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.

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.
CONTENTS

OUR MISSION  3
FOREWORD  5
PROJECTS 2012  11
PROJECTS 2013  27
PROJECTS 2014  30
IN OTHER NEWS  50
AFTERWORD  52
RFUND OPERATIONS  54
FOREWORD

This 2012-2014 Report on the work of Rainforest Fund coincides with our 25th anniversary, first as Rainforest Foundation International and from 1995 as Rainforest Fund.

As we reflect on our work during all these years, we can acknowledge that we have contributed to the emergence of a strong indigenous leadership to interface with the modern world by ensuring external support and solidarity.

Happy indigenous Cofan boys enjoying clean, potable water.

Photo: Mitch Anderson
After 25 years, we have to recognize that the road to real empowerment of indigenous communities regarding their rights and cultural diversity is still very long, even with all of our efforts and hard work collaborating with local populations.

For indigenous people, land plays an essential role. It has been the cornerstone of their lives for generations. They take what they need from the land for subsistence, they protect it, but they have no guarantees about their rights to their sacred land and its subsoil.

Since our inception, Rainforest Fund has made a substantial financial effort to assist indigenous communities, first in Brazil and then throughout the world’s rainforests, to demarcate their ancestral lands and to be recognized as full citizens of their respective countries; but, today the acquired rights are still at risk.

Indigenous people experience serious difficulties in protecting their lands due to the absence of governments’ willingness to enforce their own laws, often giving priority to the exploitation of the rainforests by national and international economic forces that are the drivers of deforestation.

With great dismay, oil extraction, logging, mining, fires, wars, commercial agriculture, cattle ranching, hydroelectric projects, burning and poaching, and building of roads are unrelenting and pervasive in every rainforest throughout the world. The lives of people, flora and fauna are at great risk.

Governments and transnational agencies have repeatedly failed to adhere to internationally agreed upon rights of indigenous people and ethnic
minorities. Procedural and conceptual failures in project planning and rehabilitation have had serious impacts on the lives of our local partners.

Today, though, governments and economic forces have to deal with strong indigenous leaderships who are organized and make their voices heard at all levels of national and international fora, defending their rights to preserve and defend their cultural identity and traditions, their ways of life, their economic activities, and their right to pursue development in harmony with their environment – the tropical rainforests.

Indigenous people and ethnic minorities with whom we work now know the content of their internationally recognized rights and the principles and standards that are to guide the actions of states and business enterprises when their rights are potentially affected. They know that it is the obligation of the state and the responsibility of companies to adhere to the principle of 
**Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)** and to implement it in a fair and thorough way in order to protect the rights of indigenous people within the challenges posed by mega projects, including hydroelectric or mining and palm oil industries that are often incompatible with their aspirations and own priorities for development.

All of the projects we have undertaken in the field of land, human, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights have strengthened the communities and given them the tools to advocate for their rights. This is the positive side of our work, together with all the NGOs working in our similar field.

As an organization from the developed world, we have always kept in mind that our role as partners is to support the indigenous peoples, without imposing ourselves or our views upon them but respecting their legitimate leadership.

**LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:** Led by Chief Almir, the Surui have worked for years to establish a successful United Nations REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) project and together with Brazilian cosmetics giant Natura S.A. they announced on September 10th,
2013 a groundbreaking, first of its kind, partnership. **Natura S.A.** has purchased 120,000 verified carbon credits from the **Surui Forest Carbon (SFC)** project to offset their 2012 carbon emissions, which protects the rainforests and mitigates climate change.

In the words of Chief Almir, “The support of **RFUND** was crucial in getting the Surui to this stage. By strengthening and implementing the Surui protection plan and supporting the Surui park guards, the **RFUND** grant ensured that the Surui would be able to protect their forest and in this way generate the avoided deforestation credits which now will continue to finance this work. Through this support, the Surui will now be able to leverage between **US $35-70 million** over the next 30 years to invest in the protection and management of their traditional forests and their own livelihoods. This project has also opened doors for other tribes in Brazil and throughout the world by demonstrating that indigenous people can engage with some of the world’s most sophisticated environmental and land management instruments and take them to successful fruition.”

The Surui have accomplished an amazing feat, but the plight in Brazil for many indigenous peoples is, unfortunately, still bleak. Brazilian law still does not consider many indigenous people full citizens and are commonly referred to as “incapaz” meaning “unable.”

Fighting for indigenous rights often includes affecting the way that indigenous peoples are perceived, both under the law and in reality. When called upon, we support Brazilian indigenous peoples, as well as all others throughout the world’s rainforests, to acquire not only rights to their lands, but to demand that their **integrity and dignity** are upheld and that they are respected as human beings.

The following pages of this report describe our projects from 2012 through 2014, and you will realize how central the issues of land and extractive industries are for indigenous and ethnic minorities’ rights throughout these last years.
Indigenous peoples’ and ethnic minorities’ experiences with extractive industry projects is rife with alienation, dispossession both from land and other resources, lack of compensation, human rights abuses and the lowering of living standards.

Conditions that led to our Water Project – which focuses on bringing clean, potable water to the indigenous people within the Ecuadorian Amazon after years of groundwater contamination by Chevron – are clear examples of decades of the degradation of indigenous peoples’ rights, lives and environments. Indigenous communities are now increasingly intolerant of their governments’ negligence as well as mining companies that sacrifice the environment for short term economic benefits. Ecuador, Peru and Colombia have seen massive protests against controversial mining policies.

By strengthening local communities all of us win: democracy, good governance and transparency generate strong civil societies; and, through those foundations the fight against climate change and the preservation of the world’s biodiversity and natural places is possible.

Whatever success we achieve, it is in large measure due to the success of the indigenous people and tribal populations who are at the forefront of the struggle to protect their land, their environment and their lives.

If after 25 years we are still on the scene at a time when so many critical issues are emerging, we owe it to the dedication of Sting and Trudie and our many supporters who have accompanied us all these years.

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

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*Dr. Franca Sciuto*  
Chair of the Board
Cofan indigenous girl drinking clean water in her community.

Photo: Mitch Anderson
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

BISMARCK RAMU GROUP (BRG), Land is Life Project

Bismarck Ramu Group is a local organization whose goal is to empower and train individuals, groups and organizations that try to find solutions within a country that challenges indigenous peoples’ rights. The state has favored economic development based on large scale extractive industries, which often results in collective land and human rights violations as well as threats to the environment.

In its second year of funding this project’s goals included: strengthening the existing relationships between BRG and its partners; enabling indigenous landowners to use media effectively to voice their issues; and, ensuring that landowners directly and effectively address their concerns with the appropriate authorities. BRG implemented most of the project’s activities as planned during 2012 as an extension of 2011’s activities, with an augmentation of the Information Communication Education program and BRG was able to support the landowners claim for preventing the Ramu Nickel Mine to dump its waste into the maritime coastline outside Madang. Cell phone use between villages and sub-regions was initiated and continues to serve as an important means of communication. Lobbying efforts had positive results with a number of landowners and groups who felt sufficiently empowered to negotiate with the government.

This project allowed BRG to become a pioneer in PNG, influencing PNG’s elite, the middle class as well as the decision and policy makers.

PROJECT TOTAL: $164,555
MALAYSIA

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES NETWORK OF MALAYSIA (JOAS), Augmenting Indigenous Rights

JOAS is the main movement representing the indigenous voices in Malaysia, a country that denies their inherent rights to land and resources, despite having signed the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous peoples.

The main need during the second year was to continue strengthening the organization and its activities (including its women’s group), engaging with civil society organizations, participating in UN processes and the Anti-Dam network, coordinating with the Borneo Indigenous People Alliance, and increasing general awareness throughout the country on indigenous rights.

This project resulted in the increased visibility of JOAS and fostered a strong, united voice within Malaysia – JOAS is seen as the sole organization representing Orang Asal’s interests. They have strengthened their regional network of NGOs and community based groups, while maintaining their position at the forefront of advocating for the Orang Asal’s rights to their traditional lands and for the protection and conservation of biodiversity and natural resources found in those areas. Finally in 2012, JOAS cooperated with government agencies and environmental groups relating to REDD+ Readiness and engaged with regional indigenous organizations to participate in international activities within the UN.

PROJECT TOTAL: $94,600
This project supported the organization CIDOB to protect land territories and natural resources of the indigenous peoples in North La Paz, the Confederación de Pueblos indígenas, in their activities on land resources.

Throughout the year, workshops were held that educated indigenous peoples about extractive industries’ negative environmental impacts, and groundwork was done for claiming three indigenous territorial zones. Two indigenous territories achieved guarantees for financial compensation from the Inter-American Development Bank and the Bolivian Highway Administrator because of the negative consequences that result from the construction of a highway through indigenous territories. And finally, indigenous movements from the lowlands and highlands (CIDOB and CONAMAO) worked together to develop a proposal for a new consultation law that emphasizes Free, Prior and Informed consent.

PROJECT TOTAL: $45,386
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION NORWAY
Latin America

BRAZIL

HUTAKARA, Surveillance of the Eastern Border of the Yanomami Indigenous Territory

While our support was mainly institutional, here we had the duty to help the Yanomami people protect the borders of their territory against illegal invasion by extractive industries, particularly gold miners on the Eastern border.

Advocacy aimed at FUNAI focused on removing the remaining gold diggers within the Yanomami territory and protecting the limits from illegal invasion. An expedition along the Eastern border provided an overview of the security situation. A meeting was held with the representatives of the communities in each of the seven border regions to discuss challenges and determine strategies for land management.

PROJECT TOTAL: $38,194
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR) & GABON

BRAINFOREST & MAISON DE L’ENFANT ET DE LA FEMME PYGMÉE (MEFP), Community Legal Fieldworkers (CLFW)

This three year project aims at improving the capacities of local civil society organizations and forest communities in CAR and Gabon to understand, analyse and use national laws related to forest management, land resource rights and human rights. In order to achieve this goal, specially trained paralegal workers were deployed to identified “hot spot” locations where there are existing or threatened abuses of rights.

The project’s first year resulted in several positive steps including the selection and training of 18 law graduates and young lawyers and the identification of 59 participating forest communities, including 3,500 indigenous people. Local indigenous organizations, Brainforest and MEFP, developed monitoring tools and processes to follow up with CLFWs and to measure the changes in community capacities in terms of their greater understanding of national legislation and their use of that knowledge in promoting and claiming their rights.

This project ended its first year on track and is based on participatory approaches of the indigenous communities throughout each stage of the project.

PROJECT TOTAL: $177,430
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK
Latin America

**CAMEROON, CAR & DRC**

MEFP, CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (CED), RESEAU RESSOURCES NATURELLES (RRN), Supporting Indigenous Peoples and Forest Communities to Engages in the Development of Official Climate Change Mitigation Strategies

Here, the aim was to ensure that national strategies and actions, along with international support, for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) in three Congo Basin countries were participatory, transparent and respect and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities. In order to achieve this goal, Congo Basin civil society and indigenous organizations must have the capacity to influence policy-making regarding forests both nationally and internationally.

This project made strides in establishing a presence at the national level by holding meetings with the Forestry Ministry and the High Commission for Human Rights. In Cameroon, for example, local organizations participated in several consultations with the government on climate policy, published a newsletter on the REDD process and organized a meeting on social safeguards in REDD to raise awareness of civil servants.

**PROJECT TOTAL: $102,280**
FUNDACIÓN PARA EL DESARROLLO DEL PUEBLO WOUNAAN,  
Securing Wounaan Lands in the Darien

Building on previous work, this project focuses on land titling within Panama. The goals included: pushing for the formal recognition of the five collective land petitions filed in 2010 and 2011 (two in Panama Este in 2010 and three in the Darien in 2011); gaining legal titles for three new Wounaan collective lands in the Darien (totalling 69,300 hectares/171,244 acres); and, educating three Wounaan communities on their human rights as well as on the Wounaan’s Organic Charter.

The project ended with the titling of the first two collective lands – the very first in Panama. The procedures established through that process were expected to help pave the way for the remaining 25 collective lands in the Darien by 2015.

PROJECT TOTAL: $51,577
**PERU**

**FEDIQUEP, Strengthening the Environmental Monitoring of the Quechua of the Pastaza River**

This project dealt with the environmental monitoring of extractive industries, with a focus on reporting contamination and environmental violations to the state and publicly demanding remedial action and compensation. In order to carry out these goals, the project centered on three other major actions: to improve the communities’ knowledge about their rights and extractive industries, to strengthen their own federation to better represent their voices and needs; and to actively participate in an indigenous alliance of all federations in the Pastaza region.

Several workshops were held related to hydrocarbon and consultation law, and over a dozen assemblies throughout the Quechua communities resulted in a consensus to mobilize and voice claims to the Peruvian state and Pluspetrol [the state’s oil company] to acknowledge and address the problems that the communities faced as a result of oil exploration so that possible solutions could be addressed. A major step towards fulfilling this project’s mission occurred in June 2012 with the agreement by the central government to create a multi-sector commission with the purpose of resolving the problems suffered by the Quechua villages, most notably ones related to health.

**PROJECT TOTAL: $62,766**
AIDESEP, Securing Land Rights for Indigenous Communities in the Peruvian Amazon

This project related to securing land rights for Aawajun, Kichwa, Shawi and Shipibo communities for a total of 35 communities, establishing legal and political groundwork, holding meetings, workshops, and working to obtain demarcation and titling of at least 5 communities.

In 2012, the activities aimed at establishing the legal and political groundwork necessary to secure land rights in San Martin and Ucayali. Activities included meetings and workshops to establish descriptions of problems; a prioritization of the necessary actions for recognition and titling; land management discussions; and, the development of a process to achieve those goals. Collaborations with an Awajun lawyer, radio station, and other NGOs signaled a wide range of support and resources behind this project. AIDES-EP also cooperated with the Regional Environmental Authority (ARA) to enhance REDD+ Indigena as a means to advance land titling and facilitated a visit by government officials to the communities identified for recognition and titling.

PROJECT TOTAL: $58,875
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION US
Latin America

PERU

AIDESEP, Emergency Funding

Starting in 2009, we supported AIDESEP with emergency funding first through Rainforest Foundation Norway after the Bagua Riots, and later in 2010, 2011 and 2012 through Rainforest Foundation US for the legal defence of the indigenous leaders who were jailed following the Riots.

PROJECT TOTAL: $62,000

GUYANA

AMERINDIAN PEOPLES ASSOCIATION (APA),
Ensuring Indigenous Participation in Climate Change Policies

This project sought to continue to build upon similar activities that began in 2010, involving Training of Trainers workshops, community workshops, advocacy work and new in 2012 was a land assessment study aimed at clearly identifying and documenting the land rights and related problems faced by indigenous communities in Guyana.

The project provided institutional support to the APA to remain engaged in the national discussion regarding REDD and to continue representing the indigenous peoples of Guyana at the negotiating tables.

PROJECT TOTAL: $97,010


BOLIVIA

COMUNIDAD VIVA, Advancing Community Water Management

We have supported Comunidad Viva with great success and achievements since 2002. We started assisting them to recover their land from the missionaries who had evicted the Ayoreo Community. Then our support focused on getting their land titles back, and developing a women’s group. Thereafter, we funded a project related to their community management plan, and finally to install water tanks in their community houses, school and medical center.

The project in 2012 had three components: the reforestation of 500 hectares of forest by planting 2500 plants from the nursery by 20 youngsters, which included an additional training course about the ecology of the forest ecosystem; the installation of 10 ecological lavatories and relied upon beneficiary participation, particularly regarding the building of the wooden bases; and, the installation of 16 water systems for the 16 families living permanently in the community, again involving them in the work and in workshops about the issue of water, how to use it and maintain the systems.

The project has implemented all the activities.

PROJECT TOTAL: $75,000
EQUIPE DE CONSERVACAO DA AMAZONIA (ECAM) – Supporting the Protection of the Surui Reserve and Community Territorial Management (REDD Project)

This project supported the protection of the Surui Reserve within the context of their Indigenous Community Territorial Management and REDD Project and is a continuation of the 2011 project.

Since 1997, the Surui have been protecting and restoring the important part of the forest where they live, while developing sustainable income generation projects as alternatives to illegal logging and the unsustainable monoculture soybean farming that have been driving the local economy. But their efforts require scarce resources, and the Surui therefore needed short-term assistance to continue their pioneering role in the new green economy to take the next crucial steps required to earn payments for Environmental Services through their Carbon Credit Project. This support intended to ensure that the Surui would be able to secure payments for environmental services and earn the revenue needed to help them safeguard their culture and protect, restore and sustainably manage their land.

The UN validated their project, and it was presented at the Durban Conference on Climate Change on November 29, 2011.

PROJECT TOTAL: $94,693
Ecuador

E-TECH INTERNATIONAL, Technical Support in the Codillera Del Condor Region

This project took place in the Cordillera, which is home to an estimated 120,000 Shuar spread over approximately 500 communities and is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. E-Tech, together with the indigenous communities, worked to combat the negative impacts of the opening of two mines: a gold and silver mine and a copper mine which impacts 100,000 square miles of the Cordillera.

At the end of the project year, E-Tech and the indigenous communities produced technical-legal evaluations of the potential impacts of the mining project, which resulted in National Environmental Ministry delaying the permit to process copper at the mine. The project also resulted in creating media and outreach tools depicting current social and environmental conditions throughout Ecuador.

PROJECT TOTAL: $20,000
Monitored by RAINFOREST FUND
Latin America

ECUADOR

Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia, Water Project

Beginning in August 2012, we have been supporting the local mestizo communities of the Lago Agrio region of the Ecuadorian Amazon in their fight for clean water. For decades, oil companies (Texaco and now Chevron) contaminated the groundwater as a result of resource exploitation and also contributed to further deforestation. Years of consuming polluted water has led to significant rises in cancers, birth deformities, miscarriages and disease amongst the indigenous and mestizo populations throughout the entire region.

Through this partnership, local communities build rainwater purification systems so that not only will they produce clean, potable water, but they also have a sustainable, culturally relevant and empowering solution. They work together throughout all aspects of the project, from planning, to buying materials, constructing the systems, maintaining them, and educating each other about the systems and broader health. In the first year of work, 205 rainwater systems were constructed reaching over 2,000 people.

PROJECT TOTAL: $182,721
Simone Chiquejno - a wise woman and one of the best weavers of Cheque Oitedie - holding the plant she harvested in the community of Puesto Paz.

Photo Credit: Enrique Uzquiano
2012 - 2014 Biennial Report

2013 Projects

RF Norway 28
RF UK 30
RF US 32
RF Fund 35
The activities planned for 2013 reflected a change of strategy compared to 2010-11 in BRG’s approach to tackling the problems faced by local communities in fighting for justice and their land. BRG has reflected on its achievements and the result of this process was the recognition that problems continue to grow despite all efforts. Therefore, BRG broadened its focus and joined forces with other likeminded and able organizations, establishing a network that, through modern technology, can mobilise and bring attention to the plights of landowners in even the most remote regions of PNG. The activities planned for 2013 were in line with the goal of bringing a new strategy and new technology to the fight for local rights and the massive destruction of PNG rainforests.

Throughout 2013, BRG was on track with project goals and trained 11 members of Women in Agriculture (WIA), 18 members of Lutheran Development Service and staff members of local NGOs and leaders to better understand development issues, local initiatives and their sustainability and globalization in general to better help communities advance their voices and rights. A couple of villagers from Sausi shared their experiences at the Media Freedom Day at Divine World University (DWU), and women from WIA shared their success stories with others to foster collective learning. Finally, the youth were involved with BRG by participating in internships and attending lectures given by BRG at DWU.

PROJECT TOTAL: $135,872
MONITORED BY RAINFOREST FOUNDATION NORWAY

Asia

MALAYSIA

JOAS, Augmenting Indigenous Rights

While Malaysia has risen to be one of the South East Asian tigers, its growth and wealth have been at the expenses of the country’s many indigenous populations whose land has been taken away giving way to huge oil palm plantations and other large scale projects. JOAS is the main movement representing the indigenous voice in the country that denies the inherent rights of indigenous people despite having signed the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People.

Environmental and human rights concerns have been very low on the agenda as the country has been pushing towards becoming a fully industrialized nation by 2020. In its third year of support, this project seeks to augment the rights of indigenous people in a country that disregards them. JOAS represents their voice.

The project was successful in holding coordination meetings and assemblies between indigenous communities, youth, women and national representatives to advance land and human rights and articulate their positions. The first newsletter was produced in April 2013, and institutionally, the JOAS database and social media are being updated regularly with new information. The online radio geared up in unison with UNICEF to disseminate information to communities and individuals through podcasts and CDs/thumb drives when people don’t have access to the internet.

PROJECT TOTAL: $154,600
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR) and in GABON

Brainforest (Gabon) MEFP (CAR), Community Legal field Workers

During the first year, the project progressed well and was on track according to its original time frame and objectives, which were to place the legal fieldworkers in communities, planning their work, involving indigenous people in the participatory approach of identifying the economic and political challenges to be addressed.

Unfortunately, the political situation in CAR rose to crisis level, particularly during March 2013. The project needed to be put on hold in CAR to avoid placing field workers and community members in danger. As of the end of 2013, the project was still suspended.

In Gabon, and in CAR until the project halted, some significant accomplishments had been made including the training of CLFWs to gain expertise in identifying gaps in national laws and the ability to identify forest communities’ rights in international agreements. Forty paralegals were trained throughout Gabon and CAR to tackle the core issues of community rights and the specific issues that their communities face. Over 2,000 people participated in meetings with 1,500 either trained or in training; 65 community representatives can explain their rights within national legislation and international conventions. Fifteen birth certificates for children in Gabon have been acquired, and this process will continue.

PROJECT TOTAL: $167,461
CONGO BASIN

Observatoire Congolais des Droits de L’Homme (OCDH) & BRAIN-FOREST, Reducing the negative Impacts on Forest Communities due to the Expansion of Industrial Palm Oil Plantations in the Congo Basin

This project is aimed at reducing the negative impacts on forest communities due to the expansion of industrial palm oil plantations.

Palm oil development is a threat to indigenous people’s land, rights and environment. Based on an initial investigation by both RFUK and local Gabonese and Congolese organizations into current palm oil development, this project was the preliminary step that worked with indigenous people and NGOs to develop strategies to reduce the negative impacts on forest communities that industrial palm oil plantations have on their forests.

As this project is an initial one, the preliminary groundwork in 2013 included strategy discussions for how to utilize the research conducted by RFUK to best work with communities on advancing their rights while mitigating the effects of palm oil expansion.

PROJECT TOTAL: $39,164
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION US
Latin America

PERU

FEDIQUEP, Strengthening the Environmental Monitoring of the Quechua in the Pastaza River to Defend their Territories

This project aimed at strengthening the Environmental monitoring of the Quechua of the Pastaza River to defend their territories.

The first year of this project centered on an indigenous environmental monitoring program conducted by young indigenous leaders. Three major actions were added to the project in 2013: improving community members’ knowledge about their rights, strengthening their own federation to better represent their voices and needs and actively participate in an indigenous alliance of all federations in the Pastaza region.

Towards these goals, FEDIQUEP leaders participated in workshops on how to combat impunity and corruption and attended several meetings with government representatives to demand that environmental tests be published and remediated. Furthermore, FEDIQUEP visited communities to update families on the negotiation process with the government on the water clean-up that affected their lands, ensured that they understood their rights vis-a-vis the government and how they are being impacted.

PROJECT TOTAL: $84,512
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION US
Latin America

PANAMA

Fundación Para el Desarrollo del Pueblo Wounaan (FUNDEPW)
Fundación Emberá y Wounaan de Tierras Colectivas (FUNDEWTC) Wounaan People’s National Congress (CNPW) and Embera-Wounaan National Congress of Collective Lands (CGTCEW), Land Titling and Protection of Collective Lands in the Darien

This project built on the land titling and protection of collective lands in the Darien Fundación from past years.

Since 2010, the RFUND has been supporting the Wounaan – one of the three indigenous people in the Darien of Eastern Panama – to obtain their collective lands. In 2012, the first two collective lands were titled. The project in 2013 expanded its work with the Wounaan, but also to the Embera, and focused on securing their rights to their ancestral land and implementing sustainable forest management systems. This project included three parts: securing land titles, building sustainable community management of collective lands and capacity building.

The project fulfilled many of its goals including the mapping of Emera territories in collaboration with local governments, Afro-Panamaian representatives and neighboring communities; and, the mapping of Wounaan territories was reviewed and approved by communities. Also, a renowned environmental lawyer was contracted to carry out a land overlap study in coordination with the indigenous communities in order to establish land boundaries and be able to more effectively advocate for demarcation.

PROJECT TOTAL: $161,515
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION US
Latin America

PERU

AIDESEP, Legal Support

At the time of the writing of this report, we are continuing our funding of AIDESEP’s legal defence of the indigenous people jailed and on trial after the Bagua Riots. We have been funding this organization since 2009, and in April 2013 RFUND renewed its commitment to supporting the indigenous peoples who are accused. As this project is an emergency one, its schedule is unaligned with the typical funding cycle and will end in April 2014.

Over the past year, AIDESEP and its lawyers have been highly successful in defending and acquitting over 100 of the accused, ensuring that they are tried in the correct courtrooms and are given a fair trial.

PROJECT TOTAL: $59,290
BRAZIL

ECAM, Supporting the Continuation of the Protection Program of the Surui Reserve

To recap this very important project, the Surui have been working for years to establish carbon credits and have now been the first ever successful indigenous-led REDD project. Recently, they documented illegal logging, fishing and cattle grazing on their territory. The activities were discovered by members of the tribe we have been supporting to become forest rangers in support of their REDD project, and they presented their findings to the law enforcement officials.

In Fall 2013, the Surui in collaboration with the Brazil Cosmetics giant, Natura S.A., established an agreement for the sale of 120,000 Verified Carbon Credits, which will bring to the community between $35-$70 million over the next 30 years. The Surui will use these funds to advance their 50-year plan to sustain, maintain and advance their green projects.

PROJECT TOTAL: $138,346
PERU

NINOS DE AMAZONIA, Educational scholarships for the youth of the Kukuma community of the San Martin De Tipischea

This project has great importance for RFUND. For the first time we are not dealing with indigenous people’s land titling, border protection etc., but with indigenous teenagers who went to Iquitos to study to become the leaders of tomorrow. This project, very close to Trudie’s heart, started two years ago when we supported the “Niños” travel to New York City and Washington D.C.; then, their first year at the University and their travels back to their village.

The Niños (Jesmarly, Roy, Edil, Miuler and Liz) have been working diligently and we wanted to continue helping them to study and live in a safe environment. Therefore, in 2013, we gave them the opportunity to live together in a rented house in the Iquitos, chaperoned by an indigenous “mother,” Carola, from their village, and most importantly, provided them the opportunities to go back to their village during some weekends and holidays to maintain the link with their families and their own culture.

PROJECT TOTAL: $50,000
Monitored by RAINFOREST FUND
Latin America

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**ECUADOR**

**E-TECH INTERNATIONAL & CEDHU, Protection of the Indigenous Communities and Environment from Large-scale Mining Impacts in the Cordillera del Condor Region**

Protection of indigenous communities and their environment from imminent large-scale mining impacts in the Cordillera del Condor region.

The support we gave in 2012 produced a technical/legal evaluation which uncovered the high potential for adverse water quality effects, failure of tailings dam and environmental impacts that could last for centuries. In 2013, the project highlighted the need to address the environmental and human rights impacts of at least two large scale mining projects in the Cordillera del Condor in Southern Ecuador, home to the Shuar and the Saraguro indigenous communities.

Towards these goals, workshops were held with Shuar villages to establish community maps that contain the location of the territories of the communities that surround rivers and living spaces. The first workshop was held in April and produced six maps that will also be used in connection with the audio-visual aspect of this project that will help communities to understand and use the information about their lands and its potential vulnerabilities regarding the mines. Also, an initial environmental/water monitoring assessment was completed to achieve a baseline water quality reading.

**PROJECT TOTAL: $40,000**
Within the Lago Agrio region of the Ecuadorian Amazon, decades of oil pollution have resulted in groundwater contamination leaving the indigenous and mestizo communities without potable water. For years, the consumption of tainted water has resulted in cancer, birth defects, intestinal diseases and turmoil among men, women and children. Our commitment to bring clean, potable water to all the indigenous and mestizo populations of this region is unwavering and we continued this partnership with Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia (The Frente) and for the first year with ClearWater.

The Frente and ClearWater work side-by-side with indigenous and mestizo communities to develop, plan and execute the necessary steps for the construction of rainwater purification systems. Indigenous people are at the helm of this project and are directing the management, construction, education and finances – not only are these steps ones that enable them to carry out this Water Project, but are steps that simultaneously build their own skills, networks and sustainable methods of securing water rights, as well as their broader human, political and social rights.

The Frente and ClearWater each built 205 rainwater harvesting systems, totaling 410 in 2013

**FRENTE TOTAL: $356,924**

**CLEARWATER TOTAL: $270,000**
Monitored by RAINFOREST FUND
Africa & Latin America

IVORY COAST, ABIDJAN

Individual Educational Scholarship

We first granted a scholarship in 2010 to a young student, Paulin, from Ivory Coast who wanted to study Environmental Management in Abidjan. We granted 3,000 USD for his studies, and he kept us informed about his progress.

He was later advised by his teacher to enrol online with a University in Canada. We granted USD 2,500 for his enrolment, and he proved to be the best student in this course, obtaining high grades at his exams and a free scholarship for a course through University in Washington. His studies on the Kyoto protocol and the Clean Development Mechanisms are at the heart of our work on Climate Change.

PROJECT TOTAL: $3,630

BOLIVIA

External Project Evaluation, Comunidad Viva

After having worked with Comunidad Viva for over 10 years, we found it important to have a third party evaluate the project to determine successes, challenges and opportunities for the future.

The report concluded that the work has been effective, productive and empowering. Two suggestions that the external evaluator mentioned were for Comunidad Viva to establish a secure cash income from the goods the women’s group produces, as well as ensuring the land territory within which the bromeliad plants are grown.
A general view of the wild garabata plants. During the winter, the leaves become red temporarily because of the presence of special pigments.

Photo: Enrique Uzquiano
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

BRG, Challenging and Transforming the Current Model of Development

This project is in its fourth and final year of funding, and this year is supported additionally by generous donations from the Ormeley Dinner held in London in June 2013. The goal of this project is to challenge the current development paradigm within PNG, one that favors extractive industries, and replace it with practices that are relevant to all PNGeans and ones that are sustainable. The strategy is to develop a strong and unified civil society based on five principles laid out in the PNG Constitution, including: Integral human development, Equality and participation, National sovereignty and self-reliance, Natural resources and environment, Papua New Guinean ways.

PROJECT TOTAL: $168,666

INDONESIA

PARADISEA, Protection of the forest in the Bird Head region of West Papua

This project works to prevent the high level of deforestation that has occurred throughout Indonesia but which has not yet reached the cultural and biological Bird Head Peninsula despite development plans that are now threatening the forests of New Guinea. The project’s mission is the establishment of green corridors between the nature reserves Cagar Alam Tambrauw, Utara, Salatan and Pegunungan Arfak, in West Papua province of Indonesia where the indigenous communities seek to secure their rights to manage the forest sustainably according to their needs and protect the forest from industrial exploitation.

PROJECT TOTAL: $188,100
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

ENVIRONMENT, RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DEVELOPMENT (ERND), Securing a Favorable Jurisprudence of the Indigenous Rights of the Batwa People through Legal and Administrative Guidance

This project is a new and interesting one as it comes to the rescue of the Batwa Indigenous people who are involved in a legal case that is currently being considered at the Supreme Court regarding their lands and natural resource rights. We expect that given the history of law regarding indigenous peoples in DRC, the case will be rejected. Hence, the Batwa people, through this project, are seeking to prepare themselves to present the complaint to the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

PROJECT TOTAL: $73,260
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK
Africa

**GABON**

**RAINFOREST, Community Legal Fieldworkers**

This is the third and final year of the CLFW project, and the work in CAR is suspended due to the internal violence that has been occurring since March 2013 through the time of the writing of this report. As of winter 2014, CAR is experiencing such violence that international and UN peacekeepers have been sent to curtail the conflict between Muslim (Seleka rebels) and Christian factions of the population. In Spring 2013, the Seleka ousted CAR’s President, Francois Bozizé. Over the past half a year, thousands of people have been killed and displaced, and as reports have shown, the number one priority in the country is security. Citizens in CAR are concerned first and foremost at this point with their survival and the survival of their families – meeting their daily and basic needs of food, water and shelter are top priority. For these reasons, we have taken the decision to suspend funding of the project within CAR until security has been restored and communities are capable of and can participate in project activities.

In Gabon, the activities will continue as planned, including the further training and securitization of CLFWs within indigenous communities to assist in the indigenous peoples’ legal needs.

**PROJECT TOTAL: $109,591**
CONGO BASIN

BRAINFOREST & FORUM POUR LA GOUVERNANCE ET DES DROITS DE L'HOMME (FGDH), Reducing the negative impacts on forest communities due to the expansion of industrial palm oil plantations in the Congo Basin (Gabon and Republic of Congo)

This project is in its second year of funding, and it is expected that the planned activities will allow the partner organizations to strengthen their advocacy, communication and research strategies to curtail the effects of palm oil expansion and at the same time, benefit the local indigenous peoples from planned activities, as the effects of palm oil expansion are rapidly occurring and its effects are devastating.

The second phase of this work focuses on supporting local and indigenous communities to engage with decision-makers and companies to mitigate negative impacts on their communities.

PROJECT TOTAL: $107,398
Monitored by RAINFOREST FOUNDATION US
Latin America

PANAMA

Congreso general de Tierras Colectivas Embera y Wounaan (CGTCEW) and Congreso Nacional del Pueblo Wounaan (CNPW), Protection of Collective Lands in the Darien

This project is in its 4th year of funding and seeks to title four Embera and Wounaan collective lands, which correspond to more than one million acres of land, and to implement participatory land management plans in order to consolidate their rights and establish a solid base for sustainable development.

PROJECT TOTAL: $131,137

PERU

FEDIQUEP, Environmental Monitoring and Organizational Strengthening

This project is in its third year of funding and the goal is to continue and enhance the organizational strengthening of the Quechua federation in order to allow a better monitoring of their territory.

PROJECT TOTAL: 80,189

EJECUTOR DEL CONTRATO DE ADMINISTRACIÓN (ECA RCA), Strengthening Capacity for the Protection and Management of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve

The goals of this new project are similar to the previous one as it seeks to strengthen traditional governance, assess environmental risks to the community’s reserve through a participatory diagnostic and implement a community monitoring program. The idea of indigenous peoples being able to monitor directly what is happening on their land and then act on it is a worthy objective.

PROJECT TOTAL: $81,900
2012 -2014 Biennial Report

2014 Projects

Monitored by RAINFOREST FUND
Latin America

BRAZIL

ECAM, Assisting the Tembe Community in the Development of an Indigenous Management and Vigilance Plan

ECAM has been working with indigenous communities in the Brazilian Amazon since 2002 with a specific focus on strengthening indigenous communities. We have supported for the last three years the Surui project, which ended with great international success.

In this project, ECAM will work with the Tembe indigenous people of the state of Para to assist them in the development of their Life Plan within the context of the needs presented by the community. Specifically, over the course of 2014, ECAM will train a number of Tembe as indigenous park guards, assist in developing a vigilance plan, cultural map, ethnoenvironmental diagnostic survey and support an ethnozoning process.

PROJECT TOTAL: $118,908

ECUADOR

FRENTE DE DEFENSA DE LA AMAZONIA & CLEARWATER, Water Project

Continuing in 2014 is the support for Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia and ClearWater in responding to the water crisis in the Lago Agrio region of the Amazon Rainforest. By engaging indigenous communities to lead the construction, technical maintenance and sustainability of their rainwater filtration tanks, along with the financial reporting and health education, these projects will continue to fulfill not only the communities’ water rights, but also will continue to empower them to claim their greater human rights.

FRENTE TOTAL: $407,675
CLEARWATER TOTAL: $424,000
**BOLIVIA**

**COMUNIDAD VIVA, Assisting in Chequ Oitedie’s Participation in International Markets**

The project is being carried out under the responsibility of two Ayoreos anthropologists who created the organization Comunidad Viva that we supported at its inception. During five years of collaboration, we helped them to create a women’s group, Cheque Otiede.

In 2014, this project aims at increasing the growth of the Garabata plant which is used by the women to make handicrafts. Cheque Otiede has grown in experience but has also presented new challenges to the women’s group such as the need to increase the quantity of raw materials in order to increase the production and sales of the handcrafts, and also to increase the empowerment of the women who join the group and train them in the different aspects of the work (i.e. finances) and their ability to sell to international markets. For several years, the women’s group has participated at an international artisans fair in New Mexico, USA which allowed the women to maintain their identity and culture despite the strong influence of the modern way of life.

**PROJECT TOTAL: $73,700**
The past three years have been full of growth, opportunity, development and maturation for each “Niños.” In 2014, Jesmarly continues to study accounting and has received scholarships for tuition based on her merit; Müller decided to join the National Police in Lima and is being supported by his family who lives there; Roy continues to study business administration in Iquitos and has also received scholarships for his good grades; Liz continues studying to be an executive secretary; and Edil decided to return to the village.

As the Niños follow their own dreams, their choices have lead them in somewhat different directions from each other and even from their own initial thoughts about their futures. We are proud that the support we have provided them has helped to prepare them for the inevitable responsibilities they face today and will continue to face in the future: this project was not only about supporting them in their wishes to study, but it was about forging independent, autonomous individuals who are responsible and informed citizens.

After a restructuring of housing, meals, and school costs, there was no request for continual financial support from the Fund in 2014.
IN OTHER NEWS

ONE WORLD FUTBOL

In 2013, our friends One World Futbol donated 20 indestructible soccer balls to the Kukuma Village in Peru – the Niños’ community. These balls (OWFs) were designed to be played anywhere – whether at the beach or on the roughest surfaces of the world – so that kids, adults, organizations and players could be uninhibited in their passion for play. These OWFs were delivered to Iquitos where the five Niños lived and were taken by them back to their fellow community members in August 2013. The OWFs were well received by the community – young children and adults alike!
SOCIAL MEDIA

In December 2012, we launched a Facebook page and have grown to over 23,000 followers. We share important news updates related to indigenous peoples’ rights and environments; climate change and its effects on indigenous peoples; share beautiful photos and facts; initiate polls to get followers’ feedback and ideas.

AND, IN APRIL 2013...

Our blog went live which features longer articles about topics that all surround and relate back to indigenous and traditional populations. The pieces range in subject from climate change education in schools; the social and gendered effects of extractive industries throughout the rainforests; voting in Cameroon; and, theoretical approaches to how to think about indigenous peoples, “what is possible,” and ideas for greater justice.

Social media has enabled us to reach a broad audience from around the world who are interested and passionate about similar issues to raise awareness.
At the end of this report, I would like to thank all those who have taken the time to read it and appreciate the work undertaken by so many indigenous people in Africa, Asia and Latin America to defend the rights to their land, their culture and environment.

As an organization that has been on the scene for 25 years, we continue to believe that our support is crucial to indigenous peoples’ and tribal communities’ survival.

The character of an organization is shaped by its origin: its strength and endurance are often determined by the ability to remember those origins and to stay in touch with the experience from which it was born. Dreams quickly disappear and movements die if they lose the power of their original inspiration and sacrifice.

Our organization did not emerge out of an abstract concern or theory about the environment or the indigenous people. It began because an indigenous leader asked for help.

Our founders Sting and Trudie agreed, not out of concern for the plight of a particular tribe of the Amazon basin, but because they understood that the threat to the home of those people was part of a larger threat to the
planet and our common future. This led to the effort to create a permanent partnership between people around the world who are concerned with the environment and human rights of the indigenous people living in and fighting for the protection of the rainforests of the world.

This happened 25 years ago.

The organization still bears the clear marks of its birth. This has given us legitimacy and our distinct identity. The primal connection to a particular place and people, the link between the rights of indigenous people and the need to defend and conserve their homeland has kept us rooted in reality. The areas we work to protect are filled not with mere symbols of ecology but with real people. The reality has forced us to face many difficult issues, to make painful choices and realize the scale of the problems confronting indigenous people and the whole world.

During these 25 years, we have learned that despite the work that we and others have undertaken, the threats to the rainforests and violations of human rights of indigenous people and forest dwellers continue, just as they did in the late eighties.

From the pages of this report one can measure what has been achieved to try to counteract the bad practices and decisions made by businesses and governments.

To some it might seem that we have achieved little in the face of the immense environmental problems that our friends and the whole world encounter every day.

Others, who are aware of the complexity and the depth of these problems, may view these achievements as a necessary contribution toward the protection of the forest and its inhabitants.

To all, we say thank you for the support you give us.

Dr. Franca Sciuto
Chair of the Board
THE RAINFOREST FUND’S OPERATIONS

The Rainforest Fund was created to guarantee the continuation of the projects of its partners in the field and to respond to their needs by securing funding, with awareness that projects presented by the indigenous communities are tailored to their needs and bring positive changes to their lives.

To avoid dependency and ensure responsibility, the Rainforest Fund, in principle, allocates 80% of projects’ total budgets, with the remaining 20% to be covered by our partners.

Following the same philosophy, projects, in general, are eligible to be funded for three years. However, this period can be extended to five years depending upon the evaluation of the project, its importance as a model for other areas, its impact, and the pressing needs of the indigenous community involved.