

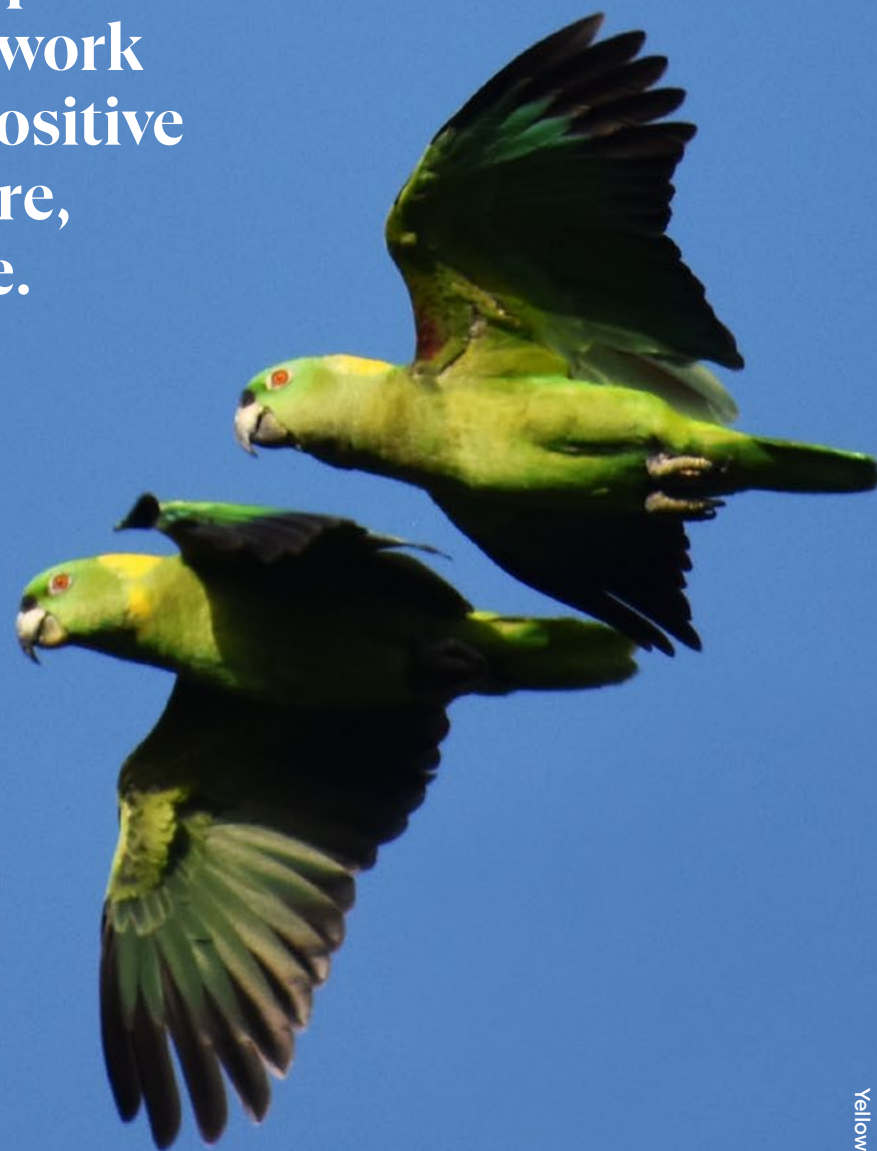


**Fauna
& Flora**
Saving Nature Together

Conservation Impact Report 2023

At Fauna & Flora, we have a laser focus on impact to ensure that our work delivers tangible positive outcomes for nature, people and climate.

This report pulls together data from across our projects to give an overview of our conservation impact in 2023.



Yellow-naped parrot in flight. © Osmar Sandino / Fauna & Flora

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A message from our CEO, Kristian Teleki

The world is changing before our eyes. Addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis is key to safeguarding the health and resilience of the planet we all depend on.

Despite the challenges this presents, we have real grounds for hope.

This report, which presents evidence from our work around the world, clearly demonstrates that positive change is happening, and that well-designed projects – built with local partners and people at their heart – drive forward impact and recovery for nature.

It shows that Fauna & Flora's approach to saving nature really works. And it provides a beacon that lights the way to a responsible, authentic and effective way of doing conservation that will help deliver the change the world needs, to ensure a brighter future for us all.



Why we are here

Our shared purpose is to protect the diversity of life on Earth, for the survival of the planet and its people.

We work closely with local conservation partners around the world to save nature, together. We use our collective expertise to inspire positive change globally.

Our vision for the future

We want to see a world where nature is valued for its impact on our health, well-being, livelihoods and survival. Where we live sustainably within nature's limits, respecting the rights of local people. Where species thrive and vulnerable habitats are protected and restored. A world with lush forests, rich grasslands and a healthy ocean, all full of life.

Understanding our impact

Conservation is a long-term and complex process, and we need to be very clear that the work we and our partners undertake is effective in achieving our goals. We use information and data provided by conservation teams during our annual reporting process to track changes within projects, as well as to understand the scale and impact of Fauna & Flora and our partners across our whole portfolio.

This report pulls together information from across all of our projects in 2023 to show how, together, we have been delivering tangible gains for nature.

Gathering and analysing the data

Every year, each active project¹ completes an annual reporting form. This asks a set of questions designed to help us understand what is changing as a result of the project's work, as well as what activities were undertaken and what was learned that year.

The data we collect through the annual reporting form is reviewed and collated by a dedicated team. This provides a good insight into the scale of our conservation work across the organisation. But alongside this, we also need to know whether our work, conducted hand in hand with local partners, is actually making a difference.

We understand that it takes time to achieve impact in conservation – sometimes decades – and that monitoring long-term impact is often difficult.

There is good evidence, however, that tracking intermediate outcomes provides a good prediction of long-term conservation results². To understand our impact, we therefore use a model based on change pathways. This model is well grounded in the reality of conservation and is a practical tool that can be easily applied to different project contexts.

1. A project may encompass multiple sites and/or species and employ multiple conservation approaches. A project might be delivered by Fauna & Flora directly, or in collaboration with partners and other organisations. Project goals can range from the conservation of a site or a species to creating the enabling conditions needed to achieve conservation success (for example by changing the behaviour of a particular group to address a specific issue).
2. Kapos V, Balmford A, Aveling R, et al. Outcomes, not implementation, predict conservation success. *Oryx*. 2009;43(3):336-342. doi:10.1017/S0030605309990275

To illustrate our findings each year, we sometimes use graphics called impact chains, which show steps on the pathway to ultimate conservation success. We aggregate the data from our project reports to show how many of our sites, species and projects are at each step in the chain, in order to provide a snapshot of our work as a whole.

Our annual reporting process gives each team the opportunity to reflect on their work each year and understand how their project is progressing towards its overarching goals.

Occasionally, our analysis shows that a site or species has not responded to our conservation interventions as expected. In these cases, we take context-appropriate action to understand why this is. For example, we might review all the evidence with key stakeholders or carry out further research to ensure we have identified and fully understood the root causes of the continued decline.

Sometimes, our investigation reveals that our approach needs to change; at other times it reveals that new external pressures are undermining our work. In all cases, we use this information to continuously improve and adapt.

We share lessons internally by convening communities of practice and working groups for key topics. These allow experience and expertise from across the whole organisation to be harnessed and applied. In turn, Fauna & Flora staff are able to share relevant lessons outwards through their ongoing work with partners and other collaborative initiatives.

You can find more information about our approach to monitoring, evaluation & learning at www.fauna-flora.org/understanding-impact

The principles behind our process

Just as every habitat is unique, every single one of Fauna & Flora's projects is different. Each has its own goal and works in its own context, requiring bespoke strategies and responses over different timescales. Our impact reporting process is based on four principles that we apply consistently across our diverse portfolio of work.

Impact-focused

We want to document and ensure that what we do is delivering real change.

Bottom-up

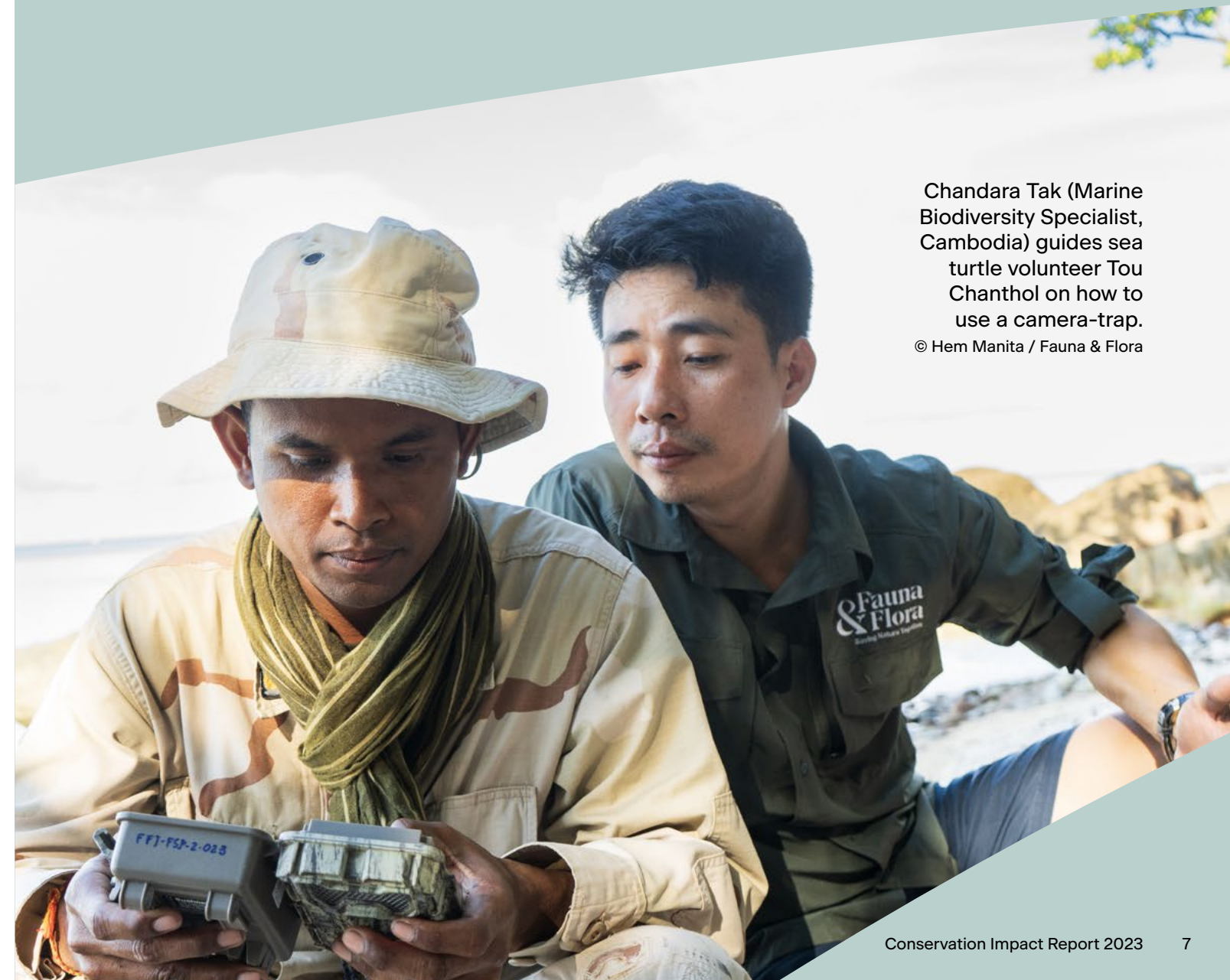
We don't impose top-down metrics or monitoring techniques on partners and projects. Instead, we make use of their existing targets and monitoring approaches that speak to the local context and each project's bespoke nature, respecting that our partners each have their own priorities and monitoring agendas.

Appropriately robust

Our monitoring and analysis needs to be accurate enough to paint a true picture, but we understand the challenges that teams and partners face on the ground across varied local contexts, so we aim to strike the right balance between accuracy and feasibility.

Shared learning

We use the information generated to share lessons learned internally, across our network of partners, and more widely.



Chandara Tak (Marine Biodiversity Specialist, Cambodia) guides sea turtle volunteer Tou Chanthol on how to use a camera-trap.

© Hem Manita / Fauna & Flora

Highlights of 2023

We influenced³ the conservation of over

57

million hectares of crucial habitat
(an area almost the size of Kenya)

We worked in **397 sites** in **45 countries**



318

The number of organisations whose **skills, knowledge & resources** we helped develop

Habitats worked in included:



Forests



Grasslands



Mountains



Marine



Freshwater



Limestone caves



Deserts and drylands



Wildflower meadows



Agricultural landscapes



We worked with

110

priority species



and at least

200

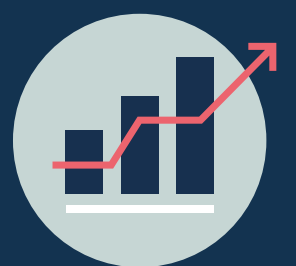
secondary species

36

The number of laws, regulations and strategic government plans we helped develop



We saw conservation benefits⁴ for **213 sites** and **93 priority species** populations



Almost **one billion tonnes of carbon**

is locked up across **94** of our **terrestrial** and **marine** project sites



We engaged with communities in **99% of relevant field-based projects**

Activities to address illegal wildlife trade helped protect



at least **70 species**

397

The number of in-country organisations we partnered with, including:

- Local NGOs
- Governments
- Universities
- Businesses



Over 7,000

The number of people whose conservation capacity we built





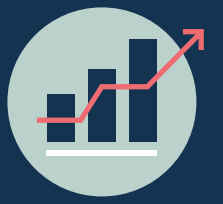
3. We work to influence conservation at different levels; this includes directly supporting on-the-ground conservation, influencing conservation delivery across wider target landscapes and supporting key partners to deliver conservation across their own priority areas.

4. Conservation benefits means we are seeing active or improved enforcement or protection, reduced threats, or evidence of recovery in specific sites or species populations.

Long-term impact for sites & species

It can take considerable time for us to see the impact of our work in terms of species populations stabilising or recovering. It is also very rare to record immediate impact at a new project site; typically, changes become apparent over a number of years as our work progresses. We therefore need to look at the long-term cumulative impact of our work over several years to recognise this.

Where species-focused projects have been operating for at least five years:

 <p>Management of primary species is actively progressing in over 95% of projects⁵</p>	 <p>Threats to primary species have reduced in over 65% of projects</p>	 <p>Primary species populations are recovering in over 45% of projects</p>
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Where site-focused projects have been operating for at least five years:

 <p>Management of sites is actively progressing in nearly 95% of projects⁵</p>	 <p>Threats to sites and habitats have reduced in over 60% of projects</p>	 <p>Site-level biodiversity recovery is already evident in nearly 25% of projects⁶</p>
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5. For both sites and species – where active management was not yet in place, this was due to a range of factors including: changes to project design/focus, changes in personnel, logistical and process challenges and stakeholder relationships.
 6. Site-level biodiversity recovery takes longer to evidence, due to the complexity of threats within individual sites and the breadth of biodiversity monitoring undertaken.

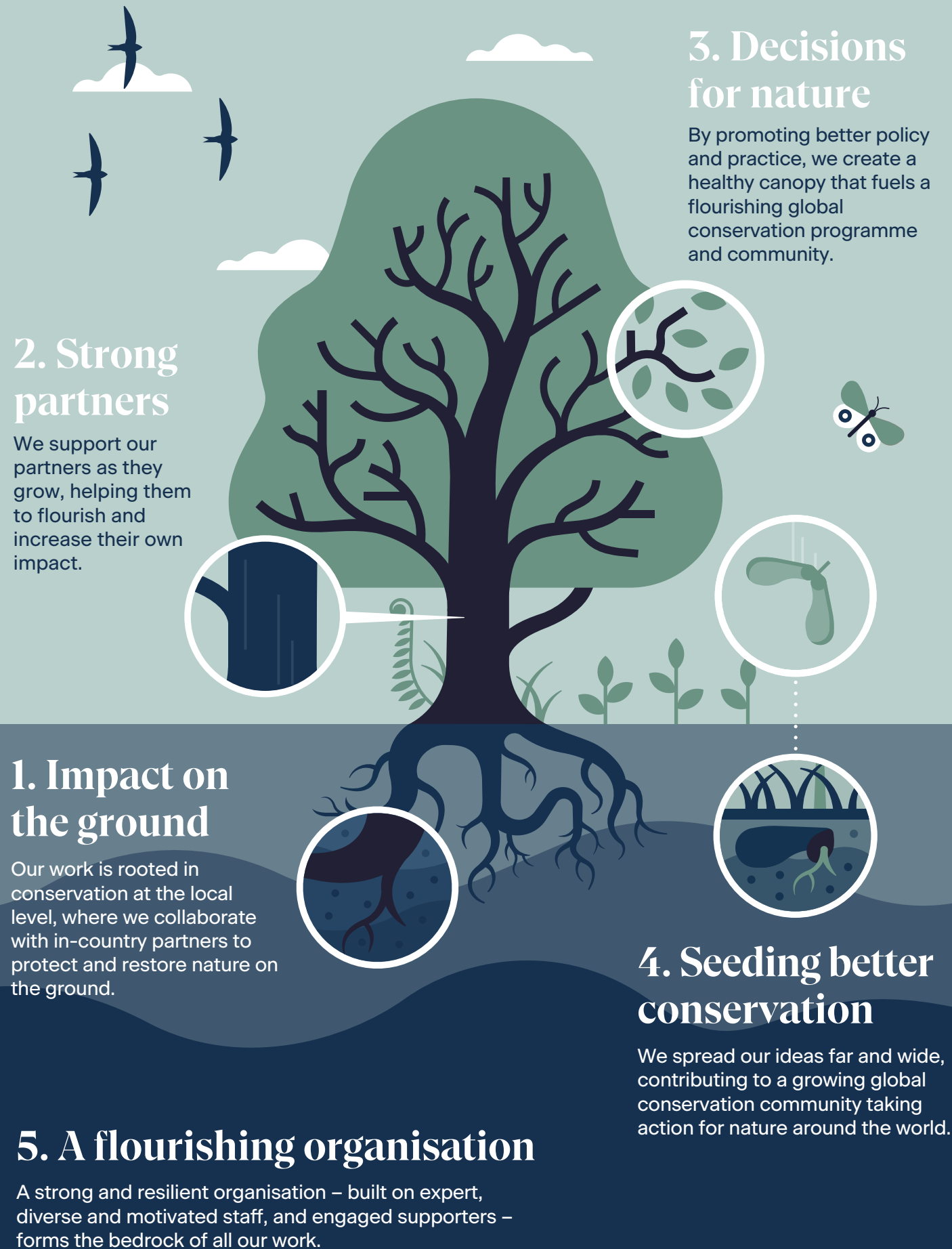
Field monitor Tahambay Smith releasing an Antiguan racer. In 1995, just 50 of these snakes survived on one offshore islet of Antigua and Barbuda.

Today there are over 1,100 individuals spread across four sites, thanks to work by Fauna & Flora and partners to eradicate invasive predators and reintroduce the snakes to restored islands.

© Jenny Daltry / Fauna & Flora



Our strategy to 2030



We understand that, at its heart, conservation is about people.

Our new strategy celebrates this connection. It's about the people working to save nature – our partners on the ground. It's about how people the world over can live alongside nature and be its champions. It's about how we, as Fauna & Flora staff, can be more effective and impactful.



Ranger Commander Captain Michael Luciano with Sorophina Nuryo on bio-monitoring patrol in Bangangai Game Reserve, South Sudan.
© Justin Purefoy / Fauna & Flora

2023 saw the gazettelement of a new protected area in Vietnam for the critically endangered Delacour's langur, thanks to the work of Fauna & Flora and partners.

© Ryan Deboodt / Fauna & Flora

Objective 1

Impact on the ground



1.1 Saving sites & species, in partnership

We work with local organisations and alongside local communities to protect and recover habitats and species around the world. Our projects are designed holistically to ensure that places, species (both plants and animals) and people all thrive as a result of our work. By 2030 we aim to have doubled our impact on the ground – ensuring far more land and sea can be secured and recovered for biodiversity, for climate security and for people.

In this way we are contributing to wider global goals to protect and restore 30% of the world's land and sea by 2030, while recognising the role and rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities at the heart of this.

What does this work look like?

- We work directly on the ground to support local nature conservation action.
- We combine the best available science with local expertise.
- We partner with in-country organisations and put local communities, and their rights, at the heart of our work.

Through these projects:

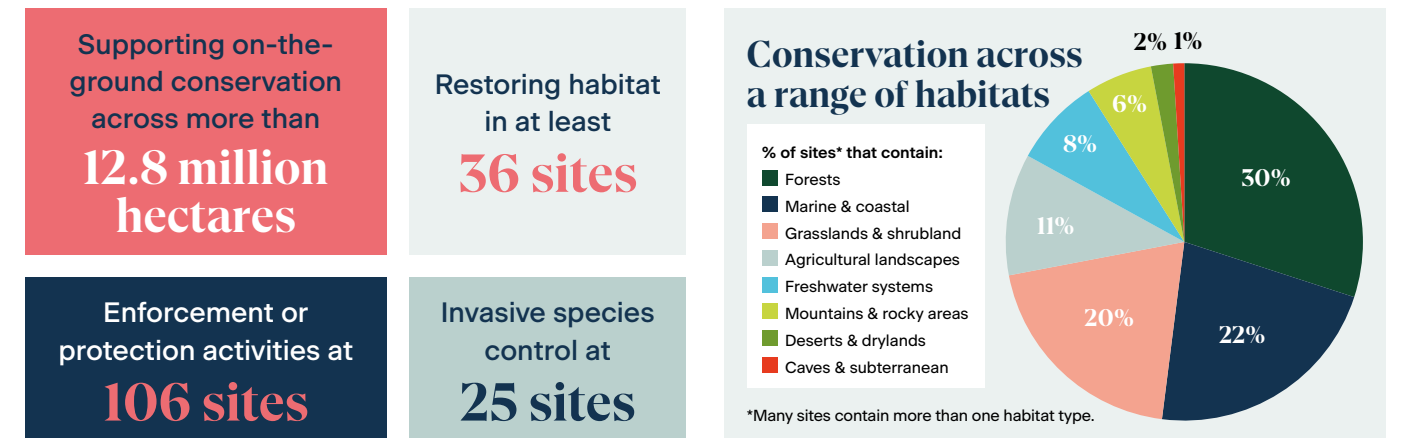
- We secured vital areas of natural habitat by establishing or improving the management and effectiveness of state-protected areas.
- We developed and scaled up locally led approaches (such as community conserved areas) and found alternative ways to protect nature in areas with no conservation designation.
- We promoted the survival and recovery of key species within these areas and ensured that biodiversity more widely benefited.
- We helped people to coexist and thrive alongside nature, enabled communities to directly participate in conservation and ensured that wider benefits (for example, for climate), could be realised.



The scale of our work in 2023 – Sites



We supported:

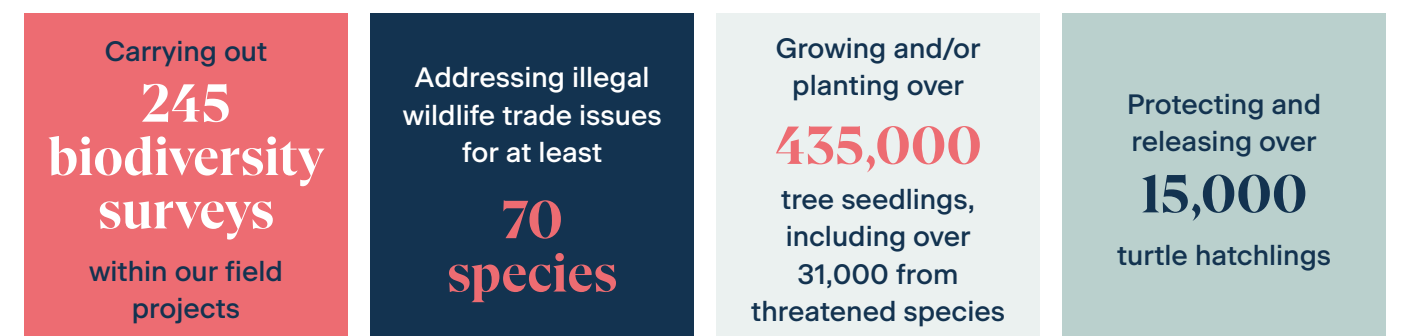


The scale of our work in 2023 – Species

Within our sites, we worked to help protect and recover key species – these are chosen as flagships for the site or because of their uniqueness or ecological role.

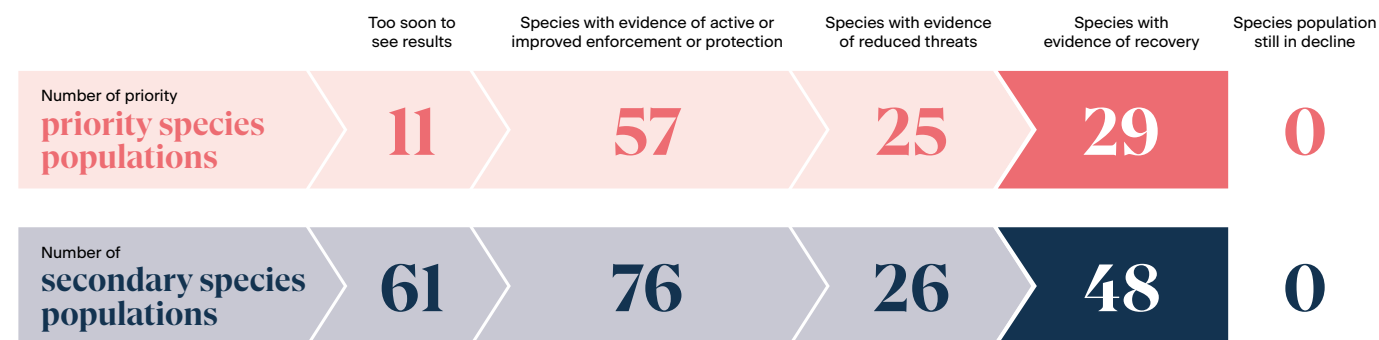


Activities included:



The impact of our work in 2023 – Sites & species

The impact chains below give a current snapshot of our site- and species-based work across our portfolio. They show how many of our 280 habitat-focused sites, 128 priority species populations and 278 secondary species populations are at each step on the pathway of change towards recovery. Two sites, six priority species populations and 67 secondary species populations are not included as there was insufficient information available about impact this year. We also indicate where habitats or species populations have not responded to our interventions or showed signs of recovery.



Our long-term work with partner Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan to reduce threats to saiga in the Ustyurt plateau has helped their population grow to almost 40,000 individuals in 2023 – up from only 1,900 in 2016. This helped inform the IUCN decision to downlist the species from Critically Endangered to Near Threatened.



In 2023, monitoring teams found more than 1,000 *Magnolia grandis* saplings growing wild in the forest – the result of a decade of work with partners to protect this critically endangered tree in Vietnam.

© Chu Xuan Canh / Fauna & Flora



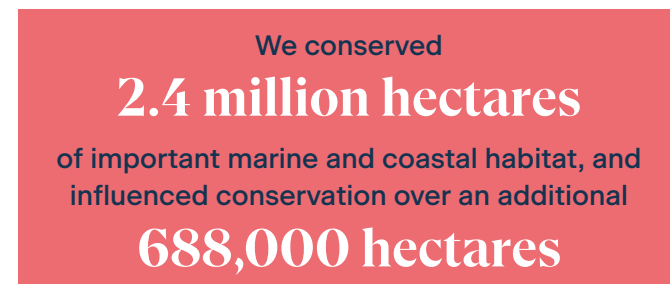
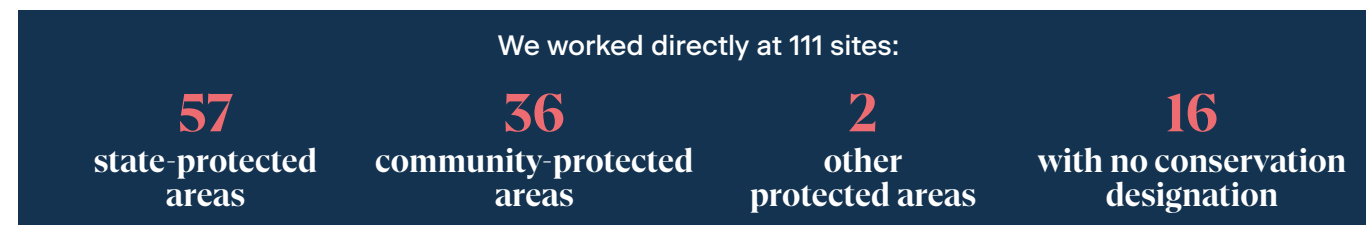
A deep dive on marine

Fauna & Flora has been protecting and restoring marine habitats for decades. Today, we have a dedicated marine team, and our projects span the Americas, Eurasia, Africa and Asia-Pacific regions.

Our marine programme has three key pillars:

- Safeguarding marine species and habitats through effective local management
- Tackling the wider threats to marine ecosystems through improved policy and practice
- Strengthening the ability of local and national organisations (including community-based organisations) to deliver effective marine conservation

The scale of our work in 2023 – Marine



The impact of our work in 2023 – Marine

Of the 111 marine and coastal sites where we work, we directly promoted habitat conservation in 76. The impact chain below shows the number of marine and coastal sites at each stage of progress towards habitat or biodiversity recovery. We also indicate where sites have not responded to our interventions or showed signs of recovery.



Surveys conducted in 2023 at one of our longest-standing marine sites in Cambodia – Koh Rong – show stabilisation and recovery of key indicators, including hard coral and seagrass cover, as well as an increase in overall fish abundance.

© Paul Colley

1.2 Putting people at the heart of conservation

People living closest to nature are our biggest allies in protecting and recovering nature. We need to honour their rights, agendas and existing knowledge. We need to promote solutions that support them to be active participants, partners and leaders in conservation and sustainable natural resource management. And we need to ensure that finance and other benefits from conservation work reach them.

What does this work look like?

Our work in this area centres around ensuring effective community-based conservation by:

- Engaging and consulting with communities and removing barriers to their participation in decision-making.
- Supporting the establishment of local institutions, including governance.
- Supporting sustainable livelihoods.
- Delivering education and training.
- Supporting local land tenure.

The scale of our work in 2023



Engaged with
4,500
people from
475 communities
to inform
conservation actions



Worked with
over 190
communities on
local planning or
governance



Supported at least
80
communities
in accessing
tenure rights

Sustainable livelihoods activities directly benefited
almost 14,000 people

At least 3,600 people
saw tangible benefits in terms of employment and/or income

Supported or helped establish at least
130
community-based organisations

Delivered conservation outreach activities to over
77,000
community members

Provided conservation skills training to at least
6,300 people
close to our project sites, including community members and students

The impact of our work in 2023

The impact chain below shows how the 66 projects that engaged with and empowered local communities are progressing towards biodiversity improvements linked to changes in local support or behaviour. Eight projects are not included on the chain as there was insufficient information available about their impact this year.⁷



In 2023, over 4,000 people received training related to livelihoods activities across our sites. This included over 150 people from Uganda's community-based Private Forest Owners' Associations, who received training on the use of crops known to deter wildlife (such as chimps) in order to reduce human-wildlife conflict.



7. It often takes a combination of different activities to achieve positive changes for biodiversity at our sites. Supporting community members to be active participants in biodiversity recovery is an important component of long-term success in many of the places where we work. However, because these critical activities (as well as those relating to partner development, influencing and seeding better conservation) tend to benefit nature in an indirect way, it can take longer to see attributable change.

Beyond biodiversity

Protecting nature is not only about biodiversity conservation. Healthy and resilient natural ecosystems also support human well-being, local livelihoods, health and food security. And conservation – when done well – contributes to land rights, community empowerment, gender equity and human rights.

1.3 Wider benefits from nature – protecting our climate

One of the key contributions that nature conservation makes is towards a stable climate. Natural ecosystems absorb and store vast quantities of carbon – much of which has been laid down in soils and vegetation over millennia. By protecting mature and complex habitats, we and our partners keep carbon safely locked up and help these ecosystems continue to play a vital role in ensuring climate stability in the future.

Natural habitats also help us all adapt to a changing climate. This is especially true for communities living in and around the places where we work, where the risks of climate change may be greater and the impacts felt more severely. We design our projects holistically, building in adaptation benefits wherever possible while also considering how we might need to adapt our work to future climatic conditions to ensure that our successes can withstand an uncertain future.

The impact of our work in 2023

“Forestry has really protected me against natural disasters. Because the strong winds don’t destroy my plants anymore. Even when there was a hurricane, the storm didn’t have as much impact on my farm compared to my neighbours, who don’t have as much forest protection.”



Narcisa Morales, a farmer in Ometepe Biosphere Reserve, Nicaragua, where Fauna & Flora and local partner Biometepe are supporting farmers with measures to adapt to a changing climate by protecting the island’s important forests.

© Narcisa Morales

Through our work, almost **one billion tonnes of carbon** is locked up in vegetation and soil/sediments across **94 terrestrial and marine sites**



The carbon content equivalent of **8 billion barrels of crude oil**

Putting local communities centre stage to protect wildlife in Western Equatoria

South Sudan is a new and complex African nation, conflict-afflicted for many years, and home to expansive, intact habitats. Fauna & Flora has been working in Western Equatoria in partnership with local communities and the Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism, encompassing the National Wildlife Service, since before South Sudan gained independence in 2010. This work focuses on improving biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management by strengthening both protected area and community-based management. Conservation here, and around the world, is most effective when carried out alongside those with local expertise and when activities benefit the people who live closest to nature.

Four years of consultative and inclusive processes culminated with the signing ceremonies for two Community Conserved Areas in South Sudan in 2023. This groundbreaking achievement was the result of the collective efforts of Fauna & Flora, South Sudan Government partners, and the Andari and Naandi-Nesi communities.

The new Community Conserved Areas are the first of their kind in South Sudan and will help to improve the protection of 5,560 hectares of forest beside Bangangai Game Reserve. They will be located on community-owned land and underpinned by community-based governance structures.

While the lands the Community Conserved Areas are situated on are neither settled nor cultivated, they are used by the surrounding communities for regulated activities on a small scale, including fishing and harvesting of forest products such as edible plants and oils. The aim of the Community Conserved Areas therefore is to improve biodiversity and natural resources through a variety of land management practices while deriving sustainable social, cultural and economic benefits from the land.

To enable more sustainable use of natural resources, Fauna & Flora is collaborating with local NGO Community Organization for Development on a pilot project to provide training and resources to help these communities develop diversified sustainable livelihoods, such as honey production.

Both Andari and Naandi-Nyesi Community Conserved Areas border Bangangai Game Reserve, and will help to reduce pressure on this state-protected area as well as support the conservation of threatened species, including pangolins, chimpanzees and leopards. In the longer term, the creation of additional Community Conserved Areas could enable greater connectivity in the landscape and improve resilience for both people and nature.

With the areas now established, Fauna & Flora is providing training to community members on conducting biomonitoring patrols, which will take place at least once a month. These patrols draw on local expertise to identify signs of species – and threats to species – and are crucial to enhancing understanding of the natural resources and biodiversity on which local livelihoods depend, while inspiring commitment to preserve them.

The legal frameworks to recognise community-led management of natural resources do not yet exist in South Sudan. The process of creating the Andari and Naandi-Nyesi Community Conserved Areas therefore has the potential to act as a model that can be built upon as the role of communities in the management of natural resources becomes more formalised. This exciting achievement gives us great hope for the future of conservation in South Sudan, as we see community-led approaches as an essential component of success, complementing effective state-protected areas.

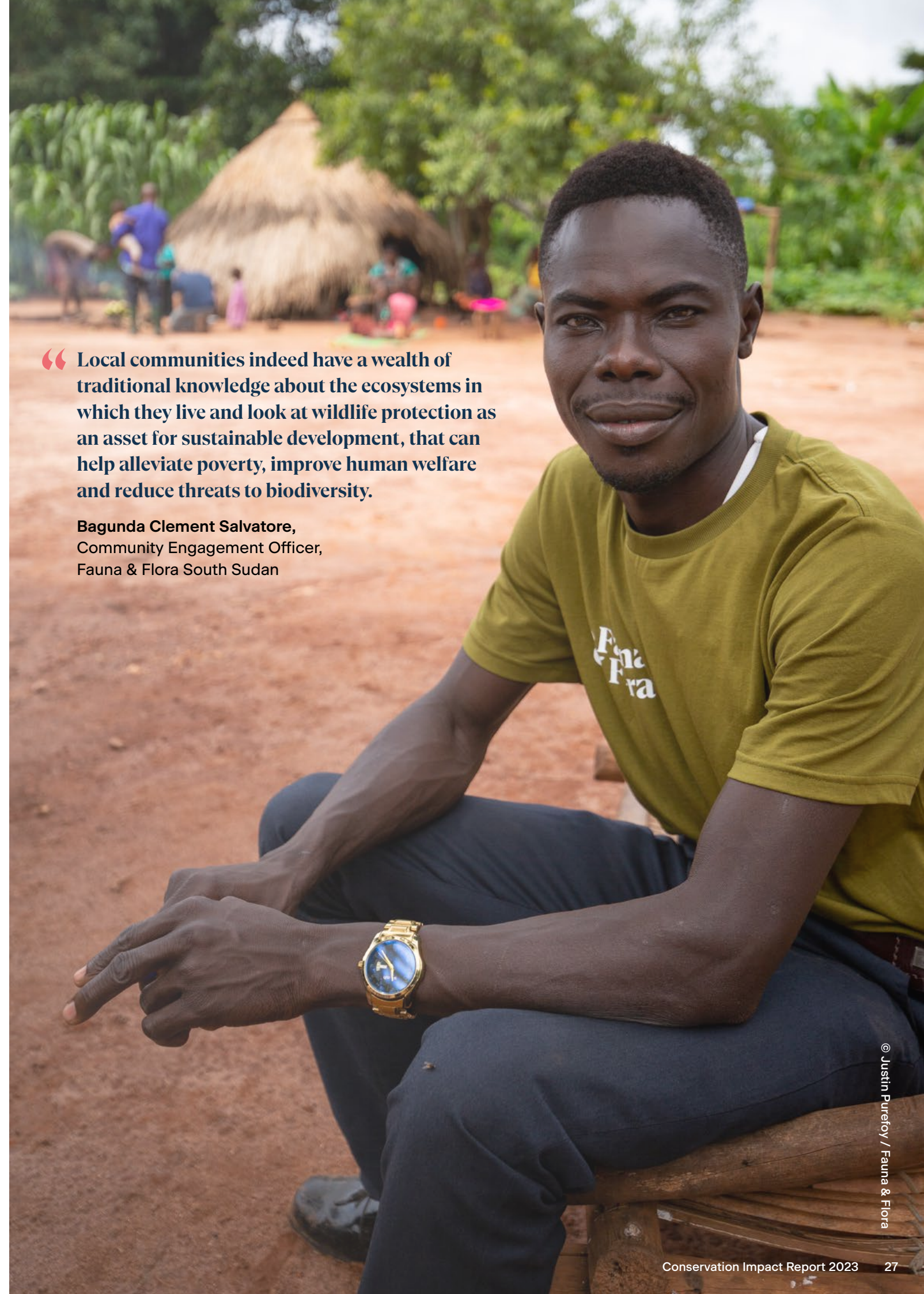


Andari Community Conserved Area member Mbikoyo Wage at the beehive pilot sustainable livelihood initiative.

© Justin Purefoy / Fauna & Flora

“Local communities indeed have a wealth of traditional knowledge about the ecosystems in which they live and look at wildlife protection as an asset for sustainable development, that can help alleviate poverty, improve human welfare and reduce threats to biodiversity.”

Bagunda Clement Salvatore,
Community Engagement Officer,
Fauna & Flora South Sudan



© Justin Purefoy / Fauna & Flora

Objective 2

Strong partners

Akdeniz Koruma Derneği, our partner in Türkiye, has gone from strength to strength. Their work with communities to protect Gökova Bay has been so successful that their model is now being replicated along the country's coastline.

© Akdeniz Koruma Derneği



Supporting in-country partners

Working with in-country partners has long been at the heart of our work. We do this because we know local expertise is key to effective outcomes and is vital to ensure that conservation efforts are sustained over the long term and have real legitimacy.

The strength of our partnership model is that it combines our partners' local knowledge, skills, networks and experience with our global reach and experience, deep technical expertise and access to wider funding. By working collaboratively and building respect, trust and transparency, we aim to create equitable partnerships that lead to mutual benefits and greater conservation impact than either organisation could achieve alone.

We work together with our partners to save nature, but we also want to see them thriving, growing and increasing their own impact, in line with their own goals.

A key part of our work therefore is to support our core partners to help them meet their own defined priorities. This includes accompanying them as they develop the skill sets, resources and confidence they need to grow sustainable programmes and institutions. Once we reach the point where we can step away, or can adopt a smaller role, Fauna & Flora will withdraw from projects, confident that the good work will continue. However, we remain available to re-engage with partners, if they need us.

The scale of our work in 2023



The impact of our work in 2023

The impact chain below gives a snapshot of 35 core partners for which information was provided about where they are on their trajectory towards organisational resilience and independence and achieving long-term outcomes for biodiversity.



Fauna & Flora's long-term approach to supporting partners is showing real conservation impact in Honduras, where we have been supporting Fundación Cuero y Salado (FUCSA). In 2007, FUCSA became the NGO co-manager of Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge and, in 2011, started collaborating with Fauna & Flora. We supported FUCSA to develop marine protected area management skills and now, through FUCSA's careful management, the wildlife refuge has stronger regulations. FUCSA has led work to improve mangrove systems and monitor the impact of climate change in the wildlife refuge. In 2023, FUCSA reported that threats to the refuge have stabilised, and ecosystem health is improving thanks to mangrove planting and protection.



Exchanging expertise & building bonds between partners

Thanks to support from Arcadia, Fauna & Flora orchestrated a series of dynamic learning exchanges between our partner organisations in 2023. These exchanges – made up of seven impactful sessions that brought together 12 partner organisations – provided a collaborative platform for knowledge-sharing, capacity building and professional development within the conservation community.

The participating organisations were paired up, and either hosted or travelled to another organisation's working location to share expertise and learn from each other. This opportunity to experience others' work first-hand served as a transformative journey, nurturing bonds and cultivating collective growth. Resounding positive feedback from both hosts and guests highlights the profound impact of these exchanges.

Cabo Verde to São Tomé and Príncipe

Strengthened mutual support and collaboration developed from a fruitful pairing between our partners Fundação Príncipe – a conservation NGO based in São Tomé and Príncipe – and Fundação Maio Biodiversidade – a conservation organisation from Cabo Verde, both of which strive to protect nature while promoting the socio-economic development of local communities.

Fundação Príncipe generously hosted Fundação Maio Biodiversidade at its headquarters on Príncipe Island. The exchange began with a meeting to understand the organisational structure and ongoing projects at Fundação Príncipe, followed by knowledge-sharing sessions on administrative and financial policies. Discussions ensued regarding strategic plans for external communication and organisational visibility, aiming to enhance the reach and impact of both organisations.

Visits to local projects also provided valuable on-the-ground insights. Janete Agues, Executive Director of Fundação Maio Biodiversidade, reflects on a field trip to learn from alternative income initiatives developed by local communities:

“ **This learning exchange was very timely as it allowed us to learn about other experiences, leading to a reflection on how to improve conservation by focusing on the issue of income-generating initiatives for local communities. Having learnt about low-cost and easy-to-manage approaches, we can ensure funding reaches more people in local communities and has a greater impact both in increasing the amount of people with alternative income and in reducing the population's unsustainable demand for natural resources.**

Janete Agues,
Executive Director,
Fundação Maio Biodiversidade

To formalise their ongoing commitment to mutual support, a shared organisational development strategy and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were developed – aligning the organisations' needs and objectives for future collaboration.

Fundação Príncipe and Fundação Maio Biodiversidade have already begun to put this into practice. During the exchange, they developed a joint project proposal to work on sea turtle conservation and research, leveraging a funding opportunity for their collective objectives and strengthening collaboration. Moving forward, they intend to seek additional funding opportunities to implement the objectives outlined in their MoU, advancing their ability to achieve conservation impact.

Janete Agues (Executive Director, Fundação Maio Biodiversidade), Litoney Oliveira C. Matos (Executive Director, Fundação Príncipe) signing their MoU during the partnership learning exchange.

© Fundação Príncipe



These activities fostered knowledge exchange, strategic planning and strengthened partnerships between Fundação Príncipe and Fundação Maio Biodiversidade, ultimately enhancing their capacity to protect local biodiversity and drive sustainable development initiatives.

“ **Overall, the closeness between us is an extraordinary step forward in itself, as both organisations share experiences and knowledge about conservation and organisational development. This was an experience much appreciated by team members of Fundação Príncipe and Fundação Maio Biodiversidade.**

Litoney Oliveira C. Matos
Executive Director,
Fundação Príncipe



Green turtle hatchlings, Príncipe.

© Vasco Pissarra / Fundação Príncipe

Fauna & Flora's CEO Kristian Teleki speaking at the 2023 World Biodiversity Summit, New York.

© World Climate Foundation

Objective 3

Decisions for nature



Influencing wider policies & practices

The decisions made by governments, international bodies and businesses can help or hinder nature. We aim to influence laws and policies that have a direct impact on the sites where we work and ensure that the knowledge and information that we and our partners hold can be used to influence key global decisions.

The scale of our work in 2023



In addition to our direct work with companies, we influenced hundreds more through industry associations and other initiatives.

3.1 Influencing policy

We support our partners to pursue local and national policy agendas, and strive to help integrate these with global policy systems, ensuring that local voices, approaches, expertise and traditional knowledge are included at all levels of decision-making.

The impact of our work in 2023

A milestone achievement in our long-running work to address plastic pellet pollution was reached in October 2023, with the publication of the European Commission’s legislative proposal to prevent plastic pellet loss. Fauna & Flora played a major role in advocating for this legislative approach on plastic pellets.



Plastic pellets surround an Atlantic grey seal in Norfolk, UK.
© Ed Marshall

3.2 Influencing business

For decades, Fauna & Flora has been working with corporates to ensure that they contribute to positive outcomes for nature. Through this work, we have developed a reputation for bringing both expertise and a constructive approach to the table. Today, our work with the private sector includes:

- Identifying threats posed by (and opportunities for engagement with) corporations in the places where we work, and using that as a launch pad for constructive dialogue with businesses, ensuring that this translates into better conservation outcomes for our sites and partners.
- Forming strategic partnerships with committed businesses to improve their performance and to support them in becoming environmental leaders within their sectors.

- Providing expertise to help align government and private-sector decision-making, so that policy and practice work cohesively to achieve real-world progress towards nature-positive goals.
- Influencing corporate investment in nature to ensure that this promotes genuine, locally led and high-integrity solutions.

We also employ our expertise to highlight superficially attractive but potentially counterproductive environmental fixes, and use our reputation and influence to guide companies and industries away from these false solutions.

“The private sector is critical to achieving the Paris Agreement and Global Biodiversity Framework at the pace and scale needed, and businesses bring much-needed resource and innovation. Collaboration between companies, financial institutions, governments and civil society is essential to achieve benefits for nature on a local and global scale.”



Libby Sandbrook,
Director of Business & Nature, Fauna & Flora

The impact of our work in 2023

To maximise the impact of our work, we take a multilayered approach to support the organisations we collaborate with in the private sector to achieve positive biodiversity outcomes. Fauna & Flora closely monitors the progress of each organisation we partner with, to ensure they are on the right track along the path towards impact. The key steps in this pathway are shown below.



In 2023, we supported our private sector partners to pilot emerging global target setting and disclosure frameworks including the Science-Based Targets for Nature and the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD). We also provided input to the new nature-positive sector guidance for TNFD and other initiatives led by the International Council on Mining and Metals, Business for Nature and World Business Council for Sustainable Development.



© Vasco Pissarra / Fundação Príncipe

3.3 Influencing finance for nature

There is a vast gap between the finance currently being channelled into nature conservation and the amount needed to save nature. What's more, not enough of the funding currently available is reaching those taking action on the ground.

Fauna & Flora is therefore striving to find credible, practical and effective ways to get more finance

invested into nature conservation and climate change work in a way that benefits people and planet. This investment needs to have integrity to ensure that it drives real benefits for nature, climate and people – including ensuring as much funding as possible reaches those working to conserve nature on the ground.

The impact of our work in 2023

In 2023, we produced a statement outlining the high-integrity principles for biodiversity credits and have been invited to participate in the Biodiversity Credit Alliance. Our focus is on promoting high-integrity credits, as well as robust methodologies and approaches, that enable local ownership of this emerging funding mechanism.





Zebra duiker in Sapo National Park.
© Fauna & Flora

Championing conservation and community rights in Liberia

Liberia hosts some of the most important surviving tracts of West Africa’s Upper Guinea Forest, which harbour key populations of pygmy hippopotamus, forest elephant and western chimpanzee. These forest areas also support local livelihoods and store vast amounts of carbon, thereby helping to reduce global emissions and combat climate change.

In 2023, Fauna & Flora played a key role in arranging the Liberian Conservation Area and Land Dialogue. This three-day meeting was attended by heads of several government agencies including the Forest Development Authority and the Liberia Land Authority, as well as international and local NGOs. It achieved consensus on a rights-based approach to the establishment of protected and conserved areas in Liberia, which will ensure that the standards and principles of human rights are integrated into decision-making. Stakeholders committed to undertake customary land formalisation and to ensure that communities are consulted and included in decision-making before any new protected areas are established.

The outcomes of this dialogue were captured in the groundbreaking Gbehzohn Declaration, which will ensure compliance with the Land Rights Act of 2018. This Act recognises communities as de facto owners of customary land and promotes women’s rights to own, use and manage land in Liberia. Communities as rights-holders should not only benefit from conservation activities, such as livelihood initiatives, but are entitled to those benefits. Using the rights-based approach, Fauna & Flora and partners – Community Rights Support Facility, Sustainable Development Institute, Social Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development, and Creative Initiative for Development & Relief – are supporting communities to secure statutory deeds on their customary land. This will enable the long-term protection of Sapo National Park, East Nimba Nature Reserve and bring five more proposed protected areas under conservation management.

Achieving consensus on the Gbehzohn Declaration and implementation of the Land Rights Act are crucial to the protection of nature in Liberia. Local communities are central to successful biodiversity conservation. Tenure security provides the ability to make long-term plans and invest in the future. For communities dependent on the forest, it means more effective stewardship and the potential to maintain the resources for future generations.

“Recognising the rights and roles of local peoples and local communities in forest management means that their voices are heard, and this protects and secures their livelihoods. This provides the incentives for communities to invest in protecting forests and the environment and, in Liberia, a real opportunity for communities to lead the management of conservation areas.”



Mary Molokwu-Odozi
Country Director,
Fauna & Flora Liberia



Traditional leaders in Sapo National Park. From left to right: Chief Emmanuel S. Wesseh, Victoria M. Seebae of Palatroken & Nelson Kieh of Shadee Town.

© Christian Cooper / Fauna & Flora

Objective 4 Seeding better conservation



Left to right: Angelamercy Baltazary, Irene Masonda, Ashura Rajabu at the 2023 Women in Conservation Technology workshop in Tanzania.

© Stephanie O'Donnell / WILDLABS

Innovating, sharing & contributing to global efforts

Fauna & Flora has been pioneering new conservation approaches for over a century. We have spent decades supporting a wide range of emerging conservation leaders, and we collaborate across the conservation sector and beyond to share knowledge and best practice. In the coming years, we will continue this work and build on it by supporting our core partners to share their own valuable knowledge and expertise across global networks.

Our activities include:

- Innovating and testing new approaches and tools for tackling biodiversity loss, and sharing lessons learned.
- Promoting the uptake of appropriate technological tools for achieving and understanding impact, and helping make these accessible at local levels.
- Investing in leadership development for local nature champions.
- Supporting training and skills transfer for a broad range of organisations.
- Promoting the work and leadership of our in-country partners around the world and ensuring that more is done to recognise how much can be learnt globally from local action.
- Sharing innovative conservation practice and lessons through our peer-reviewed publication, *Oryx—The International Journal of Conservation*.
- Supporting local organisations to ensure that they are better able to engage in global discourse and debate, opening up these spaces for wider participation.
- Working with donors to ensure that funding being channelled directly to local organisations minimises burden and maximises conservation impact, and supporting partners to manage these funds effectively.
- Collaborating with others – both within and outside our sector – to improve practice and advance shared goals.
- Practising inclusive conservation (including bringing new skills from different sectors into the conservation space), recognising that conservation needs a wide range of skills and experience to deliver the best outcomes.


Seeding better conservation is woven throughout our programmes.

The information presented in this report provides an illustrative insight into the range, scale and impact of this work.



The impact of our work in 2023

Harnessing technology for conservation



Tools used in 2023 included:

<p>Camera-traps</p> <p>eDNA / other DNA analysis</p>	<p>Tagging</p> <p>Aerial surveys</p>	<p>In-water surveys</p> <p>Acoustic monitoring</p>
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Fauna & Flora is a collaborating partner of WILDLABS, an initiative that connects conservationists, technologists, engineers, data scientists, entrepreneurs and thought leaders to help them find, share and create effective technology-based solutions to protect threatened wildlife and habitats. In 2023:

The WILDLABS community grew to **over 8,500** registered users based in more than **100 countries**

The WILDLABS platform was visited **76,925** times

In 2023, WILDLABS launched the WILDLABS Awards. These awards allocated grant funding to 13 technology-enabled projects addressing diverse conservation challenges across species, ecosystems and geographies. The technology applied across these projects ranges from using acoustic sensors and AI to monitor bumblebees, to developing code-free species classification models for camera-trap image data.



Supporting conservation leaders

The Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) is a partnership between Fauna & Flora, the Wildlife Conservation Society and BirdLife International that has directed funding and training to early career leaders since it was established in 1985. In 2023, CLP provided a range of opportunities including:



Fauna & Flora helps to deliver the Cambridge MPhil in Conservation Leadership, a groundbreaking course that has trained 243 students from 90 countries since it was established in 2010. Twenty-three students from 18 countries passed the course in 2023. Five years after their graduation, the MPhil alumni are invited to complete a survey. They told us that the course had helped them achieve impact in organisations, with people, and in conservation in the following ways:



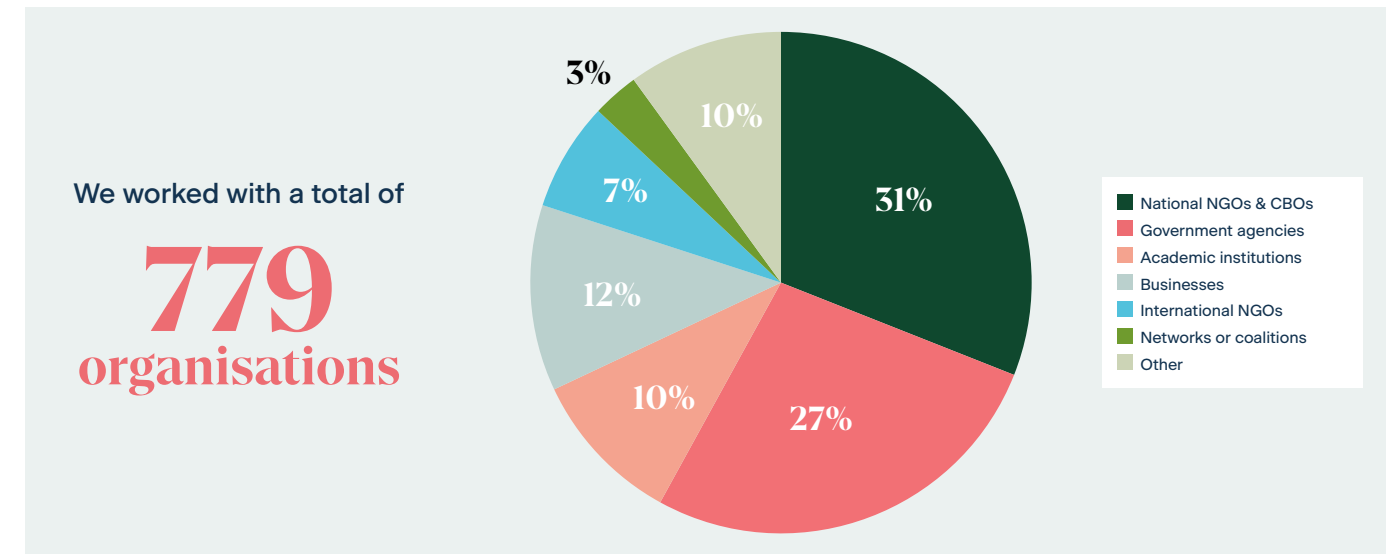
“ WildAct enables local communities to be directly involved in conservation activities on the ground. It is one of the very few organisations in Vietnam that has developed a formal short course on wildlife conservation, and we’re currently working with a local university to create the first ever Master’s degree course in Wildlife Conservation in the country. The knowledge, encouragement, inspiration and empowerment that I received as a student have equipped me to follow my dreams.



Trang Nguyen,
 Founder & Director at WildAct Vietnam and
 2014 Alumna of the Cambridge MPhil in Conservation Leadership

Collaboration

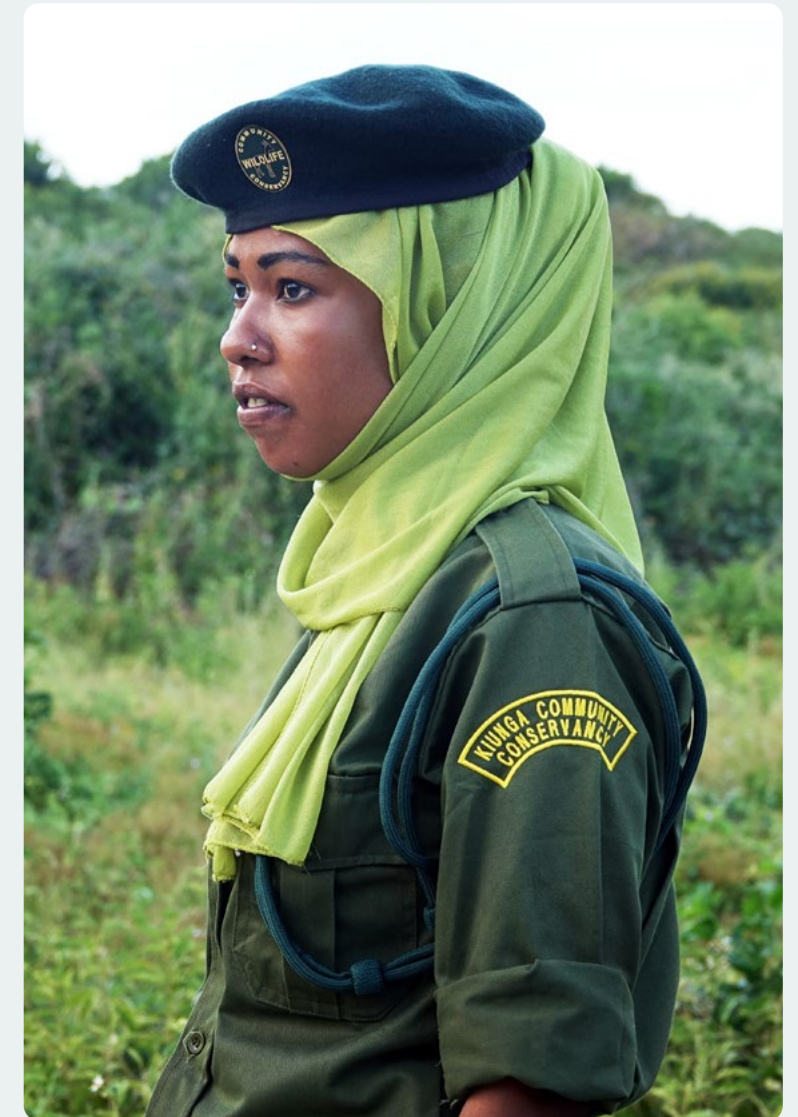
As well as our close relationships with core partners and other in-country organisations, we actively collaborate with a wide number of other organisations ranging from international NGOs and academic institutions to governments and beyond.



Fauna & Flora is active in the Universal Ranger Support Alliance – a collaboration of global conservation organisations that support and promote the International Ranger Federation to build a network of well-supported, professional and capable rangers, who can act effectively as custodians of the natural world. During 2023, we actively supported the review, translation, rollout and implementation of key resources in our conservation programmes including the URSA Code of Conduct and Ranger Competency Framework.

Saada Abu, a radio operator from Kiunga Community Wildlife Association in Kenya.

© Gurveena Ghataure / Fauna & Flora



Sharing knowledge & lessons

We use the results and lessons from our work (as well as knowledge, insights and experience from partners and communities) to inform our own work and that of others. We also enable others to share their findings from conservation research and projects, and ensure that resources developed to support our partners and projects are made available to a much wider conservation community.

Research from at least

49

projects

was used to influence wider decisions



The *Capacity for Conservation* website reached over

3,000

people, and resources were accessed around 800 times



As a result of our work, at least

25

articles were published in peer-reviewed journals and over

66

in grey literature

We supported conservation researchers and practitioners from over

64

countries to publish their research in *Oryx*

86

peer-reviewed articles were published in issues of *Oryx*, plus

63

Conservation News items

Data collected in partnership with Fundação Príncipe is regularly shared with the Regional Secretary of Environment, Agriculture and Rural Development, São Tomé and Príncipe. This data directly contributed to the revision of the Príncipe Natural Park Management Plan.

Davide Dias, terrestrial flora coordinator at Fundação Príncipe.
© Teresa Holstein / Fundação Príncipe



Improving the funding landscape for local partners

Wherever we work, our ultimate aim is to no longer be needed – leaving conservation to be led and delivered locally, while remaining available in the background if called upon. In the meantime, we have a crucial role to play in ensuring that future funding mechanisms are tailored to the needs and priorities of local institutions, enabling them to work at the appropriate scale and pace.

We therefore strongly welcome moves by philanthropists and statutory donors to increase the proportion of funds being channelled directly to local conservation actors. However, we also see at first hand the difficulties our partners face in absorbing the demands of large-scale, high-compliance funding when they do not have the necessary structures or support systems in place. In such cases, simply scaling up activities to meet higher thresholds of funding can actually be counterproductive. When coupled with fluctuating income streams and ‘funding cliffs’ at the end of a grant phase, this not only affects conservation outcomes but can destabilise the organisation itself.

“ We strongly welcome moves by donors to increase the funds being channelled directly to local conservation actors. However, we also see at first hand the difficulties our partners face.

A vital facet of Fauna & Flora's role is to help bridge the gap between donor expectations and the realities our partners face on the ground. Our model focuses on offering practical and transformational support to local organisations that are not yet equipped to manage increasing volumes of funding and the demands that these impose. At the same time, we have a duty to ensure that the donor community understands the challenges and pressure its requirements can place on local actors.

Over the last year we have therefore had a series of bold and productive conversations with donors about these challenges. We have also spoken to other conservation organisations who have identified similar constraints and frustrations, and are seeking to help improve funding access for partners on the ground.

Although it is too soon to see a wide-scale shift in perspectives, donors have stated a real appreciation for the value that organisations such as Fauna & Flora provide by working alongside partners to help them absorb such funding and by providing a backstop that increases donor confidence.

Our conversations also revealed a gradual move by donors away from highly restricted funding models towards unrestricted funding through trust-based philanthropy. We see this as a positive change that has the potential to increase conservation impact while alleviating the pressures on local organisations.

Fauna & Flora's model already shows the value that international NGOs can bring when they work in true partnership with local conservation actors. We have been exploring new ways to understand, articulate, value and fund the important role we play in solving this disconnect between donors' best intentions and local needs. Central to this is ensuring that the redirection of funding to the ground does not unintentionally deprive partners of the support they need as they seek to professionalise rapidly, develop funding pathways that are manageable at scale and quickly progress to management of larger and more sophisticated funding sources.

Supporting Indigenous-led conservation of the endangered red siskin in Guyana

The Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) is a 40-year partnership between Fauna & Flora, BirdLife International and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Through its annual team awards, CLP directs grants and training to grassroots conservation leaders to support their development as they work to protect globally threatened biodiversity.

One of these leaders, Leroy Ignacio, is the President and founding member of the South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS), an Indigenous-led NGO in Guyana. For nearly two decades, SRCS has been devoted to the conservation of the red siskin, a small, endangered finch, as well as other threatened wildlife of the South Rupununi.



Leroy Ignacio holding a red siskin.
© Chung Liu

Here, Leroy shares his story: from his early years spent immersed in nature to winning three CLP awards for his outstanding efforts to protect his beloved childhood home and its native biodiversity.

“As an Indigenous Makushi, I grew up living a subsistence lifestyle in the Rupununi savannahs of Southern Guyana. I was raised by my grandparents who passed on their Traditional Knowledge to me and taught me about the importance of preserving our resources, including wildlife.

“In 2000, while working as a tour guide, I accompanied a team who discovered a previously unknown population of the critically endangered red siskin in Guyana. This discovery led myself and friends from surrounding communities to officially form SRCS, an Indigenous-led grassroots conservation NGO focused on the preservation of the environment, wildlife and culture of the Rupununi.

“One of the biggest conservation impacts from these CLP projects was that the data we collected on the red siskin ultimately contributed to the designation of... Guyana’s first-ever Important Bird & Biodiversity Area.

Leroy Ignacio,
President & founding member of the South Rupununi Conservation Society



Leroy Ignacio, President and founding member of the South Rupununi Conservation Society, training rangers in bird banding.

© Chung Liu

“As Indigenous People most of us had not finished secondary school and, while we had local knowledge, we had no scientific or organisational management experience. We were therefore extremely grateful to CLP, who provided our first grant in 2005. This Future Conservationist Award allowed us to collect important information about the red siskin. In 2014, we received further funding from CLP, a Conservation Follow-Up Award, which supported us to build on our initial project. These CLP grants helped to develop our skills as local leaders in conservation, while also increasing our capacity to build SRCS and extend our focus to other threatened species — including the giant anteater and the yellow-spotted river turtle.

“One of the biggest conservation impacts from these CLP projects was that the data we collected on the red siskin ultimately contributed to the designation of the South Rupununi as Guyana’s first-ever Important Bird & Biodiversity Area.

“In 2022, we were awarded CLP’s ultimate prize: the Conservation Leadership Award. With this support, in 2023 we were able to partner with five of the Indigenous communities whose titled land covers the range of the siskin to create a 75,000-hectare Community-based Conservation Management Zone. The zone is designed, implemented and monitored by the local communities.

“We also trained over 30 rangers to effectively monitor the zone. Amazingly, some of these rangers were second- and even third-generation relatives of the rangers who were originally trained through our 2005 CLP-funded project. Since the creation of the zone, communities have generated income through ecotourism from birders coming to see the red siskin.

“In April 2023, SRCS was awarded the prestigious Parker-Gentry Award from the Field Museum of Natural History in recognition of our work as a grassroots conservation organisation.

“All of us at SRCS hope to serve as national and international leaders to support other Indigenous People to start their own conservation movements to preserve their local environment, wildlife and culture. Of course, our focus still remains on the red siskin whose Guyanese population has stabilised thanks to our almost 20-year partnership with CLP.”

Objective 5

A flourishing organisation

In Romania, we have been providing farmers with Carpathian shepherd dog puppies, which have been trained to protect flocks from grey wolves and so reduce human-carnivore conflict. Here, Fauna & Flora's Mircea Mărginean examines one of the puppies.

© Daniel Mîrlea / Fauna & Flora



A stronger Fauna & Flora

Fauna & Flora's own organisational health and resilience is a vital foundation for our conservation impact – so investing in this is an integral part of our conservation strategy. The conservation impact and achievements described in this report were only possible because of Fauna & Flora's own effectiveness and ongoing development.

We recognise that our amazing people are our greatest asset, and we aim to maintain an effective, expert, diverse and motivated staff base. Over the past year we have strategically prioritised a global job evaluation and grading process to bolster recruitment and retention. We have continued to invest in our pioneering mindfulness programme, to help alleviate the mental-health burden facing many of those

who work in our sector. We have developed and empowered broader management platforms, which better represent the global nature of our organisation, and have started a review of project development and management cycles to align these better with the new strategy.

We recognise that more widespread awareness of our organisation and our work will enable greater impact, and have therefore continued to develop our outreach and profile; in 2023 this included the launch of a new website and brand video, and a garden at Chelsea Flower Show in the UK, which enabled us to reach new audiences. We have strategically invested in fundraising, with a focus on unlocking the increased unrestricted funding needed to achieve our strategic objectives.

Learning & adapting as an organisation

The lessons we collect each year through this impact reporting process also feed back into helping us improve the organisation and how it operates.

We asked teams why they felt their projects had been successful over the last year. One hundred and three projects responded, often citing multiple reasons. Common themes underpinning success from across our portfolio include:



We also asked our project teams about the challenges they faced in 2023. Their insights allow us to address key issues and improve our operations, which in turn enables us to run more effective and impactful projects.

There was significant variability in the types and severity of challenges encountered by projects, and often they were highly specific to local situations.

The common themes relating to **external factors** included:

- Issues with policy environments, government engagements or political instability
- Complicated relationships with project stakeholders or partners
- Challenges associated with operating contexts or logistics
- Climate-related issues including extreme and unpredictable weather events

Internal factors were also cited as challenges to delivery. These were less varied, with two main issues reported:

- Funding and resources constraints
- Changes to staff

85% of projects that faced challenges reported learning from these and adapting their work in response



A word of thanks

Conservation is complex, and it takes time to achieve meaningful change for the species and habitats we are working with our partners to save.

Tracking and monitoring our impact is a major – but essential – undertaking. We are so grateful to our colleagues and partners around the world for sharing the inspiring results of their hard work, and for dedicating their time, expertise and passion to our shared mission – to save nature, together.

We also send our warmest thanks to our incredible donors and supporters, without whom the successes outlined in this report would not have been possible.

Siamese crocodile team on patrol, Cambodia.

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