

Dear supporters and friends,

Here is a near-year-end update along with our hearty thanks.

Brazil and our Kayapo Project

"I think we are headed for a very dark period in the history of Brazil" – Paulo Artaxo, climate change researcher at the University of São Paulo. *Science*, Oct 16, 2018

You may be wondering how the recent election in Brazil will affect the future of the Amazonian forest. So are we! As a candidate, president-elect Jair Bolsonaro vowed to open the Amazon—including indigenous territories—to industry. In the Amazon region, illegal loggers, miners, land grabbers, and large landowners are counting on him to fulfill his promise to gut environmental laws and scale back enforcement.

We are very concerned about the likelihood of further funding reductions for Brazil's environment agency (IBAMA). With help from ICFC and other international conservation groups, the Kayapo have defended their indigenous territories largely on their own, but IBAMA operations to remove illegal goldminers have been pivotal. Kayapo lands, which are twice the size of Nova Scotia, can be seen in satellite imagery as a solid green area surrounded by an expanse of encroaching deforestation.

Some perspective: Things were not rosy to start with. Deforestation jumped sharply during Dilma Rousseff's term as president and the trend continued under Michel Temer. Enforcement is woefully inadequate. The Brazilian Congress has long favoured large agricultural interests over conservation.

Might sanity prevail? A recent poll showed that a slight majority of Brazilians are in favour of *more* and not less environmental protection, but Brazil's recent dire economic woes, widespread corruption and rising crime have diverted attention. As Carlos Souza observed recently in *Scientific American*, most Brazilians are unaware that the Amazon rainforest is responsible for generating rainfall in other regions of Brazil and that reducing deforestation slows climate change. Nor do they know that a large percentage of cleared lands are currently unproductive and could be returned to productive use rather than allowing more deforestation.

While Brazil's exports of beef and soy are rising, multinational companies are increasingly seeking deforestation-free products in their agricultural supply chain, reflecting the power of environment-savvy consumers. Bolsonaro's team backed away from the alarming promise to merge the environment ministry into the agriculture ministry in part because of push-back from some in Brazilian agribusiness worried about an overseas consumer backlash.

The entire world benefits from the Amazonian forest, but few (Norway is an exception) have offered to pay. Large-scale forest carbon offset projects could help change that as would a stepped-up effort by conservation NGOs.

ICFC's view is unequivocal: *we must redouble our efforts*. Over the past two years we have developed guard posts manned by Kayapo at key entry sites, and these have proven highly effective at halting illegal entry via river access points. We are now making efforts to secure funds to construct more, including a mobile unit. In our view a comprehensive guard post system complemented by ongoing surveillance and patrol efforts is crucial to holding the line.

The Amazon and climate stabilization

Protecting tropical forests is one of the best ways to counter climate change. Kayapo lands protect (above and below ground) an estimated 2.5 billion tons of carbon, or 9 billion tons of CO₂, the equivalent of 12 years of Canada's total CO₂ emissions. Amazonian forests, which generate rainfall as far away as North America and shape the regional climate, are heading toward a deforestation "tipping point" in which the forest area is reduced below a threshold necessary for forests to be self-sustaining. Protecting Kayapo lands is vital to holding the line against this dire risk.

Operations by Brazil's environment ministry (IBAMA) have countered illegal logging and goldmining in Kayapo lands.



Travels in Bolivia

In September, Anne and Tom visited reserves of our Bolivian field partner Asociación Armonía. This was an opportunity to see first-hand how these important reserves are being managed and to experience the marvels of the Beni Savanna (below). They saw a plethora of wildlife including the Critically Endangered blue-throated macaw that is the focus of two ICFC-supported Armonía reserves, as well as rheas, giant anteater, marsh deer, pampas deer and much else. See Anne's account in our [website News page](#).



Remembering Penny Welch

Penny Welch, mother of ICFC co-founder Tom Welch, had an infectious zest for life, curiosity and sociability that lasted all of her 96 years. Penny, who died October 5th of this year, was an enthusiastic supporter of ICFC and enjoyed spreading word of what ICFC was up to among her wide circle of friends and acquaintances. Some of you reading this are supporters for this reason. Penny left a substantial legacy to ICFC and it gives us great satisfaction to apply this to important program needs that might otherwise go unfunded. We are also grateful to those who made a donation to ICFC in Penny’s honour. We feel her wisdom, strength and warmth each day as we carry on our work.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Banded at his nest in Russia in 2013, the **spoon-billed sandpiper** “Lime 07” was tracked this year flying 4,500 km from Russia to North Korea. After a 67-day stopover he made an incredible 51-hour non-stop 2,400-km flight before landing in Guangdong, China. He then flew south for 19 hours to pass over the coast of Cambodia and another 30 hours non-stop to Sumatra—a first-ever record for the country of Indonesia. We’ll save you the math: this adds to 9,000 km. ICFC is protecting this most endangered of shorebirds at its non-breeding sites in southeast Asia.

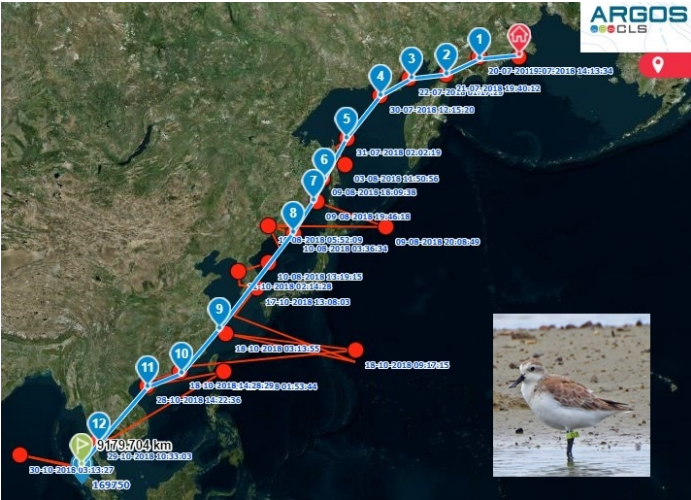


Photo by Chairunas (Nchay) Adha Putra; chart by Argos CLS



Invasive *Casuarina* pine is ruining habitat for wintering piping plovers and other species in the **Bahamas** and is a key issue we’re addressing with field partner Conservian. Above: In May the government provided a stipend for University of Bahamas students to assist our project in *Casuarina* control. Below: Joulter Cays National Park before and after treatment in 2017. Photos: Conservian/M.Lilla



Our **red panda project** has expanded from eastern into western Nepal. The new project area covers nearly 30% of the potential red panda habitat of Nepal. Upcoming activities include a survey of pangolins. Photo: Red Panda Network



When the political strife in **Nicaragua** resulted in our former local partner being unable to continue, the community stepped up to keep things going with the **turtle hatchery** and school program. So far this year, 10,000-12,000 turtles have been released. Photo: Ana Lopez Lara

In Costa Rica’s **Osa Peninsula**, a “citizen science” camera trap network has confirmed a suspected decline and range shrinkage for two keystone species: white-lipped peccary and jaguar. The network yielded 1.7 million images of 33 species from 200 cameras from March to June 2018. This aspect of our project with Osa Conservation is helping to build support for conservation among all those living in the Osa.



Irrawaddy dolphins will benefit from a proposed Important Marine Mammal Area to span the Cambodian-Vietnamese border, thanks to our work with **Marine Conservation Cambodia**. Fisheries bycatch, habitat degradation and overfishing have led to fragmented and declining populations and the Irrawaddy dolphin is now classed as Endangered by the IUCN. Photo courtesy MCC

Onward!

As year-end approaches, we feel that together with supporters and field partners, we are making solid progress that we are keen to build on in 2019!

We need your support! Please consider making an end of year gift to ICFC [online](#) or by mail. And...ICFC has now partnered with **1% For the Planet** and **Donate a Car** -- see [details on our website](#).

Thank you from all of us!