. Chemicals used to poison predators or treat livestock are causing the death of vultures that feed on dead sheep and goats. One of the most endangered, Rüppell's vulture, nests in Kwenia on the cliffs of the Rift Valley.

What we're doing

The aim of this project, launched in August 2021, is to work with Maasai landowners to establish a protected Kwenia Vulture Sanctuary of 3,671 hectares along a 6-kilometer stretch of cliff habitat favored by endangered breeding vultures, eagles and falcons. The agreed list of restricted activities in the Sanctuary is impressive: no tree-cutting or charcoaling, no poisoning of any kind, no wind farm development, no throwing of rocks over cliffs, no shooting, no hunting or poaching, no loud music, no burning of grass or bush, and no access of visitors without prior approval or payment. All visitors must be accompanied by an approved Raptor Guardian.

Above: Maasai field lead Robert Kaai surveying Kenya's first ever vulture sanctuary. Photo: Kenya Birds of Prey Trust

Right: The critically endangered Rüppell's vulture. Photo: Lip Kee

2021 Highlights

Initial efforts have been so successful that they have recently helped spark the creation of the Southern Rift Valley Raptor Conservation Area of 270,000 hectares! The establishment of the Kwenia Vulture Sanctuary in the heart of the new Raptor Conservation Area has brought wider awareness to local landowners that raptors serve as key biodiversity indicators in this stunning landscape.

Size of area: 3,671 hectares

Field partner: The Kenya Bird of Prey Trust





Above: Grauer's gorilla (aka eastern lowland gorilla) is a beneficiary of community managed forests in the DRC. Photo: Matt Brunette

Below: Gorilla mother and son.

Photo: Mike Davison

Democratic Republic of Congo: Conserving community forests for Grauer's gorilla

Forestry Concessions for Local Communities (CFCLs) empower local communities to control and sustainably manage their forests. ICFC has been joined by others—Rainforest Trust, Erol Foundation and Good Energies Foundation—to establish CFCLs across a 3,000-km² ecological corridor connecting Itombwe Natural Reserve to Kahuzi-Biega National Park—an area important for gorillas and other wildlife. To date, 15 CFCL applications have been submitted to the provincial government of South Kivu for titling of 310,398 hectares. This followed community consultations, participatory mapping of each CFCL, training of local cartographers, and guidance for local leaders in forest governance and management. A rightsbased management plan of Bantu and Batwa communities is in development.

Size of area: 112,300 hectares (ICFC portion)
Field partner: Strong Roots — see page 45

Since 2020: \$527,434

Malawi: Community fish management works!

Community members continue to protect dozens of sensitive fish breeding sites in Salima and Dedza districts by reducing the disastrous use of fine-meshed mosquito nets as dragnets. Beach Village Committees (numbering 119) are helping direct local fishery management. To ensure a high standard of management, three ill-performing Beach Village Committees were dissolved and subsequently reconstituted. A highlight of 2021 was the creation of Salima's District Fisheries Management Plan which will enable the Director of Fisheries to give legal ownership of the fish in the lake to the local fishing communities. ICFC also supported the purchase of a boat and lifejackets for Salima District Fisheries which they needed to work with the Parks and Wildlife team at the Maleri Islands, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Size of area: 22,000 hectares
Field partner: Ripple Africa
Since 2019: \$295,259



Above: Recovery of fish stocks is an impetus for ongoing efforts to empower communities for sustainable fisheries management.

Below: Early morning harvest of Usipa (Engraulicypris sardella) on the beaches of Salima District. Photos: Ripple Africa







Kenya: Conservation of elephants and other wildlife in Laikipia

In 2021, drought and overstocking of cattle resulted in the degradation of community grazing lands near Laikipia Nature Conservancy (LNC). Large numbers of cattle from Baringo, Isiolo, and Samburu counties have moved into Laikipia. To alleviate the pressure, LNC gave temporary grazing rights for 1,500 head of cattle to their neighbours. In more positive news, cheetahs have been sighted on the Conservancy for the first time in over a decade.

The lead-up to 2022 national elections has strained relationships in the area with the result that much of the work on sustainable enterprises was put on hold. To address the tensions, the new Laikipia Wilderness Education center piloted "unity" courses for youth with the goal of fostering cohesion and leadership in the region. The Land of Hope community center and preschool, which reopened its doors in August to 40 children, has remained an anchor of stability and support to communities in the Ngare Narok area.

Size of area: 36,500 hectares

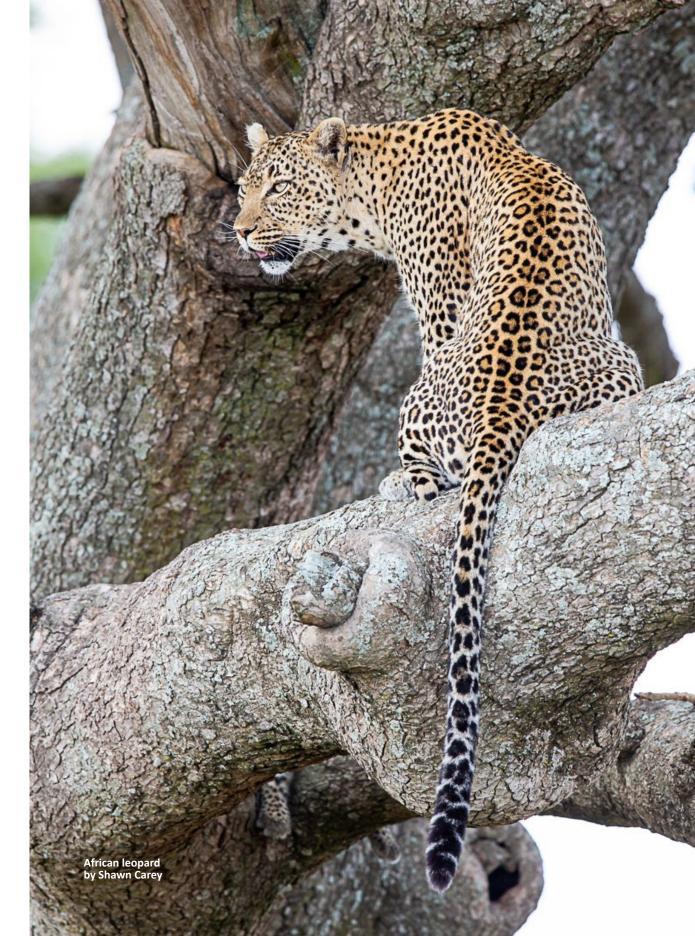
Field partner: Gallmann Memorial Foundation

Since 2017: \$699,672

Education program (funded thanks to the Paul W. O'Leary Foundation), takes in the view of this wild, rugged landscape on the edge of the Rift Valley.

Below: A participant in the new Wilderness







White rhinoceros. About a quarter of all rhinos are held within private reserves in South Africa. Photo: SRP

South Africa: Rhino Conservation

This project was badly affected by COVID-19 in 2021. Various trips that were planned to develop course content with subject matter experts (such as man-tracking and operational training for a game reserve's reaction unit) had to be postponed. In addition, many project staff contracted COVID-19, further delaying field work. As a result, all training related activities were postponed until March 2022. As of spring 2022, things are starting to get back to normal.

For select high-risk rhino reserves in South Africa, ICFC's partner Stop Rhino Poaching is improving security methods, applying advanced technology (including high-definition radar) and providing specialized training, all of which is reducing poaching levels.

Thank you to the Elliott Family Foundation, which funds this project.

Size of area: 400,000 hectares
Field partner: Stop Rhino Poaching

Since 2019: \$387,911

Kenya: Conserving Kijabe Forest

Kijabe Forest was selected as one of Africa's Top 100 habitat restoration projects (TerraMatch. AFR100)—a major accomplishment! Yet, human snaring and other illegal activities remain a challenge. Economic hardship caused by the pandemic has led to unsustainable charcoal production and poaching of wildlife for food. Kijabe rangers removed 70 snares and 3 charcoal kilns from the forest. To counter this, Kijabe Forest Trust provides alternate sources of income through the collection of approved non-timber forest products including leleshwa leaves, gum resin, and juniper berries, which are sold on the open market. Seeds of local trees are purchased by KFT for use in habitat restoration. More than 107,640 seedlings, grown from local seed stock, were planted in 2021!

Size of area: 5,000 hectares
Field partner: Kijabe Forest Trust

Since 2017: \$336,193



Spanning 1,000 meters in elevation along the eastern wall of the Great Rift Valley, Kijabe Forest's diverse floral communities include East African sandalwood, African olive, and African pencil cedar. Photo: KFT

There was just one known incident of elephant poaching in 2021. Photo: Carlton Ward

Mali Elephant Project

A joint project of ICFC and WILD Foundation

Thanks in part to a decade of work by the project's key personnel, the Gourma Biosphere Reserve came into being on December 14th, with unanimous support from Mali's parliament. At 42,000 km² (the size of Switzerland) the reserve is important for elephants and the hundreds of thousands of people living within it.

As ever, ecoguards (1,399 across seventeen communities) played a key role in natural resource management, elephant monitoring, and firebreak creation. In 2021, ICFC provided much-needed support to Chengeta Wildlife, the organization that has trained anti-poaching units in Mali and elsewhere in Africa.

Size of area: 33,534 km² (size of Belgium)

Field partner: Project director Susan Canney and in-

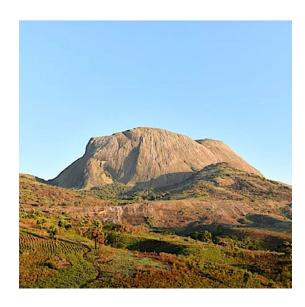
country crew led by Nomba Ganamé

Since 2010: \$3,678,588

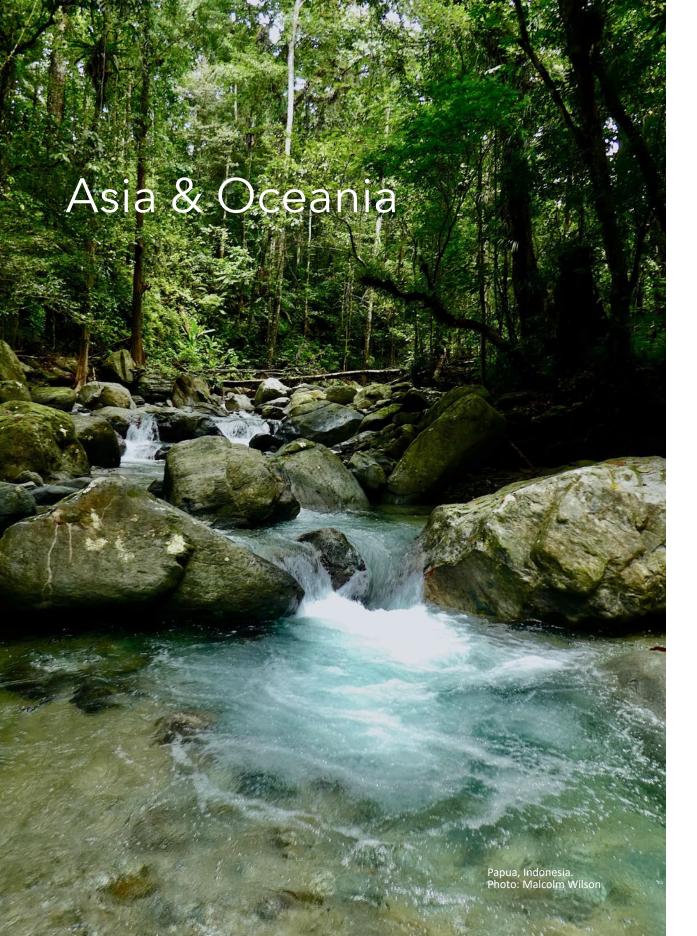
Mozambique: "Sky Islands" community conservation

In 2021, Legado concluded years of meetings with six communities, achieving full land titling for the communities. They delineated community lands and core and buffer zones for what could become Mozambique's first ever Community Conservation Area. The project has increased agricultural yields, developed sustainable honey production, and broadened outreach to commercial markets. Community fire prevention measures during the year reduced the incidence of wildfires. Monitoring and evaluation is being done with drones to evaluate the impact of this work on forest cover.

Size of area: 9,000 hectares
Field partner: Legado
Since 2018: \$121,288



Smooth granite domes form a chain of "sky islands" in Mozambique, which are rich in biodiversity and a crucial source of water for communities. Photo: Legado



Cambodia: Marine conservation

Near the Cambodia-Vietnam border, the staff and volunteers of Marine Conservation Cambodia (MCC) continued their work on the frontlines. countering illegal trawling. This work is restoring marine life, which in turn benefits local fisherman who use sustainable fishing practices. Year highlights: building a new speedboat for the local police to pursue illegal fishing vessels, deployment of additional anti-trawling structures that protect seagrass beds from illegal trawling, removal of illegal fishing gear from two marine protected areas, and further research on the endangered Irrawaddy dolphin and dugong, which appear to be slowly increasing in numbers. MCC trained and certified Cambodia's first ever Khmer marine mammal surveyors, allowing surveys to continue despite the pandemic.

Size of area: 11,354 hectares

Field partner: Marine Conservation Cambodia

Since 2016: \$717,004



MCC executive director Rachana Thap with rescued green turtle. Photo: MCC

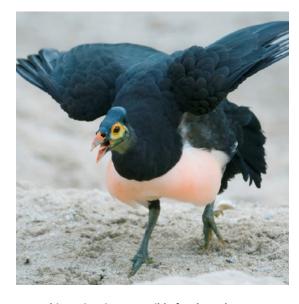
Indonesia: Imperiled wildlife in Sulawesi

The large K-shaped island of Sulawesi lies between Borneo and Australia along the Wallace Line delineating Asian and Australian fauna, and is one of the most biodiverse places in the world. In 2021 a record number (118) of maleos were counted at the biggest nesting colony in the world. This is more than twice the number seen anywhere else; in fact, colonies over 100 have not been seen elsewhere for decades. Outside our project area, the species is faring poorly. The Sulawesi-wide survey of maleos led by AITo director Marcy Summers revealed that the species is still undergoing a precipitous decline. As a result, its conservation status was uplisted from Endangered to Critically Endangered.

Size of area: 250,000 hectares

Field partner: Alliance for Tompotika (AlTo)

Since 2010: \$1,754,588



This project is responsible for the only known breeding colony of maleo that is increasing. Photo: AlTo



The elusive snow leopard is native to mountain ranges of central and south Asia. Photo: Christian Sanchez

Nepal: Protecting the Himalayan home of snow leopards

A master plan was drafted for roadless ecotourism in the Tokpegola landscape. The region is home to mammals of global concern including snow leopard, red panda, Himalayan musk deer, Himalayan black bear, and clouded leopard. Native plants were distributed to local people for planting in barren lands or nearby community forests, and 62 people were selected for nursery management and plantation training. Reforestation will help minimize the pressure on wild tree populations while supporting the local livelihoods. COVID-relief support was provided in community isolation centers and quarantine centers.

Size of area: 84,000 hectares
Field partner: KTK-BELT
Since 2018: \$272,576

The red panda, listed as Endangered, is a shy arboreal animal that feeds mainly on bamboo in temperate forests in the Eastern Himalayas and southwest China. Photo: Ignacio Yúfera

Nepal: Protecting red pandas

Although red pandas are protected by national law, their numbers continue to decline due to habitat loss and fragmentation and poaching. Illegal poaching was higher in 2021 due to the pandemic, and 37 Red panda hides were confiscated by Nepalese police. This made our project even more important since engagement with communities is key. Many of the remote villages in our project area have never been exposed to any kind of environmental awareness program. Our field partner has rolled out radio programs, eco-clubs in the schools, and community workshops. Community forest guardians regularly patrol and collect red panda data. Project support to marginalized farmers has helped take some pressure off red panda habitat and community members were hired to grow and plant red panda-friendly saplings.

Size of area: 261,600 hectares

Field partner: Red Panda Network (in Nepal)

Since 2017: \$178,836

Nepal: Koshi Tappu Wetland

Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve in eastern Nepal is home to migratory and nesting birds, numerous indigenous fish, herpetofauna, apex grazing mammals such as Asian wild buffalo and Asian elephant and two species of crocodile: mugger and gharial. But much of the wetland has been impacted by invasive species and alterations to the hydrological regime.

During 2020-2021, a seven-hectare land parcel in Hattisar was restored and early results show a three-fold increase in bird densities. A fulvous whistling duck was spotted in the reserve for the first time in about 20 years.

Size of area: 34,800 hectares
Field partner: KTK-BELT
Since 2018: \$795,445



200 residents were employed in removing invasive plants to restore Koshi Tappu. Photo: KTK-BELT

French Polynesia & Fiji: Imperiled birds

Removing invasive species that threaten the endemic fauna of oceanic islands entails travel to very remote islands. To work in Mohotani in the Marquesas Islands, the team had to bring along a ton of drinking water.

Highlights from 2021 include the removal of all feral goats from two of Rapa's islets and pioneering use of drones in eradicating rats. These interventions benefit the Rapa shearwater, Polynesian storm petrel and other seabirds. In Fiji, the common myna is being eradicated from the island of Rotuma by locals trained to use decoy traps. It is believed that only five mynas remain. This work benefits the endangered Rotuma myzomela.

Size of area: 6,800 hectares

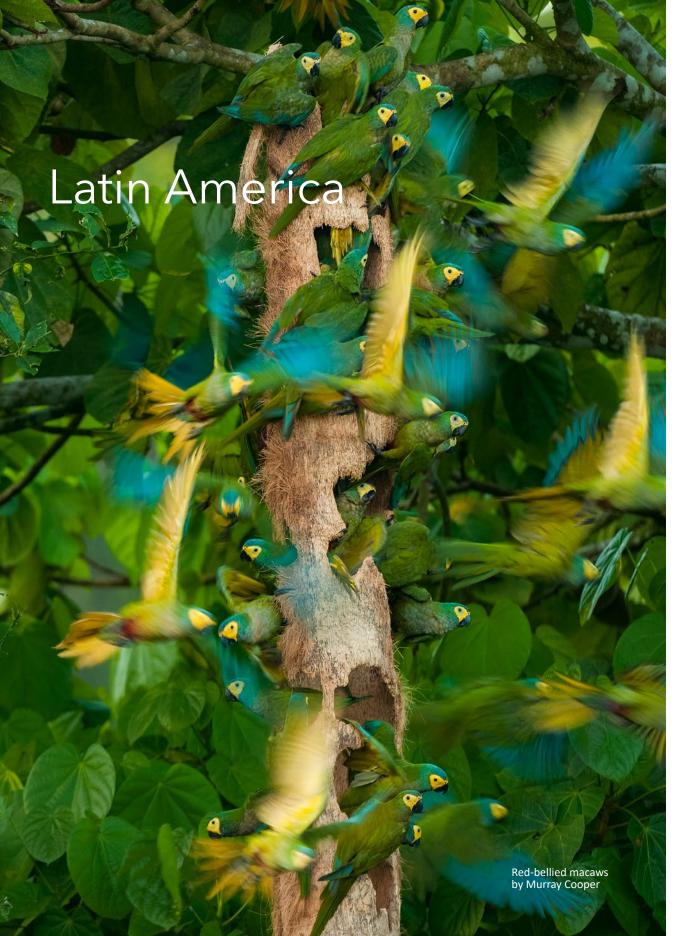
Field partner: BirdLife International Pacific; Société

d'Ornithologie de Polynésie (MANU)

Since 2019: \$111,951



The endangered Marquesas monarch is found on Mohotani, 1500 km from Tahiti. Photo: Fred Jacq





New

Belize Maya forest corridor

Conservation need

After the Amazon, the 15 million-hectare Maya forest of Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico is the largest remaining intact tropical forest in the Americas. The Belize Maya Forest Corridor includes gallery forest, pine savanna, rivers and freshwater lagoons. Its broadleaf tropical forests constitute important habitats for an abundance of Nearctic migratory birds such as wood thrush and several globally threatened birds including yellow-headed amazon parrot and great curassow. Endangered mammals include Baird's tapir, Yucatán spider monkey, Central American spider monkey and Yucatán black howler monkey. The Critically Endangered Central American river turtle may still occur in the Cox Lagoon wetlands, and this site is a potential location for rewilding the species. Other threatened fauna are jaguar, white-lipped peccary, Morelet's crocodile, and aplomado falcon.

What we're doing

In 2020-2021 a coalition of funders led by Re:wild purchased lands important to protect and establish a wildlife corridor between the two largest blocks of forest in Belize—the Rio Bravo Conservation Area/Maya Forest and the Maya Mountains.

2021 Highlights

ICFC contributed to the purchase of a 5,691-hectare parcel along the north side of the Western Highway. In 2022 additional properties are being sought on the south side of the highway to establish connectivity between the two largest forested areas in Belize.

Size of area: 5,691 hectares

Field partner: Maya Forest Corridor Trust

2021: \$632,694

Above: Maya Forest Corridor Photo: Robin D. Moore

Below: Jaguar

Photo: Christian Sanchez





New

Ecuador: FCAT Reserve in the Chocó

Conservation need

The Ecuadorian Chocó is a region of enormous importance for conservation. Over 96% of its primary forests have been destroyed, shrinking habitats for the flora and fauna unique to this region. The Mache-Chindul Ecological Reserve is among the last bastions of remaining wilderness here. However, landowners present at the reserve's creation are still living in the reserve and continue to hunt for sustenance and cut down forest to grow crops and graze cattle in a region where over 90% of the people live in poverty.

What we are doing

In 2021, ICFC helped acquire a 40-hectare property within the Mache-Chindul reserve to be managed by our Ecuadorian partner Fundación para la Conservación de los Andes Tropicales (FCAT). ICFC also provided support for rangers at the FCAT reserve. This strategic land acquisition helped to consolidate the FCAT Reserve into one of the largest contiguous reserves in the region (590 ha) and to secure habitat for neotropical migratory birds and other at-risk species.

Size of area: 590 hectares

Field partner: Fundación para la Conservación de los

Andes Tropicales

2021: \$279,921



Top: Mantled howler monkey Photo: Tony Enticknap

(tickspics.com)

Left: Eyelash viper Photo: Alejandro Arteaga



New

Panama: Indigenous-led conservation in Maje Mountains

Conservation need

Within the 60-km-long Majé Mountain range, Wounaan Indigenous territories include intact forest extending from mountain-tops to the Pacific coast—an area that harbours species extirpated elsewhere. The landscape is the winter home for at least 65 Neotropical migratory bird species, including prothonotary and Canada warblers, and it supports threatened species such as the great green macaw, harpy eagle and great curassow. At the east end of the range, research at Chucantí Reserve (supported by ICFC; see page 30) has uncovered varied new species including: a staghorn beetle, a lungless salamander, a centipede snake, *Anthurium* and *Heliconia* plants, a Pierid butterfly, a climbing rat and a beetle.

What we're doing

We are helping three Wounaan communities gain title to their lands and carry out on-the-ground protection. This includes boundary demarcation, increased guard patrols, and acquiring satellite data to prosecute illegal clearing of their lands.

Top: Keel-billed toucan

Right: The Wounaan are learning more about birds as part of efforts to develop ecotourism. Photos: Scott Hecker

2021 Highlights

In September, indigenous lawyers and community representatives met with the governor of Panama province and other officials and resolved a problem with the loan certification process that was contributing to colonization and deforestation of Wounaan territories. One month later a 30-year agreement was signed between the Ministry of the Environment and the indigenous Wounaan and Embera nations to work together to conserve lands and use natural resources sustainably.

Size of area: 22,326 hectares
Field partner: Native Future
2021: \$30,492





New Photo: ACCA

Peru: Spectacled bear and its high-elevation habitat

Conservation need

The spectacled bear ('Ukuku' in Quechua) is a cultural icon for the Quechua indigenous people because its movements replicate the seasonal migrations of the ancestral Quechua. These bears are one of the few large mammals that use the entire highland-to-lowland range in Manu National Park, a biodiversity hotspot where the Tropical Andes meets the Amazon Basin in southwestern Peru. Spectacled bears are the only mammal species to move freely from cloud forest to upper elevation grasslands and thus may play an important role in seed dispersal. The species is designated as Vulnerable and its population is decreasing.

What we are doing

In 2021, Conservación Amazónica launched a program that combines engagement with local communities—to restore and rewild degraded areas in the upper limits of Amazonian cloud forests—with a large-scale study to understand the movements and diet patterns of bears and their role in plant dispersal.

2021 Highlights

Data collected from 120 camera traps installed at varying elevations identified 40 mammal species and 20 individual spectacled bears. From fecal samples, 16 species of plants important to the bear's diet were identified. To restore and rewild degraded habitats, tree nurseries were established in two Andean communities and at the Wayqecha Biological Station. These have produced over 78,500 trees of 12 different species that bears consume, including two threatened species. An Andean bear interpretation center is currently being built near Wayqecha Biological Station to provide the ideal space to raise local awareness about cloud forest and spectacled bear conservation.

Size of area: 9,119 hectares

Field partner: Conservación Amazónica (ACCA)

2021: \$11,424

New

Colombia: Conserving Harlequin Toads in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

Conservation need

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is the highest coastal mountain in the world, reaching 5,775 meters. Designated a Key Biodiversity Area, the region is home to 17 endemic amphibians, including 5 species of harlequin toads (*Atelopus* spp.)—one of the world's most threatened amphibian genera. Disease transmission of the Bd fungus and habitat loss are the main threats.

What we are doing

Our partner Fundación Atelopus, a Colombian NGO, is investigating the population dynamics of two Atelopus species: the starry night toad (CR) and the Santa Marta harlequin toad (EN). Fundación Atelopus also works with rural communities to develop and implement small-scale conservation strategies to protect amphibian species.

2021 Highlights

Nine expeditions were conducted to obtain information on the abundance, presence and prevalence of the Bd fungus and threats to various Atelopus species. Expeditions also provide opportunities to educate local communities and develop conservation strategies together.



Starry night harlequin toad Photos: Fundación Atelopus

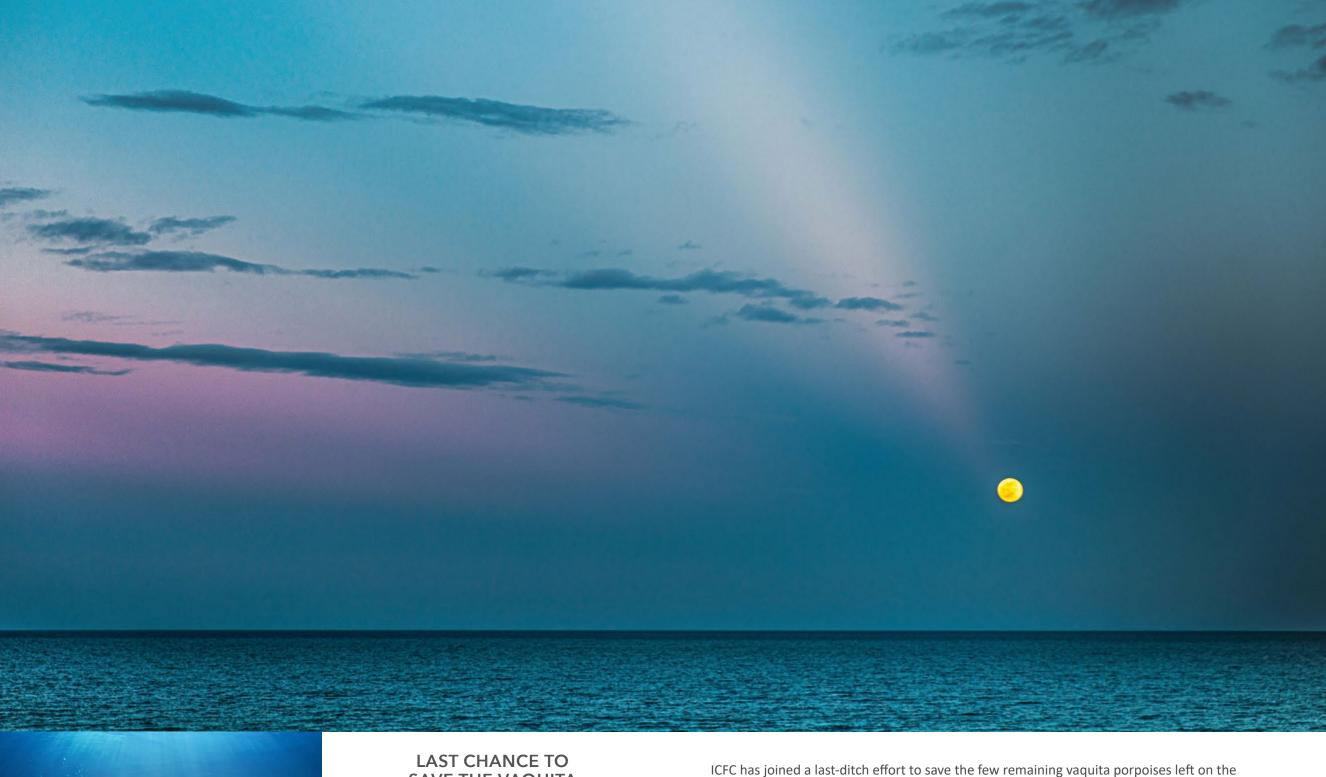
COVID-19 restrictions forced schools in rural areas to operate online in early 2021. As a result, Fundación Atelopus interacted virtually with children and local community members during the first half of the year. Many restrictions were lifted in late 2021 and a few in-person workshops and recreational activities were conducted in local communities (with Covid protocols).

Size of area: 2,520 km²

Field partner: Fundación Atelopus

2021: \$6,804







SAVE THE VAQUITA

Above: Moonllight over the Gulf of California home of the vaquita. Photo: Andrew Wegst Left: The vaquita is the world's smallest

porpoise.

planet. Normally we would not preview a 2022 project, but by next year's annual report it may be too late. With fewer than 10 remaining, they are the world's most imperiled mammal. Their population has crashed by more than 99% in ten years due to drowning in illegal gill nets. Is it worth trying to save them? We think so. The science indicates that if the illegal fishing is stopped there is hope: females calve every year and the species' small gene pool is healthy. Other species have come back from the brink. This lovely animal deserves a chance.

Brazil: Kayapo holding the line against intense threats

Guard posts continued to play a key role in territorial defense by the Kayapo as threats from goldminers and loggers remained intense. Two new guard posts were established on the western border bringing the total to twelve that operate from June or July to mid-December. Guard posts signal to the outside world that the Kayapo are in control of an area, and Kayapo patrols have proven highly effective. With increased coverage, the 2,200 km of Kayapo border has remained largely intact.

Vaccinations and the end of pandemic restrictions meant normal activities could resume: Brazil nut and handicraft commerce, the international sport-fishing enterprise, and the development by communities of official Indigenous Territorial and Environmental Management Plans.

Brazil's Indian Agency (FUNAI) continues to sow false information among the Kayapo to destabilize their NGOs. This is deliberate, since the current government and their allies involved with illegal activity recognize that Kayapo NGOs are the sole barrier to access and control over Kayapo land. The ensuing damage control takes time and resources. Project personnel must address the confusion, false promises and the bureaucratic and legal hurdles designed to hobble Kayapo NGOs. But they are so far succeeding.



Kayapo now use camera traps and other technology for surveillance and wildlife monitoring. Photo: John Meisner

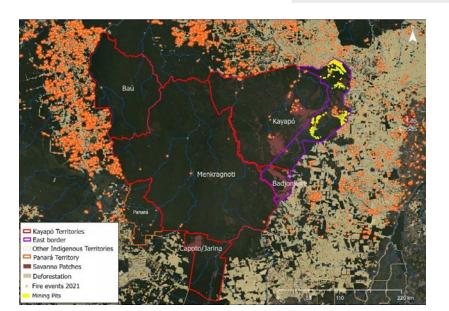
Size of area: 110,000 km² – bigger than 91 countries
Field partner: Associação Floresta Protegida, Instituto Kabu,

and Instituto Raoni
Since 2007: \$10,913,097

Never a dull moment...

"We had many difficulties: vehicles breaking down, teams having to move location at night, boats sinking, loggers threatening guards, trees falling on guard post living quarters, scorpion stings and other problems occurring on a daily basis. But we held strong—determined to fulfill our commitment to protect Kayapo territory from illegal predators."

-- Director of Kayapo surveillance, December 2021



Fire and deforestation events in 2021: The 9.4 million hectares of Kayapo territory (outlined in red) and 500,000 hectares of the neighbouring Panara Indigenous people (outlined in orange) that receive philanthropic investment remain intact, whereas 1.2 million hectares of Kayapo territory not part of the NGO alliance (outlined in purple) is heavily invaded.



Costa Rica: A citizen science alliance is protecting the Osa Peninsula

To conserve the Osa's rich biodiversity in the face of rapid climate change, Osa Conservation's grand vision involves restoring forest connectivity across an elevational gradient that connects the protected areas of the Osa Peninsula with the larger forest matrix of La Amistad National Park, the largest montane forest in Central America. Deterring poaching, illegal goldmining, and forest clearing is also part of the plan.

Osa Conservation (OC) has been working to achieve this vision not through the expensive route of purchasing land, but by deeply engaging with the people of the region. Citizen scientists, ecotourism operators, park administrators and multiple NGOs are all involved.

With cross-society involvement, a lot is being accomplished. The project deployed 260 camera traps and collected biological data along a 180-km transect from 'Ridge to Reef' to inform its future climate adaptation work. Hundreds of thousands of rare, native and threatened tree species were planted throughout the region. To address the barriers and threats posed to wildlife by roads, 13 arboreal bridges were installed in the canopy to enable animals to cross the roads safely.

A Ridge to Reef Nature Club for rural youth was launched in 2021 to build the next generation of conservation leaders. In its inaugural year, the club engaged 1,319 youth in 47 field

outings, including releasing over 1,000 sea turtle hatchlings from the OC nursery. From tree planting to camera trap training and snorkeling, the club's first year was a success! *Thank you* to the Paul W. O'Leary Foundation, which funded the youth program.

Size of area: 1,093 km²

Field partner: Osa Conservation (OC)

Since 2017: \$597,539

Above: Biologist Eleanor Flatt checks a camera trap that monitors the first arboreal highway installed in the Osa Peninsula. Photo: National Geographic

Below: Children measure tree diameter.

Photo: Osa Conservation





Ecuador: Chocó Reserve expansion continues

With less than 2% of Ecuador's lowland Chocó forests remaining, Jocotoco has been expanding its Canandé Reserve to protect the many threatened species and habitats that live there. At the end of 2021, the total area protected was over 10,900 ha, a 78% increase in size in 4 years! In early 2022, Jocotoco completed a significant milestone by connecting the reserve to Cotocachi-Cayapas National Park. A brown-headed spider monkey (CR) or jaguar (NT) can now travel the length of the reserve without the risk of crossing a road. More work lies ahead to consolidate the reserve and to restore forest on areas that had been converted to pasture.

Size of area: Target 15,000-20,000 hectares

Field partner: Fundación Jocotoco

Since 2018: \$1,139,504

We extend a big THANK YOU to Jan Oudenes & Isobel Ralston, whose Maple Cross Fund matched ICFC's \$250,000 contribution for land acquisition for Canandé Reserve in 2021. Ross Beaty, geologist, resource entrepreneur and conservation philanthropist, made possible the start of a fund to protect Jocotoco reserves in perpetuity.



Sustainability Fund for Jocotoco Reserves

As part of the effort to help Jocotoco expand its large forest reserve in the Ecuadorian Chocó, ICFC has established a Sustainability Fund for Jocotoco reserves. This was made possible thanks to a significant lead contribution by Ross Beaty. Jocotoco's 16 reserves protect biodiversity hotspots across Ecuador's varied landscapes. While the fund won't cover all costs, the intention is to ensure the long-term viability of the reserves by providing a predictable source of income for Jocotoco. This will reduce the time and resources Jocotoco has to spend raising funds, so staff can focus on the actual work of managing and protecting reserves. The fund is set up to allow Jocotoco to weather financial downturns and to maintain capital long term. This marks ICFC's fourth program-related fund (further contributions to them are welcome). A warm thank-you to Ross from ICFC and on behalf of the myriad species that call Jocotoco reserves home.

Galápagos Volunteer Infrastructure

After a two-year delay due to COVID, construction has started on volunteer accommodations at Jocotoco's San Cristóbal Reserve in the Galápagos. Why is this important for conservation? Much of the native Miconia forests on the Galápagos are being replaced by highly aggressive blackberry brambles and guava trees. Volunteers on the island help clear the brambles that block access to nesting burrows of the Galápagos petrel (CR). It is hard work and having accommodation nearby makes things much easier. Already the outlook is improving for the petrel – 17 chicks fledged in 2021 compared to four in 2020.

Size of area: 3,353,400 hectares (size of Belgium)

Field partner: Fundación Jocotoco

Since 2019: \$8,611



Galápagos petrel on its nest. Photo: Jacob Salina

Nicaragua: Sea turtle conservation

It was a good year for the two grass-roots sea turtle projects that ICFC supports in Nicaragua. The El Rosario hatchery had a 99% hatching rate, with 11,870 hatchlings safely returned to the sea. Unfortunately, a tropical storm flooded the hatchery at Playa Salinas Grandes resulting in a lower hatching success (77%; 10,507 hatchlings). Despite COVID-19, seminars and outdoor activities were held in both communities throughout the year, focusing on children's environmental awareness.

El Rosario (began 2016)

Size of area: 10 km of beach

Field partner: Mario Hipólito López Calderón and

local community members

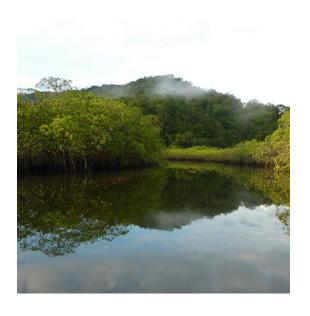
Playa Salinas Grandes (began 2020)

Size of area: 8 km of beach

Field partner: Gabriela Paredes Castillo Since 2016: \$143,677 (both sites)



Turtle hatchlings make their way to the sea. Photo: Gabriela Paredes Castillo



Laguna Grande Reserve encompasses lagoons, mangroves, inundated forests, lowland forests, and karstic mountain forests between sea level and 385 m. Photo: FUNDAECO



Cerro Chucantí Reserve is sustained in part through ecotourism and income from its biological field station.
Photo: ADOPTA

Guatemala: Laguna Grande Reserve

ICFC has committed to four years of support to optimize the monitoring, management and protection of the Laguna Grande Reserve. In the first six months, forest management plans were completed, boundary signs were placed, and new park guards were hired. FUNDAECO purchased 675 ha to create the reserve in 2009 with support from ICFC and World Land Trust. The reserve has since been expanded to 2,000 ha and with the adjacent National Core Zone of National Lands (co-managed by FUNDAECO) spans more than 4,000 ha along the Río Sarstún River. Lowland and inundated tropical rainforests of the Caribbean region of Guatemala have almost disappeared and there is ongoing pressure from expansion of palm oil plantations and cattle ranching operations.

Size of area: 2,000 hectares

Field partner: Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la

Conservación (FUNDAECO)

2021: \$16,767

Panama: Cerro Chucantí Reserve

Revenue for reserve rangers from ecotourists and visiting researchers took a hit due to the pandemic, so in 2021 ICFC was happy to step in to support rangers at this important cloud forest reserve.

Cerro Chucantí is an isolated massif in eastern Panamá that rises from sea level to 1,444 meters in elevation and sustains a diverse cloud forest tropical ecosystem. It's home to many rangerestricted species under threat from slash-and-burn activities, logging, and cattle ranching. In 2017, ICFC was involved in land acquisition for the expansion of the Cerro Chucantí Reserve.

Size of area: 607 hectares

Field partner: Asociación Adopta el Bosque Panamá

2021: \$9,262

Peru: Expanding action based on deforestation alerts

In 2021, the Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Program (MAAP) adopted a strategy of "going wide" in nine countries across the Amazon, while "going deep" at critical locations. MAAP did the first rapid Amazon-wide identification of deforestation hotspots and a major climate change report showing that parts of the Amazon are now carbon sources rather than sinks. During the year, MAAP produced 127 policy briefs sent to key Peruvian government officials, detailing illegal logging (48), illegal gold mining (37), and urgent cases involving agriculture, roads, and threats to protected areas (42). This information enables a timely government response.

Field partner: Amazon Conservation and Conservación

Amazónica - ACCA

Since 2013: \$1,143,527



MAAP uses satellites to identify illegal deforestation which enables timely intervention. Images: NASA

Peru: A year of progress at Los Amigos Conservation Concession

Illegal activities (which had increased in 2019) were almost completely eradicated in 2021 due to stepped up action—a great achievement. Additional Promotores de Conservación were hired. More frequent ground patrols were complemented by drone and high-resolution satellite monitoring (done by MAAP, see above) that pinpointed illegal activities within the Concession. New monitoring posts were established in remote areas of the reserve subject to illegal logging. As deforestation worsens in Peru's Madre de Dios region, LACC continues to safeguard its 146,000 hectares and uncontacted Indigenous people in voluntary isolation and to indirectly protect an additional million hectares of old growth forest.

Size of area: 146,000 hectares

Field partner: Conservación Amazónica - ACCA

Since 2011: \$732,527

Trust fund capital at year-end: \$1,848,981



This wild pineapple in bloom is one of many flowering plants in Los Amigos Conservation Concession. Photo: ACCA



Argentina: Innovations boost prospects for the hooded grebe

With no breeding success for four years (not as unusual as it sounds), concern for the hooded grebe was mounting. But two innovations in 2021 may prove to be a game changer. Early in the breeding season, the field team deployed artificial floating nest platforms. It wasn't long before the grebes hopped aboard to tidy them up and defend them from other grebes. They went on to produce some of the first hatchlings seen in years. The second experiment caused as much excitement if not more. Biologists have been routinely collecting abandoned eggs so they could give them a second chance in an incubator.

never survived. This year, the onsite veterinarian placed chicks in the water the minute they hatched, which triggered them to defecate. It turns out that was essential. The hatchlings not only survived but thrived. All this is good news for the hooded grebe and its fans!

Although the eggs hatched, the young hatchlings

Nesting platforms made of PVC

milfoil were a hit with hooded grebes. Photo: Gonzalo Pardo

tubing covered with native

Size of area: 575,000 hectares
Field partner: Asociación Ambiente Sur

Since 2012: \$658,641

A giant anteater with baby aboard at Barba Azul reserve. Photo: Teodoro Camacho

Bolivia: Macaw numbers reach new high at Barba Azul Nature Reserve

After a pandemic-related pause in tourism, Barba Azul reserve welcomed its first three groups of tourists, who enjoyed the facilities ICFC helped upgrade in past years. A lot was accomplished: 35 km of firebreaks, perimeter fencing and Motacú palm restoration through exclusion zones. Monitoring of the Critically Endangered bluethroated macaw was stepped up, with a peak count of 127 individuals in August. Over 1,500 buff-breasted sandpipers were recorded in a single day in August—the highest count ever.

Size of area: 11,000 hectares
Field partner: Asociación Armonía

Since 2010: \$381,105

Argentina: Reserva Rincón de Santa María

As COVID-19 restrictions kept away project volunteers, locals and colleagues carried on, planting 2,014 seedlings of 27 native tree species and controlling invasive pines and eucalyptus on 270 hectares of this flooded grassland ecosystem that is so important for native and migratory birds, such as Canada's common nighthawk.

Size of area: 2,450 hectares

Field partner: Nestor Fariña leads a team of naturalists

and volunteers

Since 2015: \$86,262



Planting trees at Rincón de Santa María. Photo: Agustina Carballo

Argentina: Selva de Pino Paraná

Ninety percent of the Atlantic Forests of South America have been lost and most of what remains has been severely fragmented. Despite challenges posed by COVID-19, the project continued to engage farmers and local youth to restore bird habitat and protect tree species needed by specialist cavity-nesting birds. A variety of interactive activities focused on threatened Atlantic Forest birds and their habitat were developed and disseminated to over 2,000 people.

Size of area: 100,000 hectares

Field partner: Proyecto Selva de Pino Paraná

Since 2013: \$73,115



The vinaceous-breasted parrot is one of the cavity-nesting birds needing protection in the Atlantic Forest. Photo: Marcelo Hubel

Costa Rica: Área de Conservación Guanacaste

In the after-school program for children in a fishing village bordering ACG, activities had to take place virtually due to the pandemic. Happily, marine field trips and bird monitoring by children are resuming in 2022. ACG parataxonomists supported in part by ICFC continued their work documenting the many species living in ACG and their ecological interactions. In 2021, 163 new species pages were added, bringing the total to 1,360.

Size of area: 163,000 hectares

Field partner: Guanacaste Dry Forest Conservation Fund

Since 2012: \$661,305

Trust fund capital at year-end: \$2,859,402



Spotted eagle ray Photo: María Marta Chavarría Díaz

Shorebird Initiative



Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, Thailand: Gearing up protection of the spoon-billed Sandpiper

At the sites we protect, spoon-billed sandpiper numbers increased to 89 (35% above the prior year). In China the number of illegal hunting cases dropped to only two. Our site in Myanmar was declared a national park in February 2022. In Thailand a public blind was completed and attracts birdwatchers from all over the world who want to see a "Spoonie"!

Since 2004 fifteen countries have joined forces to save the Critically Endangered spoon-billed sandpiper that breeds in Russia and winters from China to Bangladesh. The primary threat is the widespread use of nets to harvest shorebirds for food. Many thousands of nets have been removed from key areas as local communities have rallied to help the world's most endangered migratory shorebird. Where kilometers of nets once snared shorebirds, bird-watching blinds now stand within new bird sanctuaries. The popularity of the spoon-billed sandpiper and the conservation work targeting its habitat also protects other highly endangered but perhaps less charismatic shorebirds such as Nordmann's greenshank and great knot.



Photo: Lefei Han

ICFC notes the loss of the much-admired conservationist Evgeny Evgenyevich Syroechkovsky (1968-2022) who accomplished much for this species and rallied others to the cause.

Field partners: Sayam Chowdhury, Spoon-billed

Sandpiper Task Force; Bangladesh Spoonbilled Sandpiper Conservation Project (BSCP); Nature Conservation Society-Myanmar; Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force China, Bird Conservation Society of

Thailand

Since 2016: \$364,220



Project director Sayam Chowdhury addresses a community meeting in Bangladesh. Photo: BSCP



New bird blind at Laguna Quenuir wetland. The development of birding tourism is going hand in hand with conservation. Photo: Claudio Delgado

Chile: Increased protections for Maullín coastal wetlands

Since the project began in 2015 the area protected has expanded from 738 ha to over 10,000 ha. The immense estuarine system of the Maullin attracts thousands of Hudsonian godwits and whimbrels and other migratory shorebirds, nesting waterbirds and Chilean flamingos. Without careful management the area would be impacted by rapidly advancing coastal development, unregulated recreational activities, livestock trampling, and a growing aquaculture industry.

In 2021 our field partner continued to add more protected areas and implement additional protective measures including gates to restrict vehicle traffic on coastal beaches, fencing to keep livestock out of wetlands, and new boardwalks and public blinds to encourage eco-friendly bird watching tourism. Camera traps allow us to document the success of this work compared to areas that are not as well protected.

Size of area: 8,152 hectares

Field partner: Fundación Conservación Marina

Since 2015: \$423,902

Bahamas: Pause in actions to protect habitat for piping plovers and other species

Due to the pandemic, fieldwork in 2021 was cancelled for the second year in a row. However, the project is underway again in 2022 and our field partner will be working with volunteers and university students to eradicate invasive Australian pine (*Casuarina sp.*) and post signs at wintering sites of piping plovers and resident beach-nesting birds such as the Wilson's plover. Nesting areas of seabirds, including the roseate tern, are located and posted with protective signs.

Size of area: 410 km of shoreline on 29 islands/cays
Field partner: Conservian Coastal Bird Conservation

Since 2016: \$355,743

Argentina: Rangers effective at Bahía de San Antonio

The expansive rich tidal flat of the Bahía de San Antonio is one of just a few major migratory stopovers for the red knot during its northward migration from Tierra del Fuego to the Canadian Arctic. But this beach, which is important to thousands of migratory shorebirds and hundreds of resident plovers, oystercatchers and flamingos, is also a very popular recreational area. Our team of 30 rangers (partially funded by the province), are deputized, with legal authority to protect birds and sea lions from impacts from beach goers, ATVs, camping, pets, and kite-boarding. Onsite research has shown this protection has increased chick survival and nesting success.

Our partner's annual shorebird festival (in its 8th year) has made this program so popular that the community is asking for more rangers and more regulations to protect its beaches and birdlife.

Size of area: 6,500 hectares

Field partner: Fundación Inalafquen (Patricia González)

Since 2015: \$412,314



A portion of a shorebird mural in San Antonio by Carolina Perazzoli. Photo: Fabian Pinasco



Wilson's plover nest. Photo: Scott Hecker

Mexico: The "Grunion Queens" and the protection of Pacific red knots

Holy Week is a busy time on the beaches of Santa Clara on the Gulf of California. For thousands of years small, silvery grunions, a type of sardine, have come there to lay millions of eggs at the surf edge. This natural spectacle, which coincides with one of the busiest beach holidays in Mexico, has made it a crucial fattening-up stopover for thousands of northbound Pacific red knots (C.c. roselaari). We support the wonderful work of a group of volunteer women known as the "Grunion Queens" or Las Pejerreinas. Each year they conduct a major educational campaign in a tent on the beach and erect kilometers of rope and signs to separate beach-drivers and beach goers from the vulnerable fish and birds.

Size of area: 10 km of beachfront Field partner: Pronatura Noroeste

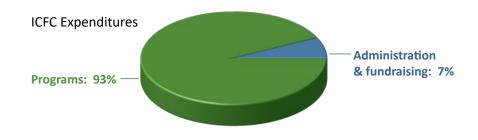
Since 2020: \$20,840



Shorebirds and spawning Gulf grunions in Santa Clara. Photo: Adriana Hernandez Alvarez

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION OF DECEMBER 31, 2021			
	2021	2020	
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash	634,028	948,997	
Investments (securities)	1,776,245	174	
Project advances	861,842	654,384	
Accounts receivable	13,971	5	
HST Recoverable	14,953	9,151	
	3,301,039	1,612,711	
Capital Assets			
Interest in land ⁱ	93,152	93,152	
Office equipment, net	3,370	4,685	
	96,522	97,837	
Restricted Assets			
Los Amigos Cons. Conc. Trust Fund	1,848,981	1,643,630	
Parataxonomist Trust Fund	2,859,402	2,545,815	
Administration Trust Fund	801,297	657,192	
Poon Trust Fund	598,388	519,689	
Jocotoco Sustainability Fund	1,031,519	0	
·	7,139,587	5,366,326	
TOTAL ASSETS	10,537,148	7,076,874	
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable	79,419	73,055	
necounts payable	79,419	73,055	
Fund balances	75,125	. 0,000	
Unrestricted	2,435,952	1,289,942	
Internally restricted	1,913,709	347,551	
Restricted	6,108,068	5,366,326	
	10,457,729	7,003,819	
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	10,537,148	7,076,874	

Complete <u>audited financial statements</u> are available on our website.



¹ Conservation easements in Guatemala and mortgages in Ecuador & Bolivia with conservation covenants.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS 2021 REVEN EXPEN:

2020

REVENUE		
Donations	9,909,326	6,321,999
Gain/(Loss) on investment and foreign currency	110,497	264,284
NET REVENUE	10,019,823	6,586,283
EXPENSES		
Argentina: Hooded grebe	69,857	80,614
Argentina: Mar Chiquita wetlands	0	29,835
Argentina: San Antonio, Red knot	3,884	49,983
Bahamas: Piping plover	10,898	42,234
Bahamas: Salinas Long Island Restoration	27,454	0
Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Taiwan: Spoon-billed sandpiper	96,940	83,747
Belize: Land Acquisition for the Maya Forest Corridor	632,694	0
Bolivia: Blue-throated macaw	20,702	40,118
Brazil: Kayapó Project	1,761,451	1,663,256
Cambodia: Marine conservation	178,431	194,037
Chile: Maullin coastal wetlands	88,230	65,828
Costa Rica: ACG marine education & Parataxonomists	99,060	98,220
Costa Rica: Osa, sea turtles and community education	2,033	121,268
Costa Rica: Osa Peninsula, preventing ecosystem collapse	173,980	185,819
Costa Rica: Osa Youth Program	68,993	0
Democratic Republic of Congo: Grauer's gorilla	220,189	307,245
Ecuador: Rio Canandé/Chocó reserve land purchase	347,597	11,599
Ecuador: FCAT Reserve land purchase	279,921	0
French Polynesia: Imperilled birds	46,061	8,638
Indonesia: Sulawesi threatened wildlife	202,053	238,052
Kenya: Kijabe Forest	82,183	79,814
Kenya: Mukutan Conservancy, aka Laikipia Conservancy	217,942	183,969
Madagascar: Rabondro Reserve	118,162	0
Malawi: Lake Malawi fish conservation	201,232	59,904
Mali Elephant Project	348,333	312,037
Mozambique: Sky Islands	64,251	38,429
Nepal: Koshi Tappu wetland & land acquisition	72,651	855,486
Nepal: Kanchenjunga, snow leopard	59,401	60,264
Nepal: Red panda	30,102	63,013
Nicaragua: Sea turtles projects	60,528	36,392
Panama: Majé Mountains Indigenous-led conservation	30,492	0
Peru: Andean Amazon, MAAP	196,881	181,021
Peru: Los Amigos Conservation Concession	78,077	90,854
Shorebird Program Coordinator	1,942	51,066
Small projects (Argentina, Chile, Ghana, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama)	118,064	51,448
South Africa: Rhino conservation	39,650	94,936
Various Rainforest Trust-led common projects	83,774	417
TOTAL Program Expenses	6,134,093	5,389,088
Fundraising ⁱⁱ	115,343	140,891
Administration ⁱⁱ	316,477	321,108
TOTAL EXPENSES	6,565,913	5,851,087
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	3,453,910	735,196
	2, .55,510	

ii 100% of Administration/Fundraising expenses were covered by ICFC's core group of long-term donors.

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Created in 2019, ICF is volunteer run and has an active and experienced Board of Directors. ICF is hoping that by exposing Americans to ICFC's inspiring work and variety of projects it can increase support to nature conservation globally. And so far, it's working! ICF contributed US\$ \$260,085 in revenue to ICFC in 2021.

Many thanks to Jackie Leppard for tirelessly assisting ICF with banking, the donor database and more!

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Featured field partner: Dominique Bikaba

A conservation leader in the highly important Congo Basin of Africa, Dominique Bikaba was personally impacted by conservation in an earlier era.

Dominique was born in the forests that are now Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When the park was expanded in 1975, communities within its boundaries were expelled, including his (a practice that has since been widely discredited.) Growing up in the region, Dominique had plenty



Photo: Strong Roots

of opportunity to see all kinds of wildlife. He was also able to witness the successes and failures of a succession of conservation programs. Fast forward to today and Dominique is leading Strong Roots, an organization he founded in 2009, to create a complex of community forests that will form a 6,000-km2 corridor between Kahuzi-Biega National Park and Itombwe Nature Reserve. The massive corridor crosses seven chiefdoms and ancestal forests of Bantou tribes and the Batwa Indigenous peoples. The effort involves an enormous amount of community coordination, education, and reforestation. It benefits people and wildlife, including the last remaining populations of Grauer's gorilla (aka eastern lowland gorilla), a critically endangered subspecies that is a cornerstone of Strong Roots' work. Ultimately, the corridor will reduce habitat fragmentation and allow for gorilla and other species' movement within the landscape spanning Kahuzi-Biega park and Itombwe Nature Reserve. For this pioneering work, Dominique won the Whitley Award (for leaders in conservation) in 2018.

Dominique knows that concern for local peoples' wellbeing must be at the heart of conservation work. "Any conservation action which does not care about human rights is another form of extractive industry", he says. This was the impetus for Strong Roots to push for legislation on community forests in DRC—to give local communities and indigenous peoples legal responsibility to manage and govern their traditional lands to advance both conservation and sustainable livelihoods.



Message from the Executive Director

Last year saw ICFC expand to new geographies, like Madagascar, and to protecting new species like the spectacled bear, the giant mastiff bat and the Ruppell's vulture. It also marked a new look forward, at what we plan to do in the next decade. Last fall we joined a number of other philanthropies in the Protecting our Planet Challenge, which has pledged to spend over US \$5 billion to help protect 30% of our planet by 2030. What does this mean in practice? It means that organizations like ours will be spending *now* rather than later, to protect what is precious and at risk now before it is gone. One unexpected positive outcome from this big, coordinated push is that conservation NGOs are working cooperatively like never before to share information, to co-fund worthy projects and to strategize. It has been a pleasure and privilege to get to know these colleagues better and to work with them for the good of our planet, since together we can accomplish so much more. How does ICFC fit here in light of our smaller size? We are able to act fast and take risks when urgent needs present themselves, like the last chance to save the few remaining vaquita porpoises (see page 23). In 2022, we have started projects in the Philippines, Laos and — most notably — Papua, Indonesia. The needs are urgent everywhere, but we've found there is no shortage of capable partners who can get the job done. Please join us in our big new push to protect our planet! — Molly Bartlett



Painting: King of Saxony bird-ofparadise by Léon van der Linden

ICFC staff and associates



Top row:

Anne Lambert Tom Welch Molly Bartlett Scott Hecker

Middle row:

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