

# FOREST ALLIES



## HOW FOREST ALLIES CONTRIBUTES TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all 193 United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a blueprint for achieving peace and prosperity for the world's people and landscapes. At its heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), which support a comprehensive vision of sustainable economic, social, and environmental development. Tackling climate change and conserving forests—aims of Forest Allies and an associated Community of Practice created by the Rainforest Alliance—are critical to this effort.



## FOREST ALLIES + UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Rainforest Alliance developed Forest Allies in 2020 as an answer to the challenges companies face in achieving their forest commitments. An alliance of companies, local civil society organizations, and forest communities, Forest Allies creates a bridge between corporate commitments to global initiatives and on-the-ground actions by implementing responsible forest management and restoration programs and reporting on outcomes to measure success.

The Rainforest Alliance has analyzed how Forest Allies' primary activities align to the SDGs through an assessment that used the **Integrated Community Forest Management (ICFM)** approach as a theoretical basis. The first step was to review all the SDGs and their targets and identify each relevant one for Forest Allies. Secondly, explicit actions and descriptions explained in the ICFM **Monitoring and Evaluation framework** were identified, so their level of relevancy per SDG target could be determined. Once their level of relevancy was determined, the SDGs were prioritized accordingly, while still acknowledging the interconnected nature of the SDGs.



## NEXT STEPS

With 30+ years of expertise, the Rainforest Alliance created Forest Allies, a comprehensive, three-year roadmap for program implementation, management, measurement and evaluation; the roadmap runs through January 2024. Implementation of programs is currently underway in Indonesia, Cameroon, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia and Peru, with regular reporting and workshopping for stakeholders, Community of Practice members, local governments, and other key allies scheduled in 2022 and 2023.



# FOREST ALLIES-FUNDED PROJECTS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING AT LEAST TEN OF THE SEVENTEEN DIFFERENT SDGs. THESE ARE THE FIVE STRONGEST LINKS BETWEEN SDGS AND FOREST ALLIES.

## SDG 1: NO POVERTY

For the Forest Allies initiative, land tenure and land-use planning is a key pillar, as rural and forest communities with ownership over their lands have better economic well-being. This pillar includes working to have these rights and land-use plans recognized by local authorities and state institutions and keep social legitimacy by safeguarding the customs of other groups living in or around the community forest area they depend upon.

## SDG 15: LIFE ON LAND

SDG 15 calls to "protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss." Forest Allies aligns with this SDG as it promotes and monitors biodiversity conservation through the active identification of rare and threatened species and recording High Conservation Value areas within, or nearby, the production forests, as well as by the development of forest management plans. Reforestation and restoration are implemented using native species or through assisted natural regeneration. These activities contribute to global biodiversity goals and ensure functioning ecosystems where communities can benefit from sustainable production systems.

## SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION

With their capacity to store carbon, forests are an important ally in addressing the climate crisis. Many indicators used by the Rainforest Alliance, beyond those found under the ICFM Monitoring and Evaluation pillar Forest Management, work toward these outcomes by promoting sound governance, land-use planning, and thriving community forest enterprises. This approach helps maintain forest integrity, avoid deforestation, and increase resilience through risk management that aims to reduce harmful impacts on infrastructure, forest resources and communities by natural hazards.



## SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is a cross-cutting theme in all Forest Allies projects. The pillar on governance explicitly stresses equal leadership opportunities for women and men, as well as for marginalized groups. At the foundation is ensuring women's full and effective participation, especially in organizational decision-making processes. For example, in the process of designating land use, the involvement of women is crucial as their knowledge and use of natural resources is different from men's.

## SDG 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

A common challenge for initiatives that put the community at the center of forest management is the lack of income security. Forest Allies' pillar on enterprise development aims to achieve decent job creation and stimulate entrepreneurship to close the living income gap and improve access to financial services while maintaining a safe and secure working environment. This includes establishing cash flow accounts, creating revenue streams, and re-investing in the community. Youth programs promote the involvement of young people in decision-making processes and job development in order to secure the next generation of forest guardians.

