



# PEOPLE PLACES

U.S. FOUNDATION  
FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION

A NEW MODEL LEVERAGING PRIVATE & PUBLIC  
FUNDS FOR COMMUNITIES AND THEIR ECOSYSTEMS

# AS THE WORLD LOSES NATURE, IT FACES A SERIES OF LOOMING CRISES

THREATENING STABILITY, FOOD SECURITY, ECONOMIES, DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, AND NATIONAL SECURITY OF COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD

**T**he U.S. Foundation for International Conservation is a proposed U.S.-led public-private grantmaking entity that is chartered by the government and operated as a private foundation. It will leverage private funding to implement projects around protected and conserved areas in the most vulnerable parts of the world in order to avert these crises.

## THIS INITIATIVE IS:

- **a focused effort** to ensure that protected and conserved areas – widely recognized as one of the most important tools for conserving biodiversity that benefits people – receive the dedicated long-term financial support that is often lacking.
- **complementary to programs being implemented by other donor nations**, such as the Legacy Landscapes Fund, established by the German government and now funded by multiple European countries.
- **able to augment other successful U.S. government investments and innovative finance mechanisms** that conserve nature and biodiversity globally while supporting Indigenous People and local communities.

- **designed to ensure the effective long-term management of protected and conserved areas** as critically important “anchors” that can support broader landscape-scale conservation, and essential natural resources and ecosystems.
- **a means of enhancing regional stability**, safety, and security; and providing economic opportunities and developmental mechanisms for Indigenous People and local communities.
- **intended to provide multiple benefits**, including conservation of forests, freshwater, and biodiversity while sequestering carbon and supporting food and water security, tourism, and other essential ecosystem services.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER TO THE UNITED STATES?

- **It directly affects our national security**, food security, health, and stability.
- **Protecting natural security costs far less** than suffering the costs of losing vital benefits provided by healthy ecosystems.



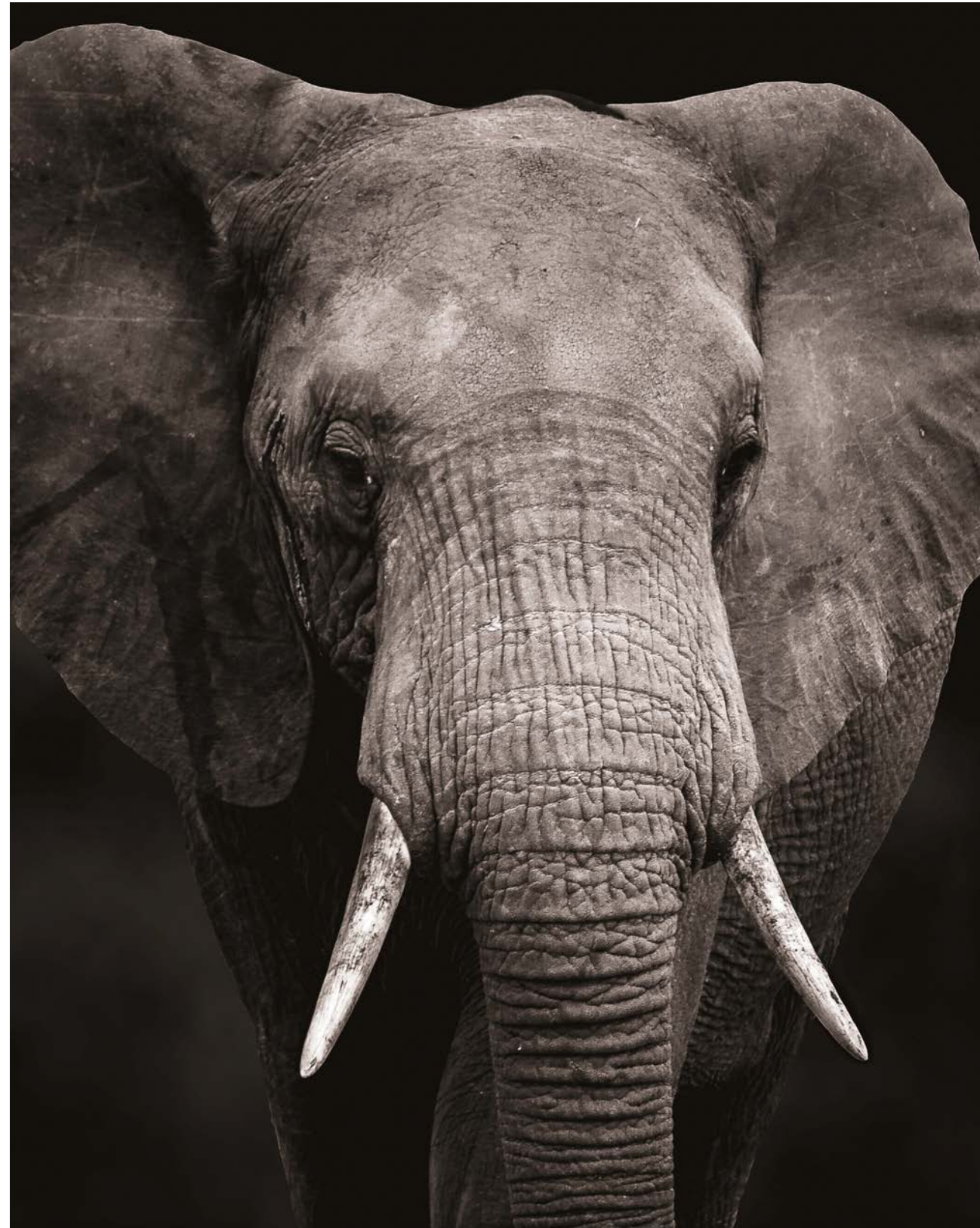
# AFRICA

## *FOR PEOPLE, BY PEOPLE.*

**M**any countries in Africa are seriously challenged by poverty, disease, food and water insecurity, instability, corruption, and conflict. These factors have contributed to parts of the continent falling under the sway of violent extremism and becoming safe havens for organized crime. Sustainable economic development that promotes conservation, improved natural resource management, and restoration of degraded lands is increasingly essential to countering such threats, bolstering social stability, and ensuring Africa's future prosperity.

Public-private partnerships (PPP) are proving to be highly effective in protecting biodiversity and ecosystems in some parts of Africa, through private-sector partnership with governments and communities in and around parks and protected areas. More than 11% of Africa's protected areas are managed through PPPs and there is a demand from African governments to scale this up. Over the past two decades, PPPs have demonstrated enhanced ecological, social, and economic resiliency. This is a model that is working, and by strengthening this model financially, we can save some of Africa's most important landscapes and the species that inhabit them, while benefiting the people who most depend on them.

**RIGHT:** The Okavango Delta in Botswana



# REVENUES + SCALABLE + SUSTAINABLE

AFRICA'S GREATEST WILDLIFE CONSERVATION STORIES



## SUCCESS STORIES

### NOUABALÉ-NDOKI NATIONAL PARK

**N**ouabalé-Ndoki National Park (NNNP), managed in partnership by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Republic of Congo, and local communities, is one of the most advanced and successful conservation efforts in Africa.

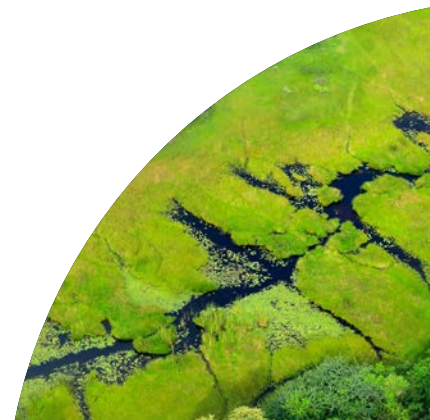
**It is a stunning protected area and World Heritage Site that features pristine lowland rainforest safeguarding some of Central Africa's best-known wildlife.**

When the park was established in 1993 there were no people living within its borders. The Indigenous Peoples of Bomassa-Bon Coin in the west and Makao in the east continue to hunt, gather, and fish in the forests, rivers, and lakes within their traditional territories outside of the NNNP. These lands and waters have been theirs for hundreds, if not thousands, of years and continue to provide food, clothing, and shelter to their families and remain essential to their cultural sense of self. In addition, the park directly employs nearly two hundred people from Makao and Bomassa villages, injecting over 90,000 USD into the local economy each month.

### AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

**R**wanda's Akagera National Park was nearly destroyed in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, when refugees settled in the park, clearing most of the land for homes and cattle and poaching large numbers of animals. In 2010, African Parks assumed management of Akagera National Park in partnership with the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), with the objective of transforming Akagera from a depleted landscape into an income-generating park for the benefit of people and wildlife. Poaching was practically eliminated within five years, and many animals have been reintroduced. Akagera National Park continues to provide for the 300,000 people living around its boundaries, who directly benefit from its existence.

This is one example of many extremely effective programs being carried out by African Parks, which is achieving great success by implementing a model in which the organization enters into long-term agreements with governments to manage park sites and improve them while boosting jobs and welfare locally through tourism, sustainable agriculture, forestry, and/or fisheries. Community development and engagement also play a vital role. African Parks currently manages 22 national parks and protected areas in 12 African countries.



## CONSERVANCIES + COMMUNITY-MANAGED LAND

**D**onor nations, including the United States, have invested tens of millions of dollars over the past 20+ years in priority conservation areas, including communal wildlife conservancies. These programs directly or indirectly provide millions of jobs for people in the developing world, sustain economies, and contribute significantly to peace and stability. Through the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association, for example, the U.S. supports 160 conservancies across Kenya benefitting over 700,000 households in partnership with local and international organizations, the private sector, and other development partners.

### **Namibia led the world in pioneering communal conservancies, with significant, multi-year investment from the United States.**

Shortly after its independence in 1990, Namibia's government partnered with local communities and NGOs to launch the first communal conservancies. With multi-year support from World Wildlife Fund and U.S. agencies, including USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, Namibia now has 87 communal conservancies covering roughly 20% of the country and connecting locally conserved lands with national parks and other protected areas. By giving communities rights to manage their natural resources and benefit economically from wildlife on their lands, conservancies have played a central role in recovering populations of rhino, elephant, lion, cheetah, and other at-risk species while generating over \$10 million in annual benefits for hundreds of thousands of rural Namibians, primarily from wildlife-based tourism.

**RIGHT:** The gemsbok, a large antelope in the genus *Oryx*, native to the region of Southern Africa

### **Namibia's conservancies also help anchor the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), the world's largest terrestrial transboundary landscape.**

A partnership between five countries, KAZA boasts half of Africa's remaining savanna elephants and natural wonders such as Victoria Falls and the Okavango Delta, making it a cornerstone of regional economic development driven by sustainable tourism.

**Enduring Earth, a collaboration between The Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, World Wildlife Fund, and ZOMALAB, is developing Namibia for Life (N4L), which is designed to secure long-term support to communal conservancies, focusing on ensuring sustainable social, economic, and wildlife benefits of the conservancies for the health of the people and the planet.**



# ASIA

## **SAFEGUARDING HABITATS**

**O**ceans and healthy coral reefs are essential to all life on earth; however, the oceans are being severely overfished and filled with plastic and other pollutants, and up to 90% of coral reefs may be destroyed by 2040. One-quarter of all global marine biodiversity is threatened with extinction. In places like Southeast Asia, these pressures are fueling competition for scarce resources, driving food insecurity and transnational organized crime, and exacerbating conflict and instability.

**RIGHT:** Aerial view of turquoise ocean waves in Kelingking beach, Nusa Penida Island in Bali, Indonesia





# LOCAL + LOW COST = NEW HABITATS

SAFEGUARDING HABITATS  
IN ASIA AND BEYOND

## SUCCESS STORIES

### BIRD'S HEAD SEASCAPE INITIATIVE

**T**he Bird's Head region in West Papua, Indonesia contains more than 2,500 islands and reefs and is home to huge concentrations of marine species, including more than 70 species of fish, corals, and crustaceans found nowhere else. The area provides food and income for 760,000 local people. It is hard to imagine now, but in the not-too-distant past the seascape was nearly ruined by overfishing and destructive fishing practices, like dynamite fishing.

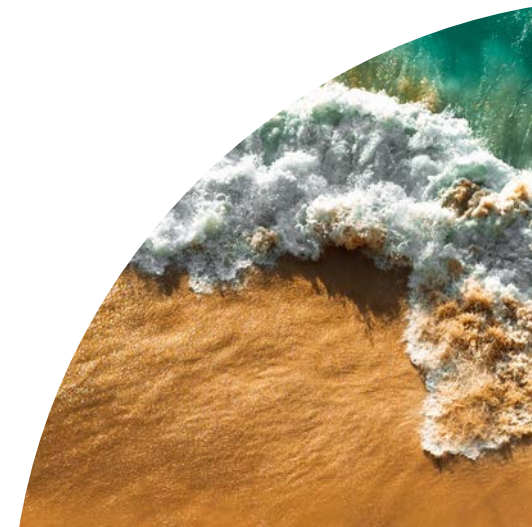
In 2004, the Bird's Head Seascape Initiative – a community-based conservation partnership – was launched by a network of more than 30 partners, including the government of Indonesia, the people of West Papua, and organizations such as Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Walton Family Foundation, and World Wildlife Fund. The initiative formed a network of marine protected areas

(MPAs) covering nearly 9 million acres that employs local people to protect and sustainably manage the area's coasts, reefs, and biodiversity.

**Since the launch of the initiative, marine species and coral reefs have recovered, poaching by outside fishers has declined by 90%, and ecotourism has flourished.**

### CAMBODIA'S CENTRAL CARDAMOM MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

**T**he million-acre Central Cardamom Mountains National Park (CCMNP) represents Cambodia's first protected





area and one of Asia's largest. Rivers in the CCMNP provide drinking water for more than 30,000 people and support rice and fish production in the lowland agricultural plains, ensuring food security for many of Cambodia's poorest people.

Due to the region's isolation, the natural biodiversity of the Cardamom Mountains was untouched by outsiders for centuries. But as Cambodia has modernized, they have become increasingly vulnerable to illegal logging, hunting, forest clearing, and land encroachment.

**LEFT:** Stone face Asura and sunset over moat in Angkor Thom, Cambodia

**Since helping to gain official protection for the forest in 2002, Conservation International has helped the Cambodian government to develop the legal frameworks and the on-ground strategies needed for effective, long-term conservation of the area.**

CI is working to improve the government's capacity to protect the area and working directly with the communities in and around the forest to develop livelihoods that allow them to benefit from the rich resources of the Cardamoms while encouraging their preservation.

## **INDONESIAN REEF RESTORATION**

**T**he Spermonde Archipelago off of Indonesia's Sulawesi island was once home to abundant marine life; however, destructive fishing practices including dynamite and cyanide fishing over several decades nearly destroyed the local coral and edible fish species. Since 2019, Mars Inc. and its SHEBA cat food brand have been partnering with local government and communities to work to restore reefs in the area using the Mars Assisted Reef Restoration System (MARRS), a low-cost scalable method of coral reef ecosystem restoration that involves installing a web of steel structures embedded with coral fragments, called reef stars, to replace dead coral. The reef stars are manufactured by local communities from locally sourced materials, and large numbers of the local people are involved in the restoration process.

**Off Sulawesi, the project has planted more than 19,000 reef stars seeded with more than 285,000 coral fragments, and marine life has returned.**

Other SHEBA coral restoration projects can be found in the Mexican Caribbean and Australia's Great Barrier Reef, with additional sites for new reefs being considered.



# LATIN AMERICA

## PROTECTING THE AMAZON

**T**he Amazon region accounts for more than 40% of the world's remaining rainforest, is the single largest repository of biodiversity on the planet, housing 10% of the world's known species, and is the world's largest freshwater system, contributing more than 15% of the world's total river discharge into the oceans. The entire ecosystem plays a critical role in global climate regulation, storing at least 5 percent of global GHG emissions, making it a vital region for climate change mitigation.

The Amazon Forest plays a key role not only for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services, but for the socioeconomic prosperity of about 47 million people who derive their livelihoods from its forests and rivers. Approximately 410 indigenous groups live in the Amazon, and it is one of the last places on the planet where isolated tribes live, with an estimated 80 uncontacted groups. The diversity of its population also includes Afro-descendants and mestizo populations that migrated to the region.

**PHOTO:** Navigating rainforest in a handmade boat



# PUBLIC + PRIVATE + INTEGRATED

THE AMAZON'S LARGEST CONSERVATION PROGRAM



## SUCCESS STORIES

### AMAZON REGION PROTECTED AREAS FOR LIFE (ARPA FOR LIFE)

**A**mazon Region Protected Areas (ARPA) for Life is the largest tropical forest protected areas program on Earth. Launched in 2014, ARPA for Life was created to expand, consolidate, and maintain Brazil's 148-million-acre network of protected areas, including nearly 15 million acres of new protected areas.

**By securing 15% of the Brazilian Amazon in strict and sustainable use protected areas, ARPA for Life is expected to avoid 1.4 billion tons of carbon emissions by 2050.**

The public-private ARPA for Life program was developed and launched by the Government of Brazil in collaboration with World Wildlife Fund, the German Development Bank, the World Bank acting with funds allocated by the Global

Environment Facility, the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund, and others. It was an early leader in the integration of thorough long-term financial planning into the program design process and helped form the basis for the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) approach – an approach designed by conservationists, bankers, and management consultants based on ideas from Wall Street to create a new way to protect large ecosystems.

**The PFP approach seeks the permanent conservation of an ecosystem by ensuring it is adaptive, resilient, and able to weather unforeseen events.**

The approach is rooted in project finance, a for-profit-sector model in which target countries define a unique set of commitments from multiple stakeholders in a single closing to ensure that, over the long term, conservation areas are well managed, sustainably financed, and benefit the communities that depend on them.



## MADIDI NATIONAL PARK

**T**o conserve biological and cultural diversity and consolidate Indigenous territorial management over 3.7 million acres within the Madidi landscape in Bolivia, one of the most biodiverse areas on the planet, the Wildlife Conservation Society has established alliances between Indigenous organizations, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, bilateral donors, the Bolivian government, Kreyal Coffee in the U.S., and others to support natural resource management projects including shade-grown coffee, wild cacao, ecotourism, and the growing gourmet market for conservation-friendly ingredients.

For example, the paiche (*Arapaima gigas*) is the largest Amazonian fish, but is an invasive species in Bolivia. Paiche fisheries in the Madidi landscape are focused on controlling populations, while generating economic benefits for Indigenous Tacana communities, as alternatives to advancement of the agricultural frontier.

**Paiche fisheries have doubled local livelihoods and increased women's participation to 30%, while reinforcing participatory decision making and territorial control in respect of Indigenous rights.**

## CHILE + ARGENTINA

**K**ris and Doug Tompkins have, over three decades, leveraged philanthropic giving with public and private funding to create parklands, protect and restore wildlife, promote regenerative agriculture, and prove that national parks are economic drivers that provide lasting benefits to local communities.

Their work to create a vast network of parks to promote climate stability, restore

**PHOTO:** Sunrise in the Patagonia National Park



biological corridors, and provide habitat for native species has resulted in nearly 15 million acres protected, rebounding wildlife populations, and growing economic opportunities in park gateway communities.

**Tompkins Conservation was a key partner in a coalition that helped secure new marine protected areas totaling upwards of 30 million acres in 2018-2019, including Argentina's first two marine national parks.**

It has invested \$345 million in protected areas in Argentina and Chile and recently concluded the largest private land donation in history, turning over more than a million acres of land comprising the Pumalin and Patagonia Parks to the Chilean government. Tompkins Conservation is working with government representatives and private-sector partners toward securing long-term financing to manage the land in perpetuity.

## FUNDING CHALLENGES

**R**ecent studies show that protected and conserved areas too often suffer from a lack of durable long-term financing, which can cause great projects to fail over the long term, especially in developing countries where much of the world's biodiversity is found. Financial shortfalls result in a network of parks not meeting their potential. Addressing this financial gap represents one of the best opportunities for improving biodiversity protection. A new U.S. funding mechanism is needed to create the durable financing necessary to ensure the longevity of projects for protected and conserved areas -- which directly affect our national security, food security, health, and stability.

## OPPORTUNITY

**By creating a U.S.-led public-private grantmaking entity that is chartered by the government and operated as a private foundation,** the U.S. Government has the potential to leverage significant private-sector support and bring together the best aspects of the private sector and the public sector to conserve some of our planet's most important large-scale landscapes and seascapes and, in doing so, help to solve some of the world's most intractable problems. It can also augment longstanding U.S. Government programs and investments across several federal agencies directed toward biodiversity and community conservation globally.





U.S. FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION

A NEW MODEL LEVERAGING PRIVATE & PUBLIC FUNDS FOR COMMUNITIES AND THEIR ECOSYSTEMS