

FOREST ALLIES: JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



Photo: Sergio Izquierdo

Climate change is one of the most urgent threats facing our planet today. If we hope stave off climate collapse, it's crucial that we conserve and restore the world's tropical forests. In doing so, we also protect the livelihoods of 1.6 billion people who depend on forests to live.

In our 30-plus years of work, we have found that those who make their living from the forest have the greatest incentive to protect it. But forest communities often lack access to the resources that would enable their forest enterprises to meet their full economic potential.

That's why the Rainforest Alliance has formed Forest Allies, a community of practice focused on protecting, restoring, and enabling responsible management of tropical forests. Together, we will build and foster unique partnerships, work beyond our individual supply chains, and engage and empower local communities in critical forest landscapes. Join our Forest Allies community to have a greater impact on forests within—and beyond—your supply chain.

The Forest Allies community of practice realizes this vision through two main areas of support:

1. Annual membership dues
2. Participation in bi-annual workshops

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE?

A community of practice forms when individuals come together for a common goal. The group exchanges knowledge, best practices, and solutions for shared challenges. Members represent stakeholders that would typically not have the opportunity to collaborate. By participating in a community of practice, members gain access to knowledge and solutions, inspiration, and innovative partnerships. Each time the Forest Allies community comes together we will explore a different key theme, such as ecosystem services, gender equality, or access to finance. Members will leave these workshops invigorated by collaboration and new perspectives.

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN THE MAYA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

The Forest Allies annual membership fee will go toward projects or locations around the world in need of resources. An example of successful community forestry is our work in Guatemala's [Maya Biosphere Reserve](#), the largest protected area in Central America and a critical carbon sink.

For more than twenty years, nine community concessions (so called because the Guatemalan government "conceded" the right to use the forest sustainably) have maintained a near-zero deforestation rate—that's twelve times less than adjacent areas of the reserve—while creating regenerative, local economies. Net forest gain equaling 695 American football fields has been found in these communities; abundant jaguar populations and biodiversity can be found here, too. Meanwhile, other areas of the reserve have been ravaged by narcotrafficking and cattle ranching.

Through Forest Allies membership, your company will be investing in work like this where investments are needed most. We'll then share results-based claims within our community of practice to clearly illustrate impact.



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INTEGRATED COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT

Through membership in Forest Allies, business partners will support the Rainforest Alliance's model of Integrated Community Forest Management (ICFM), which is equally focused on protecting natural forests and partnering with communities to build strong local economies.

Embodying the concept of people and nature thriving in harmony, this model involves:

- A results-oriented approach to sustainable forest management and healthy landscapes
- Placing communities at the heart of restoring our world's forest ecosystems
- Incorporating shared learning and results
- Mobilizing those scaled learnings, resources, and tools across geographies and sectors

OUTCOMES OF ENGAGING FOREST COMMUNITIES TO PROTECT TROPICAL FORESTS

Deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss persist at a staggering rate, despite an increase in private and public sector sustainability commitments. The Forest Allies approach aims to create long-lasting impact through people and partnerships. With our community of practice, we want to contribute to:

1. Maintaining and restoring forests and biodiversity
2. Implementing sustainable forest management at scale
3. Supporting forest communities in adapting to climate change
4. Elevating the expertise of forest communities
5. Improving livelihoods for foresters and their families

**“Networks connect;
communities care.”**

HENRY MINTZBERG

Author and Cleghorn Professor of Management Studies at McGill University

BENEFITS FOR FOREST ALLIES MEMBERS

As a participant, your company will enjoy the following benefits:

- Gap analysis of company policies against the Accountability Framework
- Participation in bi-annual meetings alongside forest community representatives and other leading brands
- A strategic partnership with Rainforest Alliance, including:
 - Access to Rainforest Alliance technical expertise
 - Support from a dedicated account manager
 - Communications and marketing support, including storytelling and thought leadership
- Access to results-based claims (equal to investment) on our five key outcome areas

As a Forest Allies member, you can operate knowing your company's policies and strategies are in alignment with the Accountability Framework. Most importantly, you will gain confidence that your investment in forests will result in a better future for people and nature.

YOUR COMMITMENTS TO FOREST ALLIES

We ask that all Forest Allies members:

- Commit to the Forest Allies CoP Charter
- Pay annual membership dues (contact us for details)
- Publicly report annual progress on your own sustainability commitments
- Attend and actively participate in Forest Allies meetings
- Contribute to the shared initiatives and activities of the Forest Allies (to be developed as a group)
- Share learnings and experiences gained from our Forest Allies community within your sector and supply chain

LEARN MORE ABOUT FOREST ALLIES

To positively affect tropical forests and their communities, join the critical work of Forest Allies by becoming a member. Contact us at forests@ra.org or visit www.rainforest-alliance.org/business/forest-allies.

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The Rainforest Alliance is creating a more sustainable world by using social and market forces to protect nature and improve the lives of farmers and forest communities.

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