

# FOREST ALLIES

AN INITIATIVE OF THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

LOCAL-TO-  
GLOBAL ACTION  
FOR THRIVING FORESTS





# CONTENTS

» INTRODUCTION <sup>3</sup>

» OUR REACH <sup>6</sup>

» OUR MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND  
LEARNING APPROACH <sup>12</sup>

» OUR IMPACT <sup>14</sup>

» FINANCIALS <sup>19</sup>

» DONORS <sup>21</sup>

» WHY FORESTS MUST BE PART OF EVERY  
BUSINESS STRATEGY <sup>22</sup>

» WHAT'S AHEAD <sup>26</sup>

---

Natural forest gum,  
Maya Biosphere Reserve,  
Guatemala  
© Carlos Duarte

---





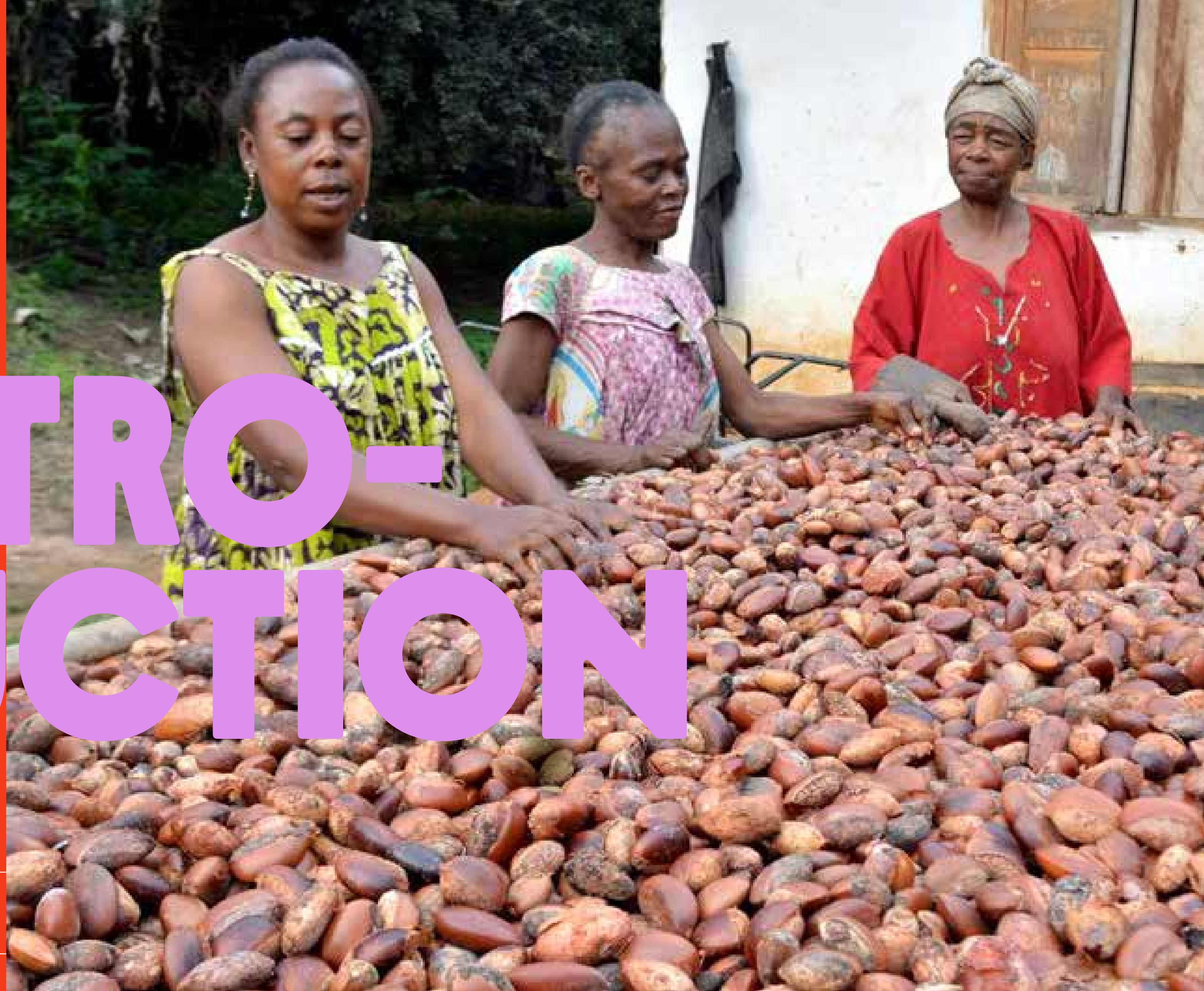
2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

# INTRO- DUCTION

---

Moabi seeds,  
Mintom, Cameroon  
© Basile Ntou'ou Abessolo

---



**With forests disappearing at an alarming rate—about 18 football fields every minute—and the effects of climate change becoming harder to ignore, one thing is clear: The world needs more people fighting for forests. Back in 2021, this principle drove us to launch Forest Allies. Simply put, the idea is to connect companies with forest communities who are working every day to protect nature and build stronger local economies.**

Through hands-on projects that restore forests and support the people who depend on them, Forest Allies is helping shift the way business is done—to a model that gives more than it takes.

This is crucial because protecting, conserving, and restoring the Earth's last remaining intact forests and key biodiversity areas is essential to slowing climate change and meeting global climate and nature targets, including the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, deforestation-free commitments, and [FLAG targets](#). But many of these landscapes lack the financial support they need, especially from companies. That's often because the products grown or harvested in these areas are sold locally, rather than through international supply chains. Forest Allies helps fill this gap by giving companies a direct way to support these communities and the forests they care for.

### How Forest Allies Works

Forest Allies is a collective action program that brings together companies, communities, civil society organizations, and the Rainforest Alliance to stop deforestation, restore damaged areas, and promote the responsible management of tropical forests. Participants benefit from the strength of the Rainforest Alliance's trusted brand and nearly 40 years of experience in conservation and forest restoration. At the heart of our approach is our

Integrated Community Forest Management model, which helps local communities manage their forests sustainably and earn better incomes.

Whether a community is just beginning its journey or ready to scale its impact, Forest Allies provides the support needed to move forward—through training, tools, and long-term partnership.

### The Power of Community Forestry

Community forestry means putting forest communities in the driver's seat of restoration and conservation efforts. It recognizes that those who earn their living from the forest not only have a deep knowledge of the land but also the greatest incentive to protect it.

According to a study<sup>1</sup> done by the Rights and Resources Initiative of 520 million hectares of forest (about twice the area of Argentina) across nine countries, the deforestation rate in areas managed by communities was lower than national deforestation averages.





Our work in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve is a powerful example of what can happen when programs are designed around that truth. For more than 20 years, nine communities there have managed the forest sustainably. The results speak for themselves: a near-zero deforestation rate (twelve times less than adjacent areas of the reserve), increased tree cover, thriving local economies, and healthy populations of jaguars and other wildlife. Meanwhile, nearby areas of the reserve without community management have been hit hard by illegal cattle ranching and drug trafficking.

When companies join Forest Allies, they support work like this—and in doing so, they also gain a window into the day-to-day life and challenges of forest communities on the front lines of the climate crisis. It's about building understanding, trust, and shared responsibility between those who grow or harvest forest products and those who bring them to market.

In the pages ahead, we'll share what Forest Allies accomplished in 2023 and 2024 and give you a look at where we're headed next. There are more forests to protect, more communities to support, and more opportunities to build a future that works for both people and nature.



Non-Timber Forest Products, Community forestry, Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve

**"From the very beginning, the Rainforest Alliance understood that in order to succeed over the long term, the environmental movement must work with the people who use forests for their shelter, sustenance, and livelihoods—for they have the strongest incentive to conserve them."**

**– Daniel Katz,** Founder of the Rainforest Alliance



2023–2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

# OUR REACH



Howler  
monkey



“Forest Allies is more than planting trees, and its impact reaches beyond supply chains. It is an initiative that brings companies face to face with the leaders of tropical forest conservation. I don’t mean NGOs or governments, but Indigenous Peoples and communities who have lived in and depended on the forest for centuries. It’s time to let them lead — one hectare at a time.”

---

**Kaley Marino**, Forest Allies Lead



From the vast Maya Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala to the dense, biodiverse forests of the Congo Basin, Forest Allies projects span the globe. Each one is rooted in a shared commitment: to protect some of the planet's most important forest landscapes while supporting the communities who call them home.

Explore a few of the places where this work is making a difference.

## AMAZON BASIN

SAN JOSÉ DEL GUAVIARE, COLOMBIA

### From Conflict to Conservation

San José del Guaviare sits at the frontier of Colombia's Amazon rainforest, a region rich in biodiversity but historically burdened by conflict, cattle-driven deforestation, and land degradation. In response, Forest Allies has partnered with the farmer-led nonprofit Asoprocegua to promote sustainable income opportunities that keep forests standing.

Asoprocegua supports small-scale farmers across 30 villages to grow and market high-value Amazonian fruits, such as açai, burití, and seje, that can be harvested without clearing a single tree. With technical training, processing equipment, and greater market access, these farmers—many of whom are Indigenous, youth, or elders—are turning non-timber forest products into a growing source of income.

Alongside forest-friendly livelihoods, Asoprocegua and its partners are restoring degraded areas—planting nearly 10,000 trees, protecting close to 7,000 hectares of standing forest, and creating wildlife corridors that act as “living fences.” These corridors link fragmented habitats, helping animals move freely and adapt to changing conditions caused by climate change. To date, there are 29 farmers participating in the initiative, each with one linear kilometer of corridor so far.

### IMPACT STATS

nearly  
**10.000 TREES** planted

**29 KILOMETERS** of wildlife corridors created

**250** community members reached across **30 VILLAGES**

**US \$ 10,171** of community revenue generated

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Fernando Macias,  
Rainforest Alliance  
Community Forestry  
Specialist, Agroforestry



Youth non timber forest product workshop,  
San Jose de Guaviare, Colombia



## AMAZON BASIN

### SAN MARTÍN, PERU

#### Planting the Future Through Public Investments

In Peru's San Martín region, Forest Allies is helping indigenous communities grow forest-friendly businesses with real financial backing. In 2023, the initiative enabled ten native communities of Indigenous producers secure nearly US \$450,000 in public funding—and almost US \$1 million more in 2024—through the national program, Avanzar Rural. These investments are driving sustainable local economies based on products like cocoa and coffee, artisanal crafts, and native non-timber forest products such as sangre de grado and huicungo. With hands-on support from the Rainforest Alliance, communities developed business plans, applied for funding, and implemented their projects. In partnership with the savings and credit cooperative COOPAC Norandino, we also launched a green-loan program that has already distributed over US \$2.2 million in credit to producers committed to responsible forest use.

Beyond business development, communities are restoring degraded landscapes—reforesting 104 hectares along riverbanks and headwaters—and safeguarding vital water sources. Thanks to three new community-led forest management plans, they've earned more than US \$240,000 to date, proving that forest protection and income generation can go hand in hand.

#### IMPACT STATS

**55,531**  
seedlings  
distributed

**US \$2.26 MILLION**  
in green credit distributed

**US \$1.45 MILLION** in public  
investment  
raised

**US \$ 242,851**  
in community revenue generated

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

**Franciz Boscato**, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Specialist  
**Jose Rojas**, Rainforest Alliance Field Technician, Community Forestry  
**Javier Martinez**, Rainforest Alliance Senior Manager of Sustainable Landscapes- Amazon Region



Warmi Awadora women's handicraft group, San Martín, Peru



CONGO BASIN  
Mintom and Bana, Cameroon

At the Crossroads of Cocoa and Conservation

In Cameroon’s Congo Basin, forests traditionally managed by Indigenous communities are being rapidly cleared for large-scale mono-crop plantations. To help reverse this trend, Forest Allies is working with local cocoa farmers and Indigenous women to protect forests while helping them earn better incomes.

Together, we’ve established five community-run nurseries and planted over 35,000 seedlings—including cocoa, fruit, and native tree species—reviving agroforestry practices that grow crops alongside trees. Farmers are also receiving training in sustainable agriculture and business skills to improve yields and reduce deforestation pressure. At the same time, Forest Allies is working with a women-led cooperative of mostly Indigenous Baka women to grow native plants like wild mango and develop innovative cassava products, efforts that recently earned them two first-place awards at a regional agricultural trade show.

IMPACT  
STATS

5 tree  
nurseries  
established

45,000  
seedlings distributed

3 NEW  
products designed and  
sold in local markets

US \$ 2,435  
in community revenue generated

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Cedric Happy, Rainforest Alliance Integrated Community Forest Management Specialist, Sustainable Agriculture  
Fonji Tanya Folefac, Rainforest Alliance Integrated Community Forest Management Specialist, Community Forestry  
Our local partner, [SAPED](#)



Cocoa tree nursery,  
Mintom, Cameroon



## SELVA MAYA

### MAYA BIOSPHERE RESERVE, GUATEMALA

#### Scaling up a Never-Before-Seen Model for Landscape Restoration

The Maya Biosphere Reserve is a 2.1-million-hectare area that anchors the largest remaining natural forest block in Mesoamerica. The Rainforest Alliance has been working in the reserve for decades to help communities build businesses that restore and protect the forests, helping create more than 15,000 jobs and maintaining a near-zero deforestation rate. Now we are working to scale our impact by creating a model that can be replicated throughout other areas of the reserve and beyond. The model centers on creating state-of-the-art community nurseries that use 100 percent biodegradable materials instead of soil, which is much more costly both to purchase and transport. Forest communities can use these nurseries not only as a renewable source of native tree species but also to learn about re-storation and reforestation. This approach enables communities to generate short, medium, and long-term income streams by harvesting forest products like nuts from nursery trees while they are maturing, as well as seasonal crops such as corn, beans, and chiles that are also grown in the nurseries. Starting with one nursery and one community, the model has already expanded to six communities and three nurseries across the reserve and surrounding areas.

#### IMPACT STATS

186  
FULL-TIME  
JOBS created

US \$ 235,739  
in community revenue generated

670,947  
seedlings distributed

3 COMMUNITY  
NURSERIES created

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

**Jorge Cruz**, Rainforest Alliance Peten Department Manager  
**Edwin Godoy**, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Specialist, Responsible for our work in La Pasadita  
**Samuel Quixchan**, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Specialist, Responsible for our work in Cruce La Colorada  
**Erik Martinez**, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Specialist, Responsible for our work in the Maya Biosphere Reserve Buffer Zone  
**Manuel Manzanero**, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Monitoring Specialist



Xate palm nursery, Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala. © Sergio Izquierdo



## INDONESIAN ARCHIPELAGO

### JAVA, INDONESIA

#### FSC-Certified and Community-Led: A New Model for Java's Forests

Java's remaining forests face growing pressure from illegal logging and land clearing, putting the rich biodiversity in these areas at risk. To protect these landscapes, Forest Allies is working with the Koperasi Wana Manunggal Lestari (KWML) cooperative in Yogyakarta to help communities manage their forests sustainably and earn more from their timber products.

Since 2021, we've supported KWML to implement the new Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Asia Pacific Regional Forest Stewardship Standard and become FSC certified. Forest Allies' funding has enabled training for community members and the cooperative, as well as partially funding certification activities. In April 2023, the cooperative became the first social forestry permit in Indonesia to earn FSC certification—a major milestone that will help open doors to better markets. With certified timber like teak, albizia, acacia, tectona, and mahogany selling for up to 30 percent more, the community has already generated more than US \$11,000 in revenue. Since then, we've been working to expand the certified area and are providing ongoing training and support to help community members protect their forests while creating a better future for themselves and the next generation.



PLAY VIDEO

*"The FSC Certification Program, facilitated by the Rainforest Alliance and run by the KWML cooperative, has made a big impact on our forest farmer group, helping us not only to boost our wood sales but also empowering our community and improving gender equality. For the first time, women are now involved in forest management activities and contributing to their household incomes."*



**Suparjiyem**  
Head of Menur Private Forest Group

#### IMPACT STATS

**1,617 COMMUNITY  
MEMBERS** trained in  
FSC standards  
and best practices

**1,845  
HECTARES**  
of forest restored

**1,030 HECTARES**  
of forest now FSC certified

**US \$11,126**  
in community  
revenue generated

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

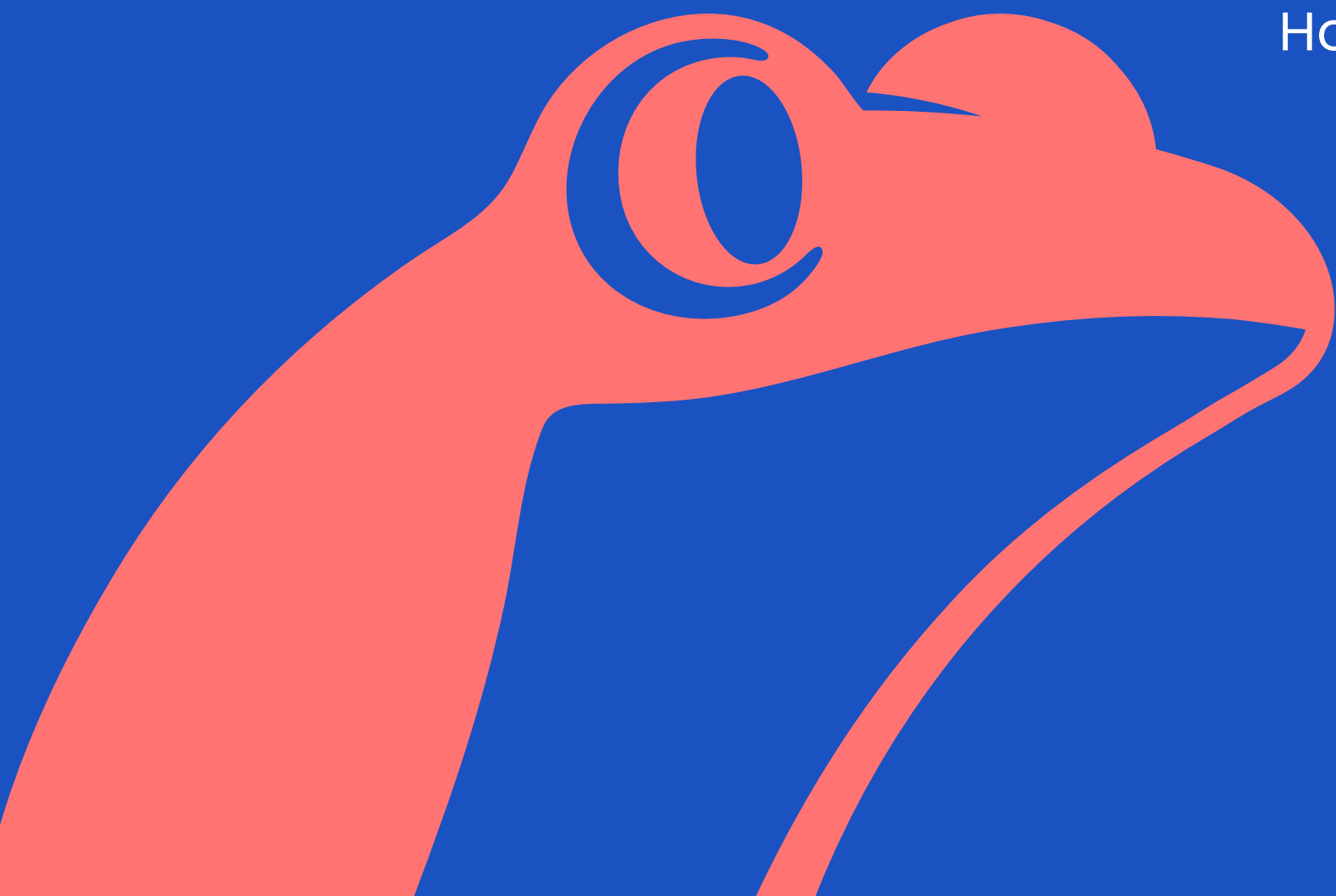
Mohammad Zainuri "Zen" Hasyim, Rainforest Alliance Community Forestry Manager, and our local partner, [JAVLEC](#).



# OUR MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING APPROACH

2023–2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

How We Measure Progress and Report Results



---

ICFM tool application,  
Java, Indonesia

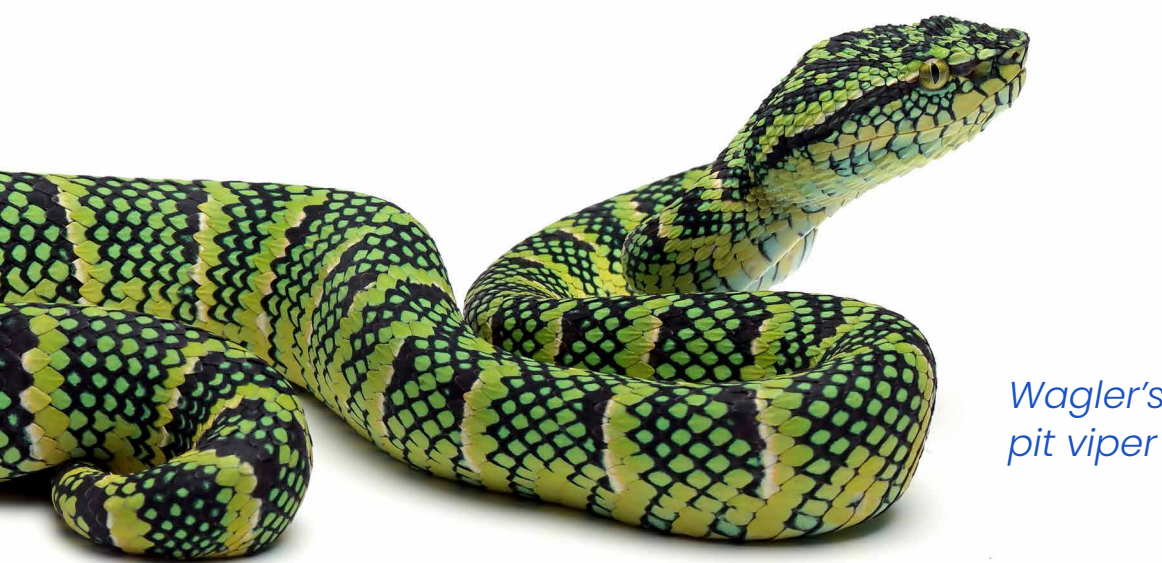
---





# To measure the outcomes of Forest Allies projects, we developed the Integrated Community Forest Management Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (ICFM MEL) Tool with support from IIED.

The tool consists of 80 self-rating questions that assess progress made across the four pillars of Integrated Community Forest Management. Each question is scored from 0 to 4. In addition, a set of corresponding indicators collect primary data on reach and outcomes. Together, the questions and indicators provide a snapshot of how forest communities are progressing in alignment with the Integrated Community Forest Management model.



## The Four Pillars of Integrated Community Forest Management



In 2022, each Forest Allies community conducted an initial baseline assessment of all 80 questions. Following that baseline, Forest Allies project managers selected a set of minimum indicators from all four pillars that best reflect each project’s priorities and context. This makes it easier to track the progress that matters most to each community. **Real-Time Feedback for Immediate Improvement.**

Once a year, Rainforest Alliance staff or local partners work with community representatives over the course of a half-day session to discuss and complete the questions. The results are then shared and discussed with the communities immediately after, helping to inform their decision-making.

These swift insights are extremely valuable for the communities as they allow them to course correct and implement changes immediately.

### Monitoring & Evaluation Result

Minimum indicators selected by country







# OUR IMPACT

2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

---

Beekeepers in the Mayan  
Biosphere Reserve,  
Guatemala

---







8,712  
total community members  
reached

= 100 people

## KEY TERMS

### Community-Based Management (CBM)

An area sustainably managed by a local community with the goal of improving their livelihoods and the environment. Communities implement improved forest management practices like agroforestry, conservation, and restoration and generate income from sustainably harvested timber and non-timber forest products. The area may be under collective or private ownership.

### Strictly Protected Areas (SPAs)

An area that has been set aside for the purpose of conserving a specific set of environmental or cultural values, with the primary objective being the preservation of bio-cultural diversity. These areas are intended to have minimal influence from human economic activity and may or may not be managed by a local community. Adjoining buffer areas are not included in the definition of Strictly Protected Areas. No Forest Allies project activities occur in these areas.

### Improved Forest Management (IFM) or Improved Agroforestry Management (IAM)

A forest or agroforestry area managed by a local community according to a forest management plan that aligns with the principles and criteria of the Forest Stewardship Council's standards. Agroforestry refers to the ancient practice of

strategically planting trees and vegetation alongside crops and/or livestock pasture to enhance productivity and the ecosystem.

### Undergoing restoration

Community-managed areas governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the recovery of the ecosystem and its associated conservation values. Ecosystem restoration encompasses a wide continuum of practices, depending on local conditions and societal choice, including planting native tree species, conserving wild plants and animals, and nurturing patches of forest in landscapes that have agricultural farms and villages.

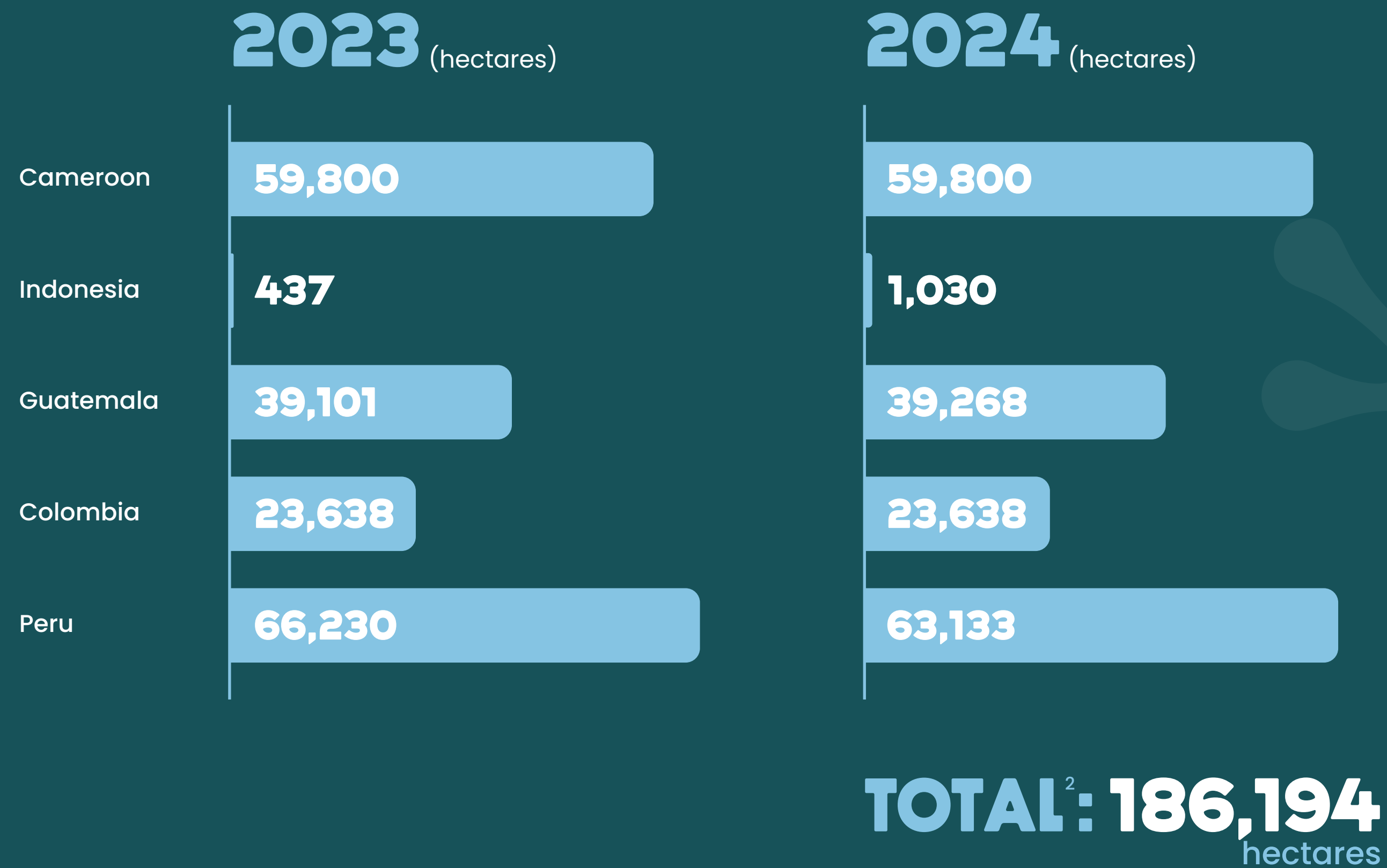


Woman holding bottles  
of moabi oil and butter,  
Mintom, Cameroon  
© Basile Ntou'ou Abessolo



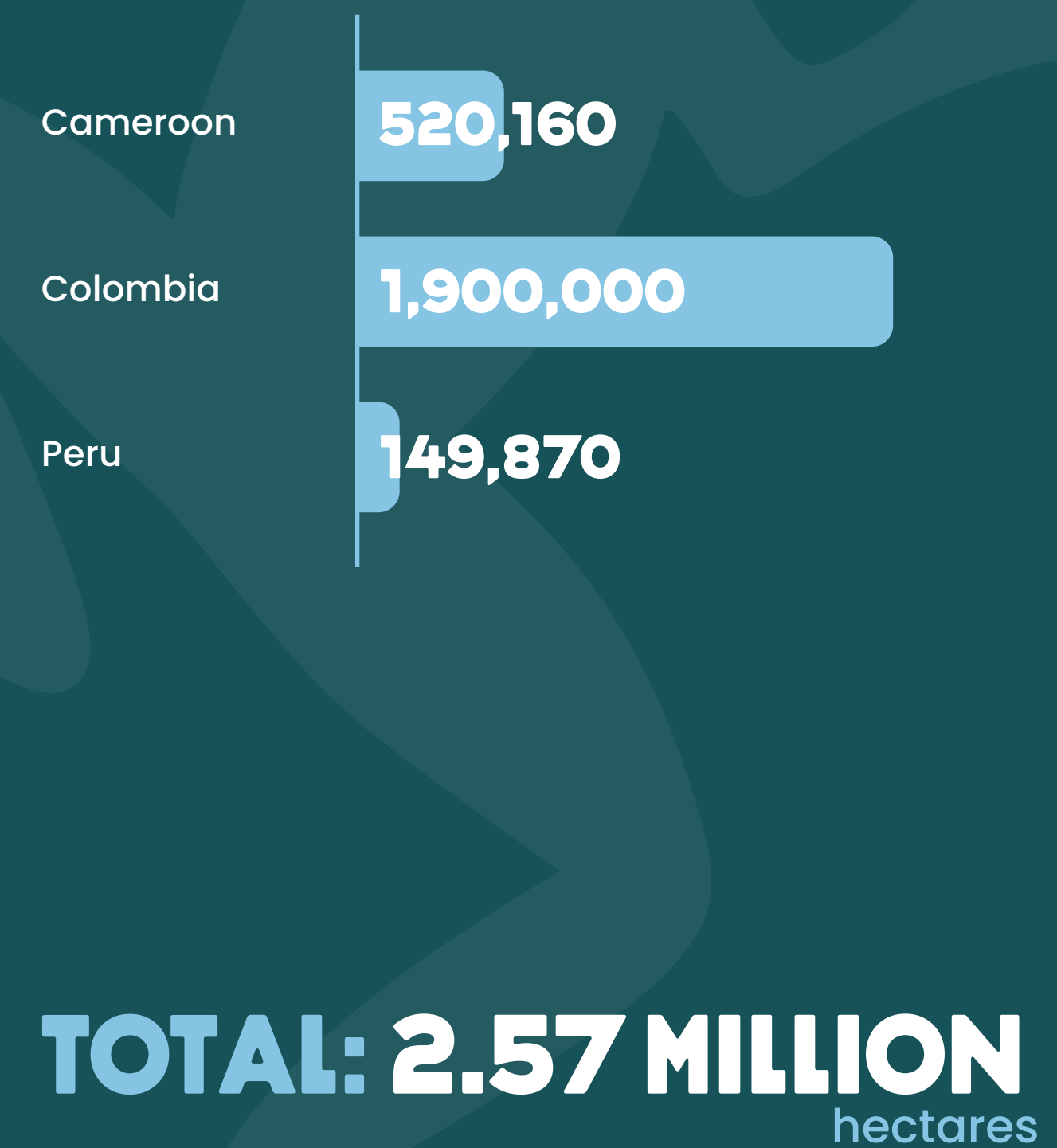
AREA UNDER

COMMUNITY BASED MANAGEMENT



STRICTLY PROTECTED AREAS<sup>3</sup>

(hectares)



<sup>2</sup> As of December 2024.

<sup>3</sup> SPAs remain consistent over the course of Forest Allies projects.

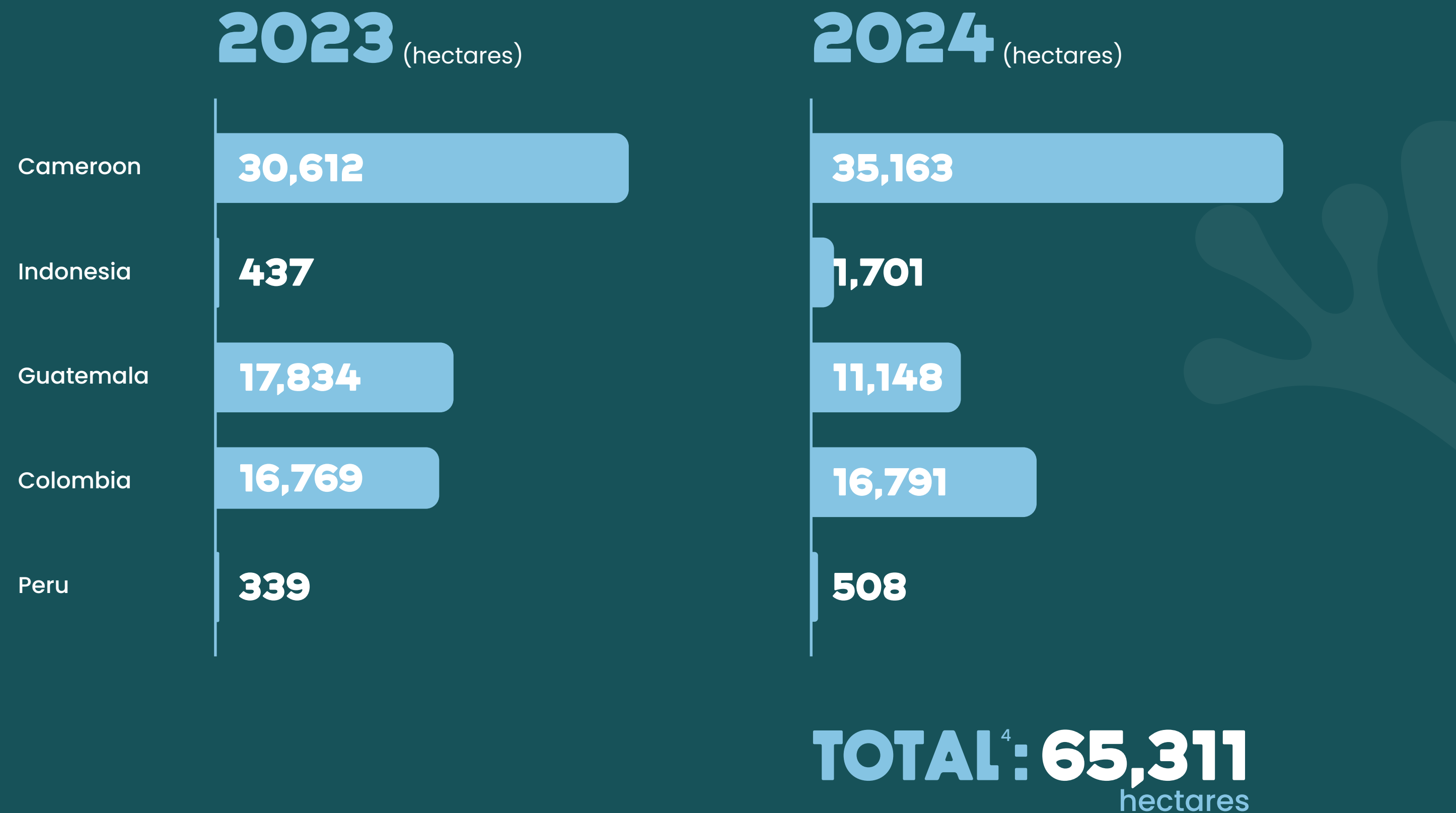


AREA UNDER

IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT

OR

IMPROVED AGROFORESTRY MANAGEMENT

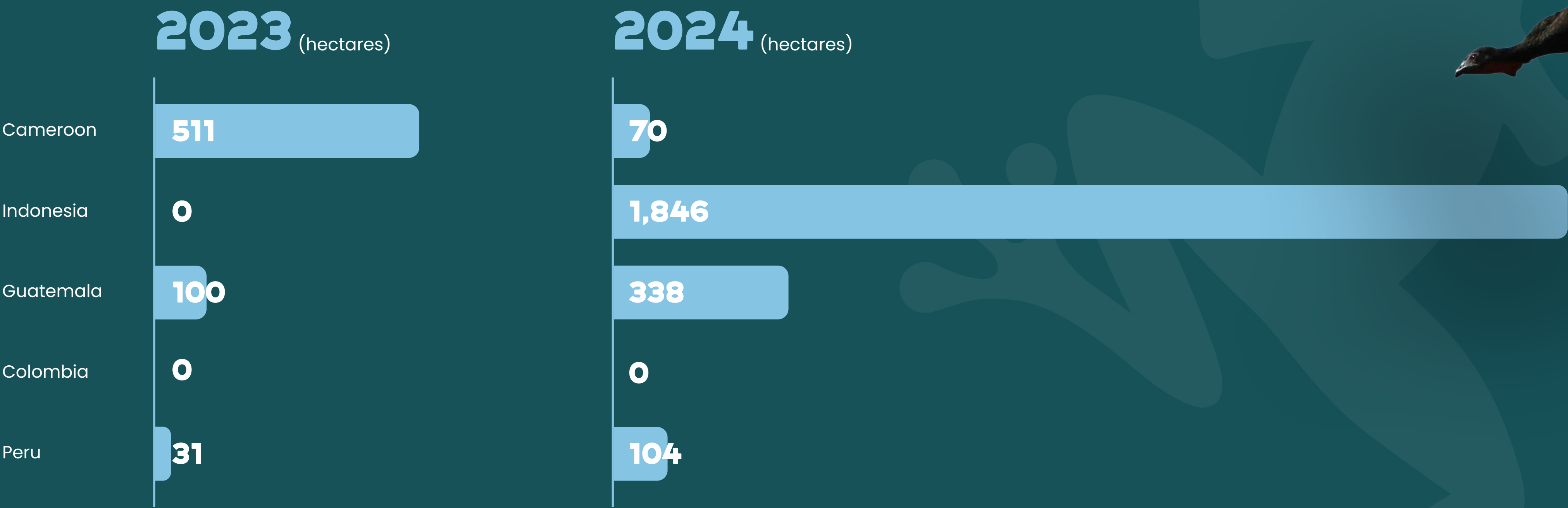


The decrease in IFM and IAM areas in Colombia and Guatemala between 2023 and 2024 reflects a positive shift. Communities there have made huge strides away from cattle land use and toward sustainably living off the forest. As communities reduce their reliance on cattle production, they no longer need to dedicate as much land to agroforestry or managed forest systems. Instead, they are shifting toward sustainable forest-based livelihoods—like harvesting non-timber forest products—that protect standing forests while still generating income.



AREA  
UNDERGOING

RESTORATION



TOTAL<sup>5</sup>: 3,000  
hectares



White winged  
guan





# FINANCIALS

2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT





# 2023 & 2024 SPENDING

| SUMMARY            | 2022    | 2023    | 2024    |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Overhead           | 126,741 | 123,008 | 121,739 |
| Project Monitoring | 10,531  | 12,840  | 6,187   |
| Program Management | 45,664  | 29,932  | 48,978  |
| Communications     | 47,960  | 4,896   | –       |
| Project Costs      | 379,508 | 577,421 | 346,101 |
| TOTAL              | 610,404 | 748,097 | 523,006 |





# DONORS

2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT



Kingfisher is proud to partner with Forest Allies. This partnership deepens our understanding of community forestry and the vital role it plays in the preservation of the world's forests. By investing beyond our supply chain, we're not only continuing our longstanding commitment to forest action but also contributing to climate resilience and tackling deforestation at its roots.

---

**Dorothee D'Herde**, Director of Responsible Business, Kingfisher PLC







2023-2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

WHY  
**FORESTS**  
MUST BE PART OF EVERY  
**BUSINESS**  
**STRATEGY**



**At the Rainforest Alliance, we believe that companies have a powerful role to play in protecting the planet—and that business strategies must include forests to succeed in a climate-challenged future. When businesses support more sustainable and regenerative ways of farming and forest management, they help create healthier ecosystems, stronger rural economies, and more resilient supply chains.**

That's why our strategy focuses on driving impact at scale through a virtuous cycle: when farmers and forest communities adopt practices that restore soil, protect water, and promote biodiversity, they produce better outcomes for people and nature. These improvements attract more committed companies and consumers, which brings greater investment back to farmers, and the cycle continues.

It's a win for people, the planet, and the future. And by 2030, our goal is to reach 100 million people in farming and forest communities through this model.

Forest Allies plays a key role in making that happen — advancing our mission in three important ways:

### **1. The path to regeneration is rooted in forests**

Forest restoration is a cornerstone of regenerative agriculture. Healthy forests protect water sources, replenish degraded soils, and create cooler, more resilient microclimates—conditions that enhance regenerative farming practices. Through Forest Allies, we support communities in restoring critical forest landscapes, not only to conserve nature but also to enable more productive and sustainable farming.

This work is grounded in the understanding that restoration and agriculture are deeply interconnected. When communities regenerate

forests, they also create the foundation for healthier crops, more reliable incomes, and stronger local food systems. That's why forest restoration is central to how the Rainforest Alliance scales regenerative practices across farming and forestry communities.

### **2. Creating thriving landscapes through a shared vision**

Over the years, we've learned that certification has the most lasting results when it's part of a broader, landscape-level approach. That's why the Rainforest Alliance is investing deeply in five critical landscapes—key biodiversity areas where long-term partnerships with communities, Indigenous groups, and local organizations can transform how land is managed and forests are protected. In these places, Forest Allies advance community forestry by supporting locally led restoration, governance, and business development. Working side by side with community members, we help strengthen forest protection, revive degraded areas, and build thriving local economies







### 3. Measuring what matters to track restoration and results

Data is at the heart of how we drive change and stay accountable to our 2030 goals. That's why the Rainforest Alliance is building an integrated data system to drive continuous improvement across our programs. Forest Allies is essential to this effort by providing a big-picture view of the health of community-managed forests. One of the core indicators we track is the total area of community-managed forest undergoing restoration, an important measure of how communities are working to bring degraded land back to life.

This data helps us assess how forest restoration contributes to broader goals like climate resilience, biodiversity, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

By investing in consistent, on-the-ground monitoring, Forest Allies strengthens our ability to track progress and refine our strategies over time. It's how we make sure that every investment across all Rainforest Alliance initiatives—whether in training, tools, or trees—helps build a more regenerative future for people and nature.



Aerial View of a forest in Sewfi Wiawso. © Misper Apawu



# WHAT'S AHEAD?

2023–2024  
ANNUAL REPORT



Gecko

With forests disappearing at an alarming rate—about 10 football pitches every minute— and the effects of climate change becoming harder to ignore, one thing is clear: the world needs more people fighting for forests.





## A User-Friendly Tool to Track Forest Health

In southern Cameroon, Forest Allies is piloting a new way to measure the health of community forests, focusing on both biodiversity and the forests' capacity to store carbon. Building on the Forest Integrity Assessment (FIA) tool, originally developed by the High Conservation Value (HCV) Network with support from the World Wildlife Fund as an easy-to-use biodiversity checklist, the Rainforest Alliance and our partners at the HCV Network have adapted it to now also capture carbon data.

Field tests across three Forest Allies communities and the nearby Dja Reserve showed promising results: even with a simplified approach, the tool measured carbon stock with around 70 percent accuracy compared to traditional methods. This makes forest monitoring more cost-effective, while keeping local communities at the center of the process.

Through workshops and training sessions, community members and local organizations are now using the adapted tool to revise forest management plans, strengthen restoration strategies, and document the real value of their forests. For companies, the pilot offers reliable, on-the-ground data to back up sustainability commitments and report progress over time. As the methodology is refined, we aim to expand it to

other key landscapes—including Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve—creating a scalable, community-driven system for ecosystem health and climate impact.

## A New Way to Source From—and Support—Forest Communities

More than ever, people want to know where their products come from and what their purchases are supporting. At the same time, new regulations—like the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and Green Claims Directive—are pushing companies to be more transparent about how they source and talk about forest products like wood, rubber, nuts, and more.

Forest Allies has long helped companies connect with the forests behind their products. Now we're building a new direct sourcing offer that will make it even easier for businesses to buy directly from forest communities and comply with regulations like the EUDR. Companies will receive tailored tools and guidance to spotlight their responsible sourcing efforts, while forest communities will gain new income opportunities and greater market access. The bigger picture? More forest communities incentivized to protect forests and more companies motivated to invest in the future of these communities.

We're excited to share more as this initiative develops.



Take care of the Forest. No cutting down trees, no hunting





# JOIN FOREST ALLIES

Together with communities, companies, and partners, we're proving that it's possible to protect forests while improving the lives of those who depend on them. As Forest Allies grows, so too does our collective impact—bringing us closer to our 2030 vision: 100 million people in farming and forest communities thriving alongside healthy, resilient landscapes. Forest Allies is leading the way, and we invite you to be part of the transformation.

[JOIN US](#)

**RAINFOREST  
ALLIANCE**