Rainforest Fund

RAINFOREST FUND

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

PROJECT REPORTS 2016

Foreword

Dear supporters,

For the indigenous peoples of the world's rainforests the right to their land is the key factor of their survival, with the right to decide on their own development.

This is the message conveyed to the Rainforest Fund by the indigenous communities we have been supporting for 27 years. It is also the belief and the mission of our organization.

Many of the indigenous communities we have been supporting in 2016 have faced numerous challenges such as the even more brutal race for land and natural resources, spurred by greed but explained as necessity, marketed as development but resulting in inequality which has opened a broad range of local battlefields where too many have lost their lives in fighting back to save their territory, their environment, their culture and their survival as peoples.

In the last year and recently, 161 indigenous leaders were killed for their protests against the building of dams, or against the invasion of their land by extractive industries without their previous consultation and agreement, in many rainforest countries in the world.

Fighting for indigenous rights, supporting the indigenous peoples and tribal population who are at the forefront of the struggle to protect their land, their environment and their lives is our mission.

After 27 years, we are still on the scene at a time when so many critical issues are emerging. We owe this to the dedication of Sting and Trudie Styler, and our many supporters who have accompanied us all these years.

We thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts and rely on your continued and generous support.

Franca Sciuto

Dr. Franca Sciuto
Executive Director/Chair of the Board

Peruvian Amazon

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Rainforest Fund

Our Mission

The Rainforest Fund is a charitable foundation dedicated to the support of indigenous peoples and traditional populations in their efforts to protect their environment and fulfill their rights.

We are convinced that accepted environmental and human rights principles embody the right of everyone to a secure, healthy and ecologically sound environment, and that environmental degradation leads to human rights violations such as the right to life, health and culture.

Brazilian Amazon
Photo Credit:
Ceibo Alliance

The Rainforest Fund bears in mind the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights, and carries out its mission by:

Funding programs and projects aimed at supporting indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the rainforests to assert their rights, to promote a sustainable development of their communities and to challenge governmental practices that have a damaging effect on their environment.

Rainforest Fund

INDONESIA

Yayasan Citra Mandiri Mentawai (YCMM), *Strengthen the participation of the Mentawai people in the design and implementation of public policies and in the management of their natural resources in a fair and sustainable way*

This project focuses on the pilot areas of the Mentawai islands and the activities to strengthen their involvement in resource management, while ensuring overall justice and security for their community. The success of these activities benefit the community as they work toward gaining acceptance and participation from the local government. Additionally, the success of this project provides the Mentawai people with more economic independence through traditional agriculture endeavors and by influencing public policies relating to natural resource management, such as monoculture and industrial agriculture schemes.

In 2016, the project was overshadowed by a campaign against an industrial plantation plan over primary forest and indigenous lands, and will need additional activities to ensure success. It is imperative that these new activities originate from within the indigenous community, thus demonstrating their commitment to leading and implementing the overall goals. During this time period, YCMM faced new threats against its forests and their rights from an industrial plantation that was eventually stopped through successful and aggressive government lobbying.

To ensure continuity from generation to generation, new YCMM jungle schools located in Gorottai, in Northern Siberut, have opened. This now gives access to education services that did not exist for children living in the area. There are plans for another school to be established once a new location has been assessed.

Project Total: $98, 000

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation Norway

Mentawai protests
Photo Credit: YCMM

Rainforest Fund

WEST PAPUA

Paradisea, *Protection of the forest in the Bird Head region of West Papua through sustainable management of the forest by the local communities and the government*

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation Norway

This project was designed to protect the Bird Head region of West Papua through sustainable management of the forest by the local communities and government. The overall mission was to establish green corridors between the nature reserves of Cagar Alam Tambrauw Utara, Cagar Alam Tambrauw Selatan, and Cagar Alam Pegunungan Arfak in the West Papua province of Indonesia. Here, indigenous communities have secured the right to manage the forest and will ensure that the local community be involved in the sustainability of their ancestral lands.

Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation Norway

Project Total: $120, 000

Rainforest Fund

CONGO BASIN

Comptoir Juridique Junior & ALPSCO, *Community rights and conservation in the Congo Basin*

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation UK

This project has promoted local and indigenous peoples' rights with regards to conservation projects in the Congo Basin. The project, scheduled to run for three years (2015-2017), monitors the human rights situation in and around protected areas in the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the Tumba Lediima Reserve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Advocacy efforts take place at both the local and regional levels, such as identifying the Odzala-Kokoua National Park as a priority area. Field missions are planned for other areas, potentially Nouabale-Ndoki and Conkouati National Parks, and continued work in either will be decided depending on the findings.

Village meeting Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation UK

The 2016 project focused on objectives to monitor and report human rights violations arising from conservation projects on their traditional lands, the rights of forest and indigenous communities, and the promotion of improved dialogue, participation, and remedy to specific rights violations.

Project Total: $120, 000

Rainforest Fund

PERU

Federación Nativa del Río Madre de Dios y Afluentes (FENAMAD), *'Forestlink': Real-time monitoring to protect the Amazon rainforest*

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation UK

This project has supported the Amazonian indigenous peoples' abilities to preserve and protect their forest, strengthen their institutions, and develop ways to liaise with relevant authorities in order to bolster forest protection and governance in Peru.

Peruvian Amazon
Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation UK

The 2016 project was designed to build on indigenous peoples' experience in forest monitoring programs, while reinforcing them with real-time monitoring technology developed by the Rainforest Foundation United Kingdom. This helps to close the communication issues that are caused by the isolated rainforest areas and enforcement bodies, which are usually based in large cities.

Project Total: $120, 000

Rainforest Fund

PANAMA

Congreso General del Territorio Ancestral Dule Tagarkunyal, *Laying the groundwork for titling Tagarkunyal Ancestral Territory*

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation US

This project focused on assisting the Tagarkunyal community as they work with the congresses and governments to acquire homelands to ensure sustainability for future generations. The goal was to create the groundwork which is essential for titling Tagarkunyal, home to many sacred sites and the ancestral territory of the Guna people.

Community meeting
Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation US

This project made progress towards the development of a certification process of ancestral territory by creating a community map through fieldwork and government assistance. In particular, young people have been trained in modern technologies and earth observation to verify field point boundaries and take geographic coordinates of the ancestral territory claims of Tagarkunyal. The communities of Paya and Púcuro are involved in claiming their land rights and participate in organized events.

There still needs to be additional work towards improving relations with the Miambiente community, a major obstacle to more success. Additionally, the promulgation of Executive Decree No. 59 of 2016, which creates and regulates the shared management in the System of Protected Areas as the Darién National Park, created distrust with government authorities since the communities of Paya, Púcuro, and eleven authorities were not consulted.

Project Total: $20, 000

Rainforest Fund

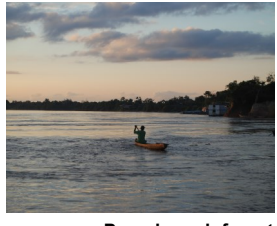
PERU

Ejecutor del Contracto de Administración (ECA), *Strengthening Capacity for the Protection and Management of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve*

Monitored by

Rainforest Foundation US

This project was designed to promote community-based protection and management of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve in Madre de Dios, Peru. The project seeked to implement a community environmental monitoring program and strengthen internal governance mechanisms.



Peruvian rainforest
Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation US

The 2016 project focused on strengthening the capacity of the indigenous community in organizational management that would benefit the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve. It was designed to implement a Territorial Community Policing Program to measure the impacts of extractive activities that threaten the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve and its buffer zone, provide financial sustainability for the Community Surveillance System, and support and monitor the implementation of a the REDD+ project in Amarakaeri Communal Reserve.

This project made significant progress towards promoting community-based protection and management of their ancestral properties. The project has encouraged the indigenous community to participate in these projects to ensure sustainability through their involvement in the activities and decision-making processes. In particular, they have hosted workshops and developed internships that will ensure the sustainability of their goals to protect their ancestral homelands, practice their culture, and live in their forests.

Project Total: $130, 000

Rainforest Fund

PERU

Native Community of Alto Tamaya Saweto, *Territorial Security and Access to Justice for the Indigenous Asheninka Community of Alto Tamaya Saweto*

Monitored by
Rainforest Foundation US

The overall project goal was to ensure there is justice and security for the Alto Tamaya Saweto Community by strengthening their capacity to manage and protect their newly titled territory of 80,000 hectares. This will be accomplished through the strengthening of their governance and the critical indigenous institutions that allow them access to a justice system.

Peruvian rainforest
Photo Credit: Rainforest Foundation US

During 2016, this project focused on activities to strengthen the Saweto indigenous community through their efforts to ensure overall justice and security for their community. The success of these activities were designed to benefit the community as they worked to gain acceptance regarding their security and safety issues by the local government.

Project Total: $35, 000

Rainforest Fund

BOLIVIA

Comunidad Viva, *Strengthening the Cheque Oitedie Women's Cooperative*

Monitored by

Rainforest Fund

The Cheque Oitedie project was designed to support and position the local craftswomen in the marketplace. The project identified ways to improve productivity while strengthening their capacities, skills, and the responsibilities needed to participate in an international market. There were three objectives identified that included an understanding of the products for the Cheque Oitedie: work to improve the organization's image, improve competitiveness and positioning of the cooperative in Santa Fe and New York gift fairs, and strengthen the Cheque Oitedie organization.

Image of a traditional bag Photo Credit: Ines Hinjosa, Comunidad Viva

The Cheque Oitedie community, through the support of the Rainforest Fund, has participated in the NYNOW International Fair in New York and Santa Fe International Folk Art Market, where they have received orders, and worked to overcome challenges to meet delivery schedules, production consistency, leadership, and the implementation of work on demand and the cost structure.

Project Total: $50,000

Rainforest Fund

BRAZIL

Equipe de Conservação da Amazônia (ECAM),
Strengthening the Tembe community of Pará state in the Brazilian Amazon by improving their institutional capacity and implementing their Vigilance Plan

Monitored by
Rainforest Fund

Tembe community
Photo Credit: ECAM

The Tembe community's overall goal is to protect and maintain their ancestral territory through projects that will support their land rights, and encourage community involvement and sustainability. This project was designed to build on the successes of the previous 2014 and 2015 projects.

Working with related partners, the project goals were to strengthen Tembe associations and implement their vigilance and management plan as well as develop a free, prior, and informed consent process for the design of an indigenous-led REDD+ project.

The 2016 project proposed to continue the work of the Tembe people in assisting the community to develop strategies and plans to protect and preserve their land. In order to accomplish this, the Tembe community has also partnered with the National Policy for Environmental Management on Indigenous Territories (PNGATI), and the Pará state's Indigenous Biodiversity Conservation Program.

Project Total: $114, 000

Rainforest Fund

BRAZIL

Equipe de Conservação da Amazônia (ECAM), *Strengthening of the Wai Wai people of the Trombetas Indigenous lands within the context of the National Policy for Environmental Management on Indigenous Territories (PNGATI)*

Monitored by

Rainforest Fund

The goal of our partnership with the Wai Wai community is to protect and preserve their land for future generations through projects that will not only maintain their territorial rights, but will also encourage sustainability through increased community involvement. The project's objective has been to strengthen the Wai Wai people of the Trombetas Indigenous lands within the context of the National Policy for Environmental Management on Indigenous Territories (PNGATI).

Wai Wai community meeting on Free, Prior, and Informed Consent Photo Credit: ECAM

One of the most challenging areas appears to be the strengthening of the Wai Wai Association (APIM). Currently, training sessions have been held between the Wai Wai Association and their neighboring communities, such as Maroon associations, and there is a new approach to strengthen the role of women by encouraging them to hold leadership positions within the community.

Project Total: $94,000

Rainforest Fund

CONGO BASIN

Monitored by

Rainforest Fund

National Alliance of Support and Promotion of the Aboriginal Areas and Communities Conserved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (ANAPAC), *Protect and Defend Indigenous Rights and Governance through REDD+*

This project focuses on the Democratic Republic of the Congo's indigenous communities that are directly or indirectly involved with REDD+ projects. The project and its activities were developed to focus on the rights of indigenous communities in the Congo Basin by introducing education and skills building activities so that they understand what their rights are, and how to advocate if they are violated by conservation projects.

Community meeting with ANAPAC Photo Credit: ANAPAC

The project has made significant progress by improving overall preparation, developing awareness of design tools, and training and building capacity of community members in the aboriginal areas of REDD+ projects. In particular, they have set up monitoring committees for eight villages and their activities have coordinated with various advocacy organizations and national authorities.

Project Total: $54, 500

Rainforest Fund

ECUADOR

Ceibo Alliance

Monitored by

Rainforest Fund

What started as the Water Project, which aimed at giving clean, potable water to the indigenous communities in the Sucumbíos region, has now become an alliance of the four nationalities in the area—working together through their new association, "La Alianza Ceibo" or "Ceibo Alliance". The association has been instrumental in the protection of their land, their culture, their rights, and in giving women and youth a predominant role in the community.

Meeting of Ceibo Alliance
Photo Credit:
Ceibo Alliance

2016 has seen the creation of the Indigenous Rights Defenders, a group of youth who, through intense legal training, have already proved their ability to successfully confront their government on the illegal invasion of their land by an extractive company.

Project Total: $495, 860

Rainforest Fund

News from the Field

It happens that we receive letters from our partners acknowledging our support.

Here are some updates for our supporters who are part of our efforts.

BAGUA, PERU

Protest in Bagua, Peru
Photo Credit: Thomas Quirynen, Amazon Watch

In 2009, the Rainforest Fund decided to support the indigenous peoples of Bagua, Peru upon request from La Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDESEP).

During the 2009 protest of Amazon natives against the usurpation of their lands for oil and timber development, 52 indigenous peoples were arrested and accused of killing 12 police officers. They were detained in different prisons far away in the country. The Rainforest Fund funded the group of lawyers who were representing these people through the years of legal proceedings.

The 52 indigenous peoples were acquitted in October, 2016.

According to the lawyers, the result of the trial may have been quite different without our support.

Rainforest Fund

BOLIVIA

The Rainforest Fund has partnered with Cheque Oitedie and their women artisans to improve their lives and community involvement. This project has given women the opportunity for economic independence, while benefiting from the traditional weaving skills that have been passed down for generations.

Below are experts from a letter by the head of Comunidad Viva, representing the artisans we have supported over the years.

Artisans at the Santa Fe International Folk Market
Photo Credit: Ines Hinjosa, Comunidad Viva

"Today thanks to the trust and support the Rainforest Fund has given to the Comunidad Viva team, to the Puesto Paz community, and to the Cheque Oitedie craft women, - the only Ayoreo women cooperative in Bolivia - Cheque Oitedie is a solid cooperative working exclusively on the production of their handicrafts, and prostitution is a fact of the past.

...

Beyond the great success of Cheque Oitedie, the Rainforest Fund supported all the necessary initiatives for the development of the community of Puesto Paz: its territorial and environmental plan, the re-forestation of the communal forest through the planting of native species, the growing of the garabata plant, and supplying the sixty families of the community with clean and potable water.

...

From the bottom of our hearts we want to express our deep gratitude for the support and the trust you gave us and please transmit the same gratitude to Sting and Trudie."

-Ines Hinjosa, *Head of Comunidad Viva*

Rainforest Fund

BRAZIL

The Rainforest Fund has been working in Brazil for many years, in the Roraima, Amazonas, and Pará states. In recent years, we have worked with the Surui, Tembe, and Wai Wai communities—including over 5,000 indigenous peoples who call more than 6 million hectares of land their home.

Tembe community meeting
Photo Credit: ECAM

Here are excerpts of letters from some of the communities' chiefs expressing their gratitude for support from the Rainforest Fund.

"I am writing in name of the Surui people and their partners to thank the Rainforest Fund for its long-term support of the Surui 50-year plan and specifically our efforts to protect our traditional forests. It is thanks to the support of the Rainforest Fund that the Surui were able to avoid the emission of hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon into our atmosphere and protect the biodiversity of our forests while contributing to the well-being of our community."

-Almir Narayamoga Surui, *Chief of the Paiter Surui People*

"I am writing this as the Chief of the Tembe tribe of the Brazilian Amazon. I want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for our relationship with the Rainforest Fund which is unique in that it not only supports our priorities but always respects our culture and our way of implementing our strategies without undue interference on how we implement our projects. This truly is rare and special!"

-Ednaldo Tembe, *Chief of the Tembe Indigenous Community*

Rainforest Fund

PERU

The “Niños de la Amazonia” project is a very unique project that has been very close to Trudie Styler’s heart and to the Rainforest Fund.

For three years, we supported a group of indigenous children upon request from a dear partner who traveled to San Martin de Tipischa and met these young children. The children expressed interest in extending their education, but could only continue by leaving their community and going to Iquitos.

Niños de la Amazonia
Photo Credit: Amy Coplan, Niños de la Amazonia

The Rainforest Fund decided to support these students and their studies under the condition that they would return to their community and assist the other youth and the elders at the end of each year.

Here is an excerpt of a letter from one of the girls we supported, Jesmarly.

“I am Jesmarly and I am part of the project ‘Niños de la Amazonia’ funded by the Rainforest Fund.
This project changed my life. I learnt a lot because I could leave my community in San Martin de Tipischa and go to study in Iquitos.
At the end of the year I will graduate at the University and when I finish my studies, I hope to go back to my community and teach my friends mathematics, computer skills, English and all what is important to become a good citizen.”

-Jesmarly, *“Niños de la Amazonia” Project*

Rainforest Fund

In Gratitude

Thank you for your support and commitment in the fight for indigenous peoples' rights. Whatever success we achieve, it is in large measure due to the success of the indigenous people who are at the forefront of the struggle to protect their land, environment and lives.

Photo Credit:
Mitch Anderson, ClearWater

Who We Are

Sting, Co-Founder
Trudie Styler, Co-Founder
Franca Sciuto, Co-Founder and Chair of the Board
Athos Gontijo, Financial Director
Li Lu, Treasurer
John-Paul Davidson, Board Member
Jennifer Caplan, Program and Development Officer

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