

Rainforest Foundation US Quarterly ▶▶

Third Quarter Newsletter, 2023

Last month, Rainforest Foundation US (RFUS) participated in Climate Week NYC, a call to action for climate justice worldwide. It's an important gathering for our organization and for the climate justice space as it brings together tens of thousands of people—including heads of state, government officials, Indigenous peoples, NGOs, and civil society—to promote and demand solutions to the climate crisis.

RFUS—along with Indigenous partners and our sister organizations Rainforest Foundation UK and Rainforest Foundation Norway—co-hosted a number of events, including a well-attended panel discussion highlighting some of the most effective community-based solutions that are ready to be scaled up to achieve an even greater impact. You can read more about these events in our Climate Week recap below.

I'm also happy to share some of our recent successes on the following pages. In Peru, our Tech Camps brought together Indigenous partners, US organizations, government entities, and academics to develop four pilot projects. These pilot projects will provide Indigenous forest monitors with new technologies and skills to support their forest protection efforts. In Guyana, we launched a paralegal program. This community-led initiative supported by RFUS—and through which RFUS provides capacity and legal training—currently supports 21 communities.

I hope you enjoy reading about our exciting progress in the pages that follow. The continual growth and success of programs like these is possible because of your support.

As always, thank you for your contributions to our work. Together, we're standing with our Indigenous partners to ensure the protection of our planet.

In gratitude,



Suzanne Pelletier
Executive Director
Rainforest Foundation US

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS ▶▶

Climate Week Highlights Our Indigenous Partners' Successes

As the climate situation worsens, we need solutions that are easily implemented and scalable now. During our event, “Saving the World’s Rainforests Through Scalable Grassroots Solutions,” Indigenous leaders from Peru, Brazil, the Congo, and Indonesia took the stage to describe successful projects being implemented by Indigenous peoples and local communities right now that are ready for additional support.

It is well documented that Indigenous ownership and control of territories is associated with higher rates of biological diversity and the overall health and wellbeing of tropical forests. During the event, panelists discussed why securing Indigenous peoples’ rights, land ownership, and traditional land management practices are key to addressing the climate crisis. These speakers also called for more direct funding to support Indigenous peoples’ land rights and sustainable livelihoods for forest guardians.

We also co-hosted events on issues around carbon credits and climate financing with Indigenous partner organizations the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA), the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests (AMPB), and the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC). The focus on climate financing

throughout Climate Week underscores the importance of funding mechanisms that will channel funds directly to Indigenous peoples’ (IP) organizations. One such funding platform is the Shandia Mechanism, spearheaded by the GATC. Additionally, in response to requests from our IP partners, our team is supporting the strengthening of their organizational capacities so that they can access, manage and ensure that funding reaches communities.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS ▶▶

Tech Camps in Peru Highlight the Scalability of Our Indigenous Partners' Work

Last month, RFUS helped organize the first of two Tech Camps in the Peruvian Amazon focused on citizen science to protect rainforests. At these events, Peruvian Indigenous organizations meet with academics, government officials and international partner organizations to showcase projects from their respective geographies. These events (one was held in Iquitos in September and the second will be held in the city of Pucallpa in late October) feature new technologies that can be used by Indigenous partners to protect the rainforest in the region.

One of the technologies highlighted was the World Forest ID sampling system. Through a partnership with the United States Forestry Service, tree samples collected by RFUS and partners are entered into the World Forest ID catalog, which helps trace the origin of wood through DNA and chemical analysis. This system will enable

Indigenous leaders to track illegal logging through sample collection. Another exciting technology featured was the Mapbuilder tool from ESRI and our partner Global Forest Watch. This technology provides free access to tools to create customized, interactive maps, which can be used to monitor deforestation and create immersive narratives for wide audiences.



Paralegal Pilot Program Launches in Guyana

With strategic support from RFUS, our partners at the South Rupununi District Council in southwestern Guyana launched a pilot program to train a team of 10 community paralegals. These paralegals—experts in the local context and culture—will serve as grassroots legal advocates from the communities. Specifically, the 10 paralegals will rotate through the 21 communities in the region to investigate and document legal disputes ranging from land rights to the revision of the Amerindian Act. They will act as intermediaries between the rural Indigenous communities and state agencies or outside lawyers in the Guyanese capital, ensuring that communities' needs and priorities are understood. They will also serve a key role in explaining legislation and policy at the community level, which is particularly important as Guyana reviews national policies relevant to their lives and lands.



SUPPORTING OUR WORK ▶▶

Join Us and Support Our Work

Giving Tuesday is right around the corner—mark your calendars for November 28th, a global day of generosity. As Giving Tuesday approaches, we encourage you to consider Rainforest Foundation US in your gift-giving. There are many ways to give including by becoming a monthly donor. While every bit counts, [monthly giving](#) is the best way to ensure the continued success of programs like our Tech Camps in Peru and the ability to fund critical initiatives like the community paralegal program in Guyana.

GIVING TUESDAY

For nearly 35 years, Rainforest Foundation US has worked to address climate change and safeguard biodiversity by promoting the rights of Indigenous peoples and protecting rainforests from further destruction.

