

The background of the entire page is a lush green field of monarch butterflies. Some are perched on large green leaves in the foreground, while others are in flight against a soft-focus background. The butterflies have vibrant orange wings with black veins and white spots along the edges. The overall scene is bright and natural.

GLOBAL RETURNS PROJECT

High-impact climate
and nature charities

April - September 2025

IMPACT REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who we are

3 Welcome letter

Our approach

4 Why give to climate and nature?

5 Why give through the Global Returns Project?

6 – 7 Our selection process

8 – 9 Our charities

Your impact

Success stories from our portfolio charities

10 – 11 Spotlight on: Americas

12 – 13 Impact stories: Americas

14 – 15 Spotlight on: Asia and Oceania

16 – 17 Impact stories: Asia and Oceania

18 – 19 Spotlight on: Africa

20 – 21 Impact stories: Africa

22 – 23 Spotlight on: Europe and Middle East

24 Impact stories: Europe and Middle East

25 Get to know: Rainforest Alliance

Your community

26 – 27 Join our community

WELCOME LETTER

Dear Friends,

The data is daunting. In 2024, 8.1 million hectares of forest were lost, coral reefs suffered unprecedented bleaching, and the world breached the 1.5°C warming threshold for the first time - just ten years after the Paris Agreement was signed to keep temperatures below that critical level. The latest UN Emissions Gap Report warns that, under current policies, the world is heading toward 2.8°C of warming, far beyond safe limits. These are not distant warnings; they are a call to accelerate action ahead of COP30 and to deliver on the commitments made a decade ago.

Amid these challenges, there is also progress and purpose. Around the world, communities, governments, and charities are mobilising behind the 30x30 goal - an international commitment to protect 30% of the planet's land and ocean by 2030. Scientists are clear that achieving 30x30 is essential not only to safeguard biodiversity, but also to stabilise the climate and secure a liveable

planet for future generations.

At the Global Returns Project (GRP), our portfolio charities are ambitiously advancing this vision. At sea, Blue Marine Foundation played a crucial role in securing the historic High Seas Treaty, the first international agreement to protect biodiversity beyond national waters. At the same time, ClientEarth has launched five ongoing legal actions to end destructive bottom trawling in these vital areas.

On land, Rainforest Trust is advancing its 2030 strategy to scale protection for the world's most critical ecosystems by working with local communities and global partners. It has already protected 58 million acres of rainforest, locked in 8.66 billion tonnes of carbon, and safeguarded over 3,000 vulnerable species. Meanwhile, Trillion Trees has planted 606,025 trees in vital ecosystems, ensuring they plant the right trees in the right places. Global Canopy's joint platform

7th November, 2025

with UNEP FI and UNEP-WCMC, ENCORE, now reaches more than 13,000 users, equipping financial institutions to address the market forces driving nature loss.

Rainforest Alliance is the newest addition to our portfolio. Its pioneering work in regenerative agriculture is helping to align food systems with climate resilience. We are grateful for our supporters' early enthusiasm and look forward to making our first major grants to their regenerative agriculture initiatives later this year.

Together, these partners form a powerful global network, protecting forests and oceans, reforming markets and laws, and strengthening the resilience of communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis. At GRP, we turn collective generosity into lasting climate and nature impact. Thank you for being part of this work.

The GRP Technical Advisory Board



Prof Joanna Haigh CBE FRS (Chair)



Prof Yadvinder Malhi CBE FRS



Dr Mamta Mehra



Prof Rosalind Rickaby FRS

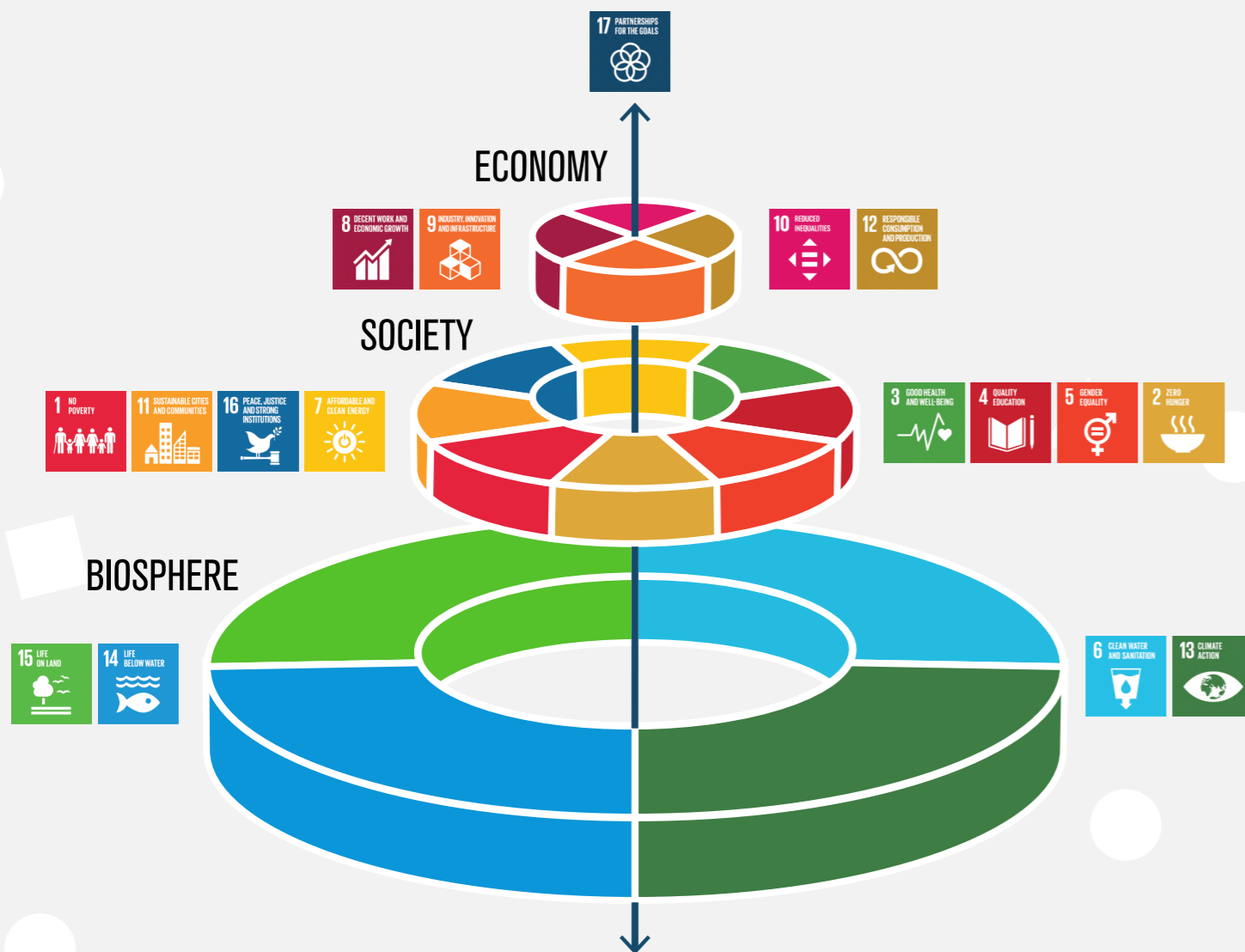


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WHY GIVE TO CLIMATE AND NATURE?

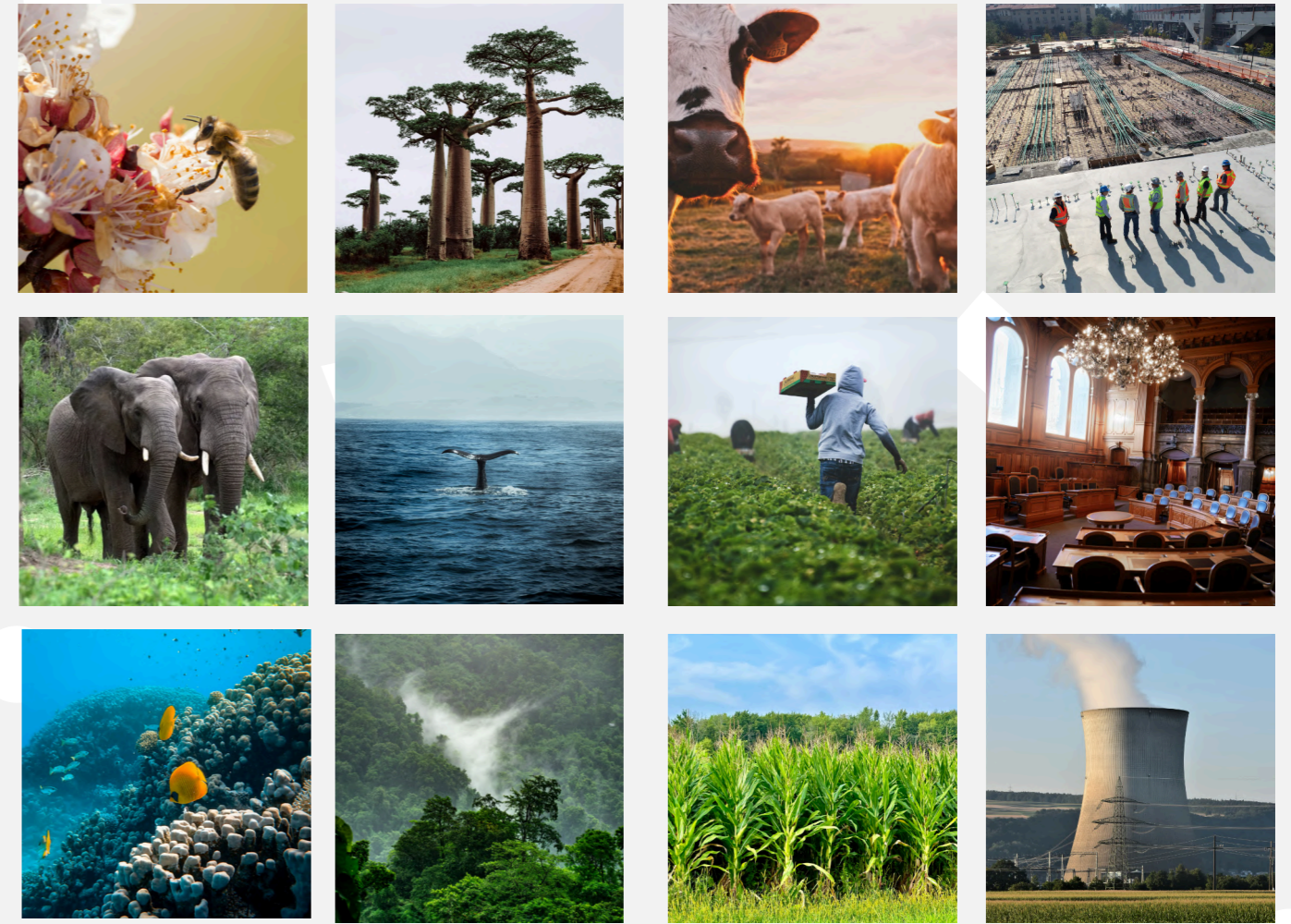
Climate and nature underpin everything in our world. We rely upon them for the basic elements of our very survival: our health, our food and our water. Created in 2015 by the United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a set of universal goals to meet the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing us today. The SDGs are often considered as a 'pick and mix' selection: if we satisfy some goals, then we fulfil our duties. In fact, scientists tell us that we should look at them differently.

The Stockholm Resilience Centre's model below displays how the planet (biosphere) should be seen as the foundation of all other aspirations, and that therefore a small number of SDGs should be understood as foundational. Without addressing the climate and nature crises, we simply cannot address the other Goals. This is how we think about philanthropy at GRP; all other aspects of a thriving world are contingent on the health of our planet.



Credit: Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University

WHY GIVE THROUGH THE GLOBAL RETURNS PROJECT?



GRP spans all types of climate and nature solutions, from nature-based carbon storage and sequestration to corporate accountability and systems change.

At GRP, we help you give to the most powerful charities protecting our planet. The experts on our team have identified the most immediate ways charities can fight the climate crisis, and created a 'Total Opportunity Set' of 44 actions necessary in the fight.

These range from protecting peatland and coral reefs to promoting a transition away from

fossil fuels to restoring the oceans. We use this set to identify the work that GRP should be funding, and it highlights the interconnectedness of the climate crisis. We select and assess the most effective charities across these actions, for free, **with no fees deducted from donations**. We then report on these charities, detailing the impact of the work across the globe.

Some of the results that follow reflect the direct impact achieved by GRP donors, while others highlight the wider achievements of our partner charities - illustrating the global reach and diversity of projects GRP donors have access to via this model. All contribute to the same mission and are vital in reversing humans' damage to climate and nature *now*.

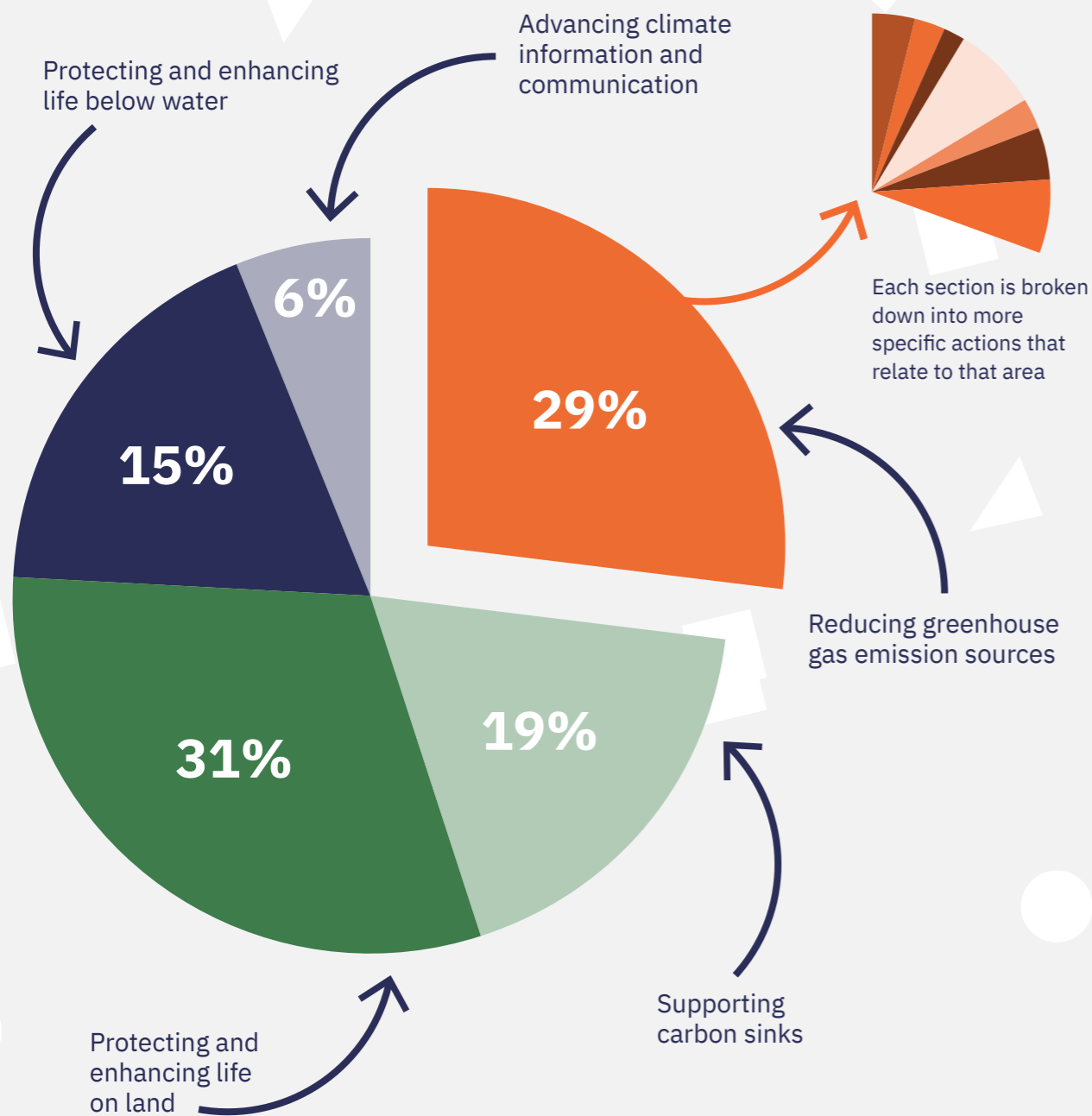
OUR SELECTION PROCESS

Drawing on our Technical Advisory Board of experts in climate, conservation, and nature, we have developed a proprietary methodology for selecting and assessing high-impact climate and nature charities.

IDENTIFYING A SECTOR

We split the Total Opportunity Set into 5 sections, and our experts update it regularly. In May 2024, we added a 'climate information and communication' sector to further take into account the need for widespread

behavioural shifts in the fight against climate change. This comes from altered individual behaviour, value sets, and culture, on which charities can have a vast impact.



PORTFOLIO DIVERSITY

Every six months, we calculate how many of the 44 actions GRP is fulfilling through the climate and nature charities in the portfolio. This guides any additions to the portfolio of charities, when we survey all the charities in a specific sector that is missing from the portfolio. For the six-month period to September 2025, the portfolio diversity sits at 54.55%*.

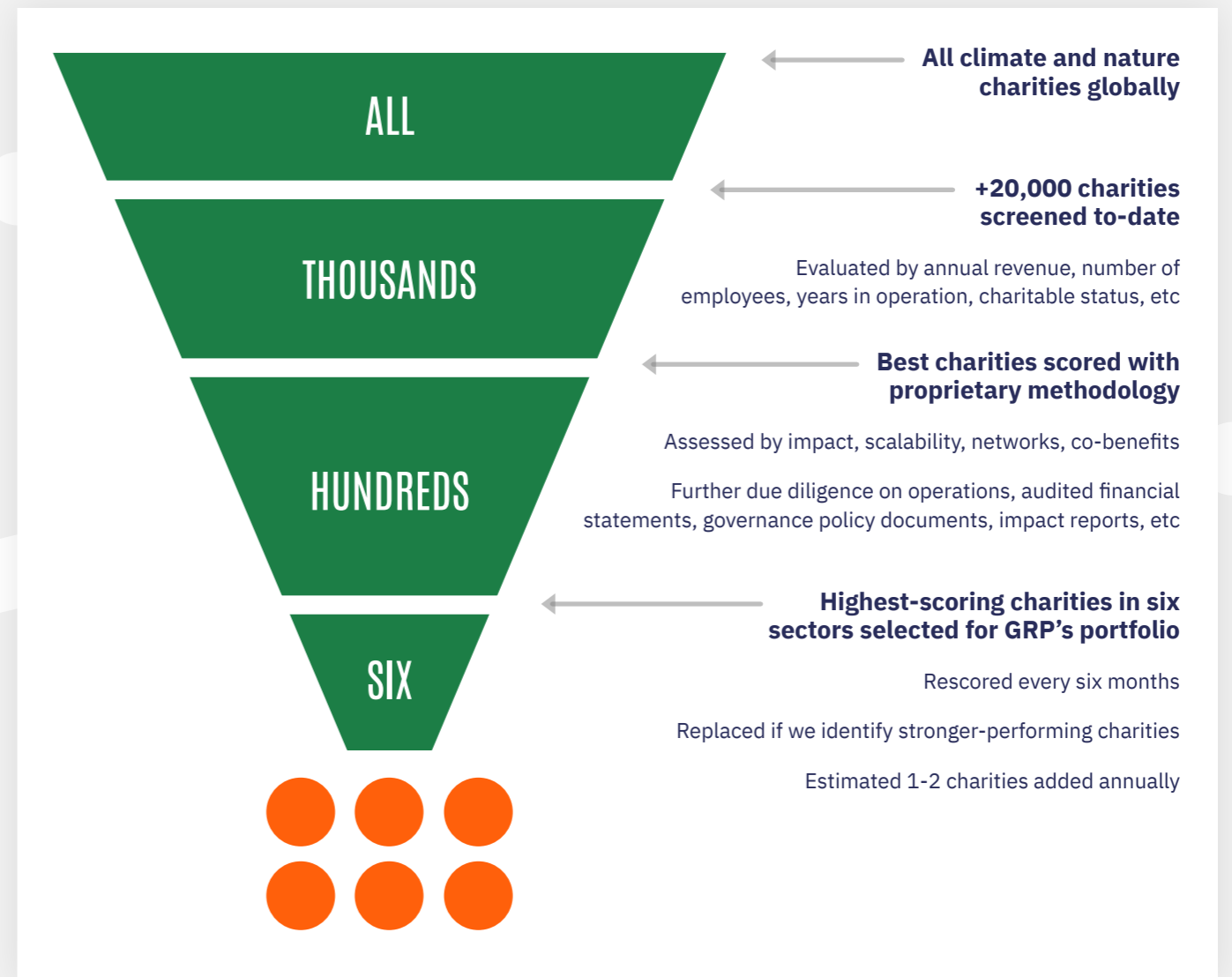


IDENTIFYING A CHARITY

Once we have identified an area of intervention, we screen all the charities across the sector according to our own methodology. By doing this repeatedly, we arrive at six of the most effective climate and nature charities doing vital work across the globe.


This rigorous process forms the GRP portfolio. However, we don't stop there. Every six months, the

charities are rescored, ensuring the portfolio is rigorously selected and maintained. Then, we create a holistic score for the entire portfolio of charities: the **Global Returns Rate (GRR)**. This combines the Portfolio Diversity with the performance scores of each charity and is updated every six months. At the end of September 2025, the GRR score was 43.9*. This is an increase from 43.2 at the end of March 2025.



*The recent Global Returns Rate and Portfolio Diversity figures do not include Rainforest Alliance, given grants have only been allocated, not granted yet.

OUR CHARITIES



BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION

Blue Marine Foundation is a global marine conservation charity that seeks to protect and restore life in the ocean. It continues to pioneer marine protection efforts and is focused on the effective protection of at least 30% of the ocean by 2030.

33,000 km² ocean protected in 2024

41 MPAs established, protected, or expanded

Active in:
29 countries



RAINFOREST TRUST

Rainforest Trust has protected over 58 million acres of tropical habitat since 1988, in partnership with local organisations and communities. 99% of the forest in their reserves are still intact today, safeguarding billions of tonnes of CO₂ equivalents.

3,335 critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable species protected

8.66 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalents stored in protected areas

Active in:
50 countries



ClientEarth

ClientEarth uses the law to protect life on earth and to build a future in which people and planet thrive together. They defend nature, hold polluters to account, and push governments towards climate solutions.

5 current legal actions fighting bottom trawling in MPAs

112+ global partners including NGOs, environmental experts, local groups and governments

Active in:
60 countries



TRILLION TREES

Trillion Trees is a partnership between BirdLife International, WCS, and WWF, which protects and restores forests for people, nature, and the climate. Trillion Trees's ReForest Fund plants the right trees in the right places, restoring crucial sites across the world.

606,025 total trees grown and routinely monitored through the ReForest Fund

1/2 of the way to 2030 target of protecting and restoring 125 million hectares of forest

Active in:
60 countries



Global Canopy

Global Canopy targets the market forces destroying nature, in order to protect nature, forests and people. Its strategies include developing tools that enable open and data-driven transparency for companies, financial institutions, and governments.

13,000+ users of ENCORE, which identifies organisations' impacts on nature

150 assessments of financial institutions with exposure to deforestation risk

Active in:
17 countries



RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

Rainforest Alliance is advancing regenerative agriculture worldwide through certification, training, and landscape partnerships that restore ecosystems, strengthen rural livelihoods, and build climate resilience. Rainforest Alliance's regenerative agriculture work so far supports **8 million** farmers across more than **6 million** hectares.

Rainforest Alliance is GRP's newest portfolio charity, and we look forward to making our first major grants to their initiatives later this year. These grants will support coffee farming, as well as cocoa, tea, and orange planting in the new year.

Active in:
62 countries

SPOTLIGHT ON: AMERICAS

illuminating nature-related dependency and risk in the United States of America

Global Canopy provided researched for a Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) report on drought and water scarcity in Californian almond production. The report, 'Nature-related issues in agribusiness value chains: The case for Californian almonds,' underscores the importance of safeguarding water supply and protecting pollinators, both essential to sustainable production.



Challenging Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) developments in Mexico

ClientEarth alerted JPMorgan Chase that its involvement in raising \$15bn to fund a LNG project on Mexico's Pacific Coast could undermine the bank's climate, biodiversity, and human rights commitments. This project will industrialise pristine shores and desert habitats and will unleash severe methane pollution near a vital marine ecosystem. Using a mix of legal action, shareholder engagement, and advocacy, ClientEarth will continue to challenge both financiers and the developers behind the expansion of LNG infrastructure in the US.



Safeguarded forests help the Eastern Monarch bounce back in Mexico

Rainforest Trust and partner Pronatura Noreste safeguarded key stop-over habitats along Mexico's Monarch Butterfly Migratory Corridor. As a result of this and other conservation efforts the Eastern Monarch population nearly doubled in the past two years – a sign that targeted habitat protection and reduced forest degradation are helping restore one of nature's most extraordinary migrations.



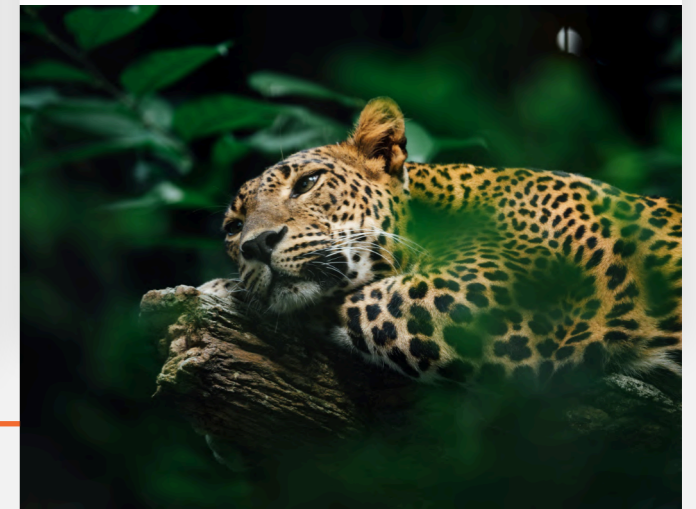
Regenerative Agriculture in Honduras

In Honduras, **Rainforest Alliance's** regenerative agriculture initiatives are showing how sustainable practices can enhance both livelihoods and ecosystem health. Field studies indicate that regenerative methods can increase farms net incomes by 20-30%. By applying these standards in Honduras, coffee farmers are restoring degraded land, strengthening climate resilience, and building more sustainable rural economies.



Restoring forest connectivity in Peru

In the Peruvian Madidi-Tambopata Landscape, **Trillion Trees** and WCS are restoring long-term health and productivity in rainforest ecosystems through implementing agroforestry initiatives with local coffee-growing families. In this project, 18,000 native trees were planted across 25 hectares, enriching a region which will help protect wildlife such as jaguars and Andean bears.

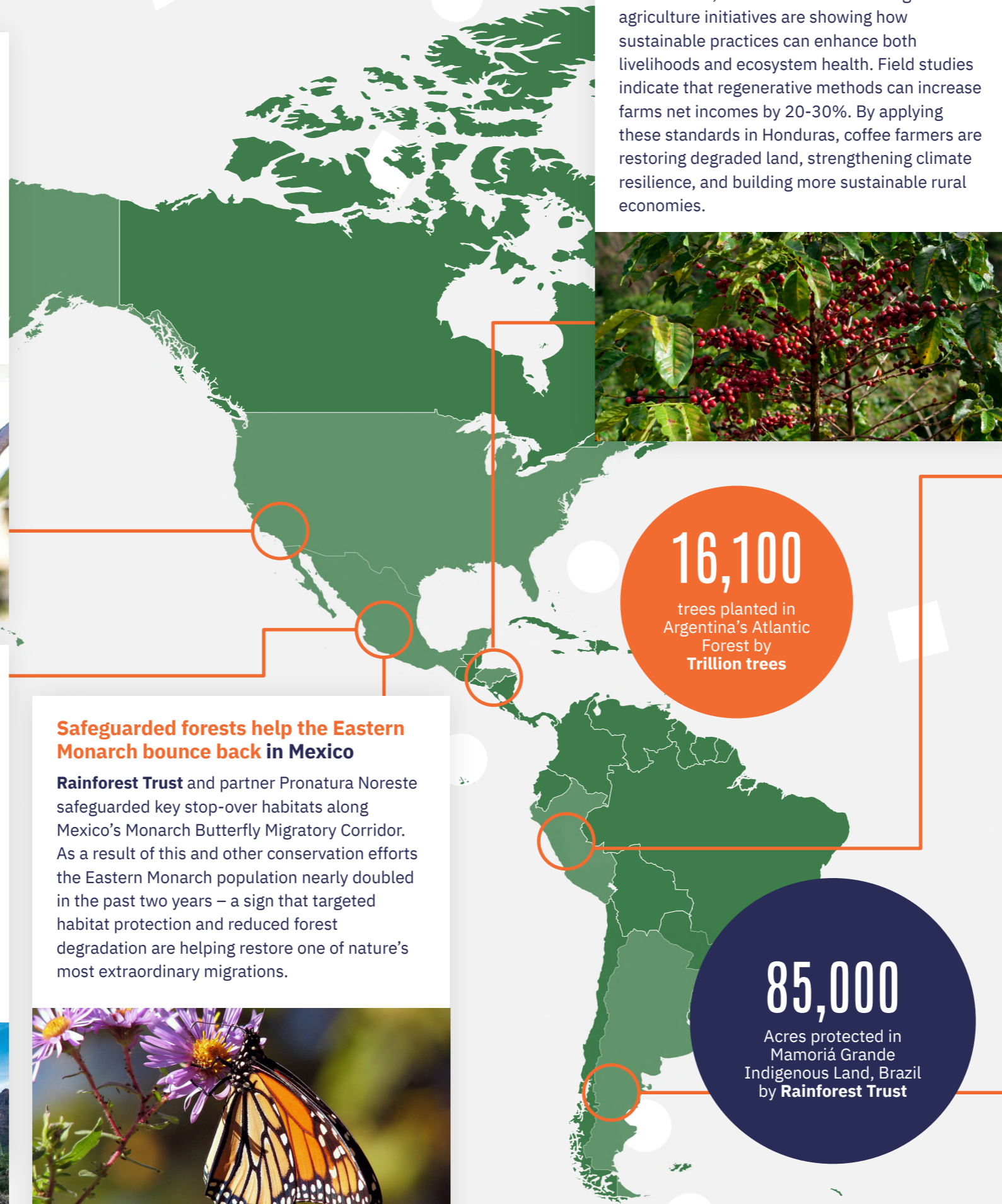


Protecting the South Atlantic Ocean in Chubut, Argentina

Blue Marine and partner Rewilding Argentina established the first marine provincial park in the Chubut Region: the Patagonia Azul Provincial Park. Covering 729,000 acres, this park safeguards Humpback and Sei whales, sea lions, Magellanic penguins, and more than 50 seabird species across a diverse landscape of 60 islands, kelp forests, islets, and coastal habitats.



Image © Maike Friedrich via Blue Marine Foundation



IMPACT STORIES: AMERICAS

HOLDING FOSSIL FUEL GIANTS ACCOUNTABLE

Across the United States sit more than 2.1 million “zombie wells” – abandoned oil and gas wells that leak methane and contaminate groundwater in local areas, where communities are left to face the consequences.

This hazard poses a long-term health risk to locals, and is a disaster for the climate, as methane is over 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping heat in the atmosphere. Each well costs roughly USD \$100,000 to safely plug and decommission, yet fossil fuel companies have routinely offloaded this responsibility, transferring aging wells to smaller firms, destined to collapse. When those companies go bankrupt, the clean-up bills ultimately fall to the local taxpayer rather than the fossil fuel company responsible.

In a landmark legal case in Colorado that ClientEarth is working on, the court recently ruled in motion for “class certification” of the case.

Class certification transforms a case from a personal dispute to a high-risk, high stakes legal threat for defendants - its the sign that a case has legal strength, economic value, and potential to succeed - thus changing the scale of the case.

The oil companies now face a single, unified lawsuit representing all affected landowners, instead of smaller, isolated claims. Therefore, the court agrees that this case raises issues that affect many Colorado landowners in the same way: now, they can move forward together, giving them a stronger voice and clearer path to justice.

By recognising these claims can be tied together, the court has acknowledged a pathway for others to bring similar cases against companies that abandon their wells and walk away from cleanup costs. It’s a decision that makes it possible to hold fossil fuel companies accountable for environmental responsibilities on a larger scale.

ClientEarth 



Image © Chris Jordan

SURINAME’S HISTORIC FOREST PROTECTION PLEDGE

At Climate Week in New York City, Suriname announced a groundbreaking commitment to permanently protect 90% of its tropical forests – an unprecedented national pledge that far exceeds the global 30x30 target for climate and biodiversity protection.

Suriname has the highest forest cover of any country in the world. Approximately 93% of this country is covered in tropical forest, most of which is primary Amazon forest, untouched by logging, mining, agriculture or other forms of development or resource extraction. It’s one of three countries (alongside Bhutan and Panama) that acts as a net carbon sink, absorbing more carbon dioxide than it emits.

Suriname President Geerlings-Simons’s pledge to protect 90% of its forests is part of a new framework which will strengthen legal protections, recognise the ancestral lands of Indigenous Peoples, and open sustainable opportunities through nature-based tourism, bioeconomy industries, and carbon markets.

“We understand and accept the immense responsibility of stewarding over 15 million hectares of tropical rainforest in a world that is seeing her forests fall day in and day out,” said President Geerlings-Simons. “It is because of this

responsibility that we envision an economy powered by our rich forests and biodiversity while providing decent jobs and incomes for all our citizens.”

To help support this extraordinary goal, Rainforest Trust announced a \$20 million pledge alongside a coalition of donors – including Art into Acres, the Andes Amazon Fund, the Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation, and Re:wild – to support the creation and management of new protected and conserved areas across Suriname. These efforts will safeguard biodiversity and deliver sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities.

“This commitment is nothing short of historic,” said Rainforest Trust CEO James Deutsch. “It signals to the world that Suriname is ready to lead, not only in words, but in action, in protecting nature and tackling climate change. Rainforest Trust is proud to join the coalition of donors in supporting this vision.”



RAINFOREST TRUST

SPOTLIGHT ON: ASIA AND OCEANIA

Driving emissions reduction in China

ClientEarth is the only legal NGO in China that is working on climate issues. As China has expanded its Emissions Trading Systems (ETS) to include the steel, aluminium, and cement sectors, ClientEarth submitted five expert recommendations, two of which were adopted, driving greater accountability and transparency in the ETS. These improvements will accelerate emissions cuts in some of China's highest-polluting industries.



Protecting seagrass meadows in the Maldives

Blue Marine and partner Maldives Resilient Reefs are championing the Seagrass Industry Leaders Project, which promotes the ecological value of seagrass meadows to resorts and communities. With 17 resorts pledging protection, the initiative combines staff training, community workshops, and policy advocacy to secure seagrass meadows as a vital asset for climate resilience and marine life, and a new opportunity for sustainable tourism.

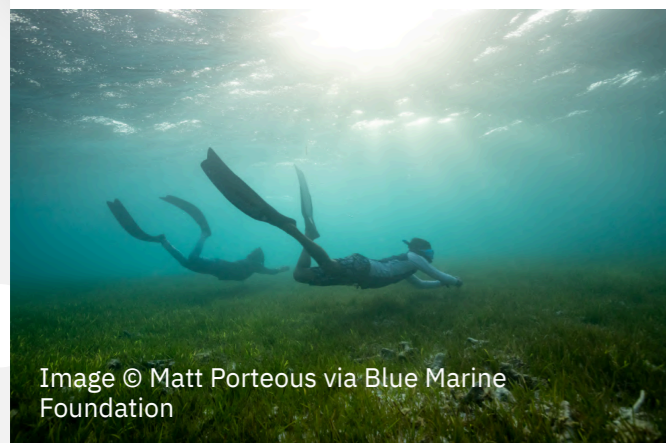


Image © Matt Porteous via Blue Marine Foundation

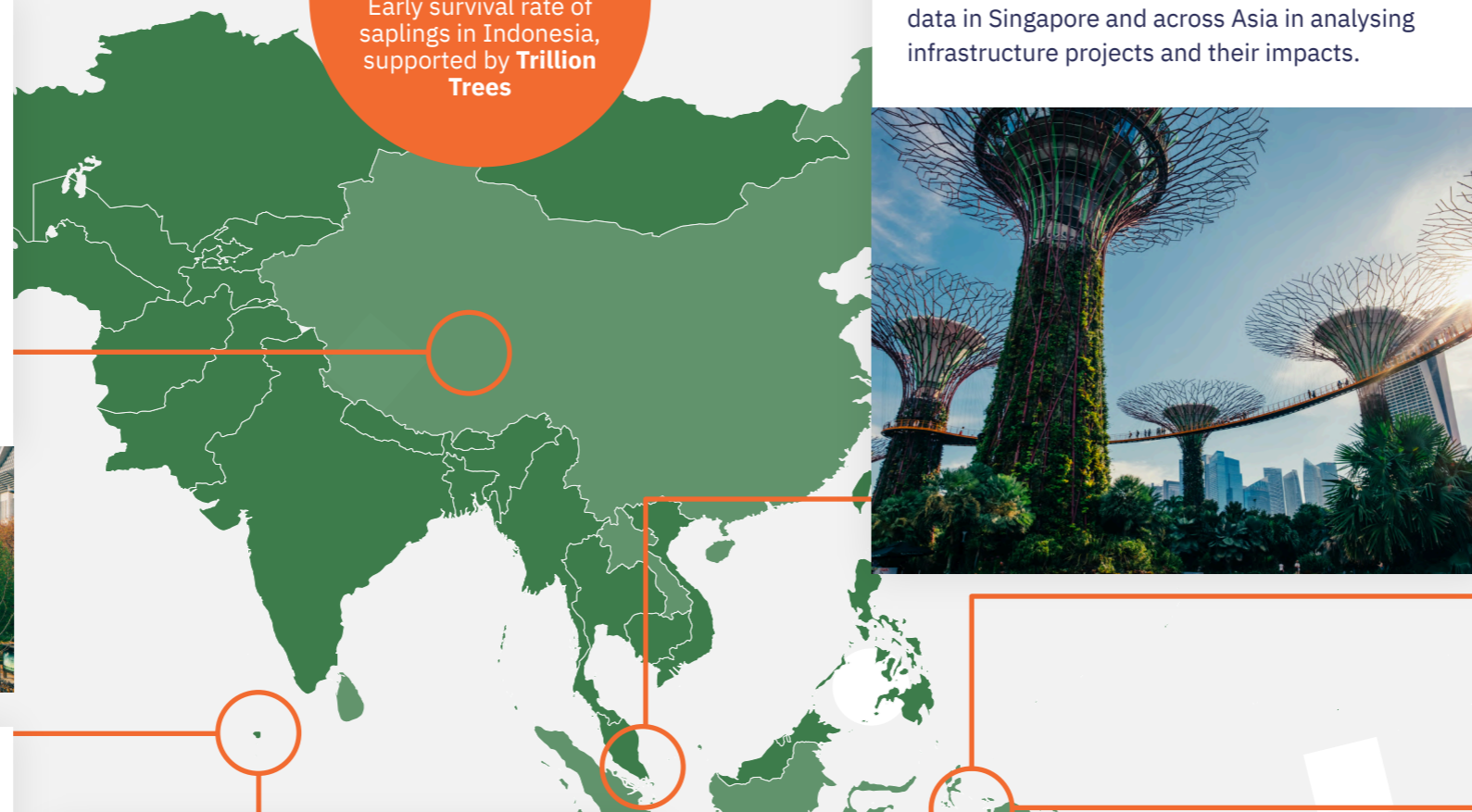
Building ocean literacy in the Maldives

Blue Marine is currently developing a Blue Ocean Learning Toolkit (BOLT) to bring ocean education into Maldivian schools. Endorsed by the Education Minister, scientists and NGOs have come together to build this programme, which helps teachers integrate local marine case studies into curriculums, challenging misconceptions about the sea, and empowering young people to become ocean stewards.



90%

Early survival rate of saplings in Indonesia, supported by **Trillion Trees**



Using data to understand impacts on nature in Singapore

Global Canopy uses ENCORE to provide organisations with data to help them identify nature-related impacts. One of the world's largest consulting firms, AECOM, uses ENCORE data in Singapore and across Asia in analysing infrastructure projects and their impacts.



Project monitoring to ensure success in Laos and Indonesia

In Laos, **Trillion Trees** have been maintaining and monitoring 24,000 recently regenerated trees, which they have grown through carefully designed Assisted Natural Regeneration techniques. In Indonesia, they have supported five community groups in maintaining 41 hectares of restored forest, improving water capture and storage as well as soil quality in the region.



Image © Trillion Trees

Biodiversity protection across Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Nepal, and the Philippines

Rainforest Trust is currently working on an exciting range of projects across the Asia-Pacific. These include safeguarding ancient forests in Indonesia, protecting rare marsupials in Papua New Guinea, safeguarding a Himalayan wilderness in Nepal, and preserving the last frontier of biodiversity on Panay Island in the Philippines.



17

Maldivian resorts pledged to protect seagrass meadows with **Blue Marine**

IMPACT STORIES: ASIA

RESTORING FORESTS FOR WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION

In Indonesia's West Manggarai District on Flores Island, the Mbeliling Landscape spans 94,000 hectares of forest, farmland, and community lands. Designated as both a Key Biodiversity Area and an Important Bird Area, Mbeliling is not only a haven for wildlife but also a critical supply of water for 36 villages, where over 34,000 people depend on water for agroforestry, rice farming, and animal husbandry.

The forests of Mbeliling feed rivers and aquifers that sustain local agriculture and supply water to Labuan Bajo, a coastal town whose ecotourism industry thrives on the region's natural beauty. Yet, years of deforestation and land degradation have reduced the landscape's ability to absorb and store water, threatening both biodiversity and livelihoods.

To counteract this, Burung Indonesia, a partner of BirdLife International, has been leading a large-scale restoration initiative focused on agroforestry and forest enrichment. With funding from **Trillion Trees**, Burung Indonesia has been working closely with local communities and water-dependent businesses to plant more than 19,000 saplings across 14 key locations, restoring 41 hectares of land, 16 hectares of public forest and 25 hectares of private agroforestry plots. Early results are promising, with a sapling survival rate of nearly 90% signalling healthy regeneration.

The project's impact extends beyond reforestation. Through partnerships with schools, students have joined tree-planting events such as One Million Trees Day, World Water Day, and International Forests Day. So far, six Indonesian schools have become active participants, nurturing a new generation of environmental stewards.

Another key focus of this project has been on empowering women through sustainable livelihoods. The Kembang Mekar women's farmer group alone has produced more than 2,000 saplings used for the project, strengthening family incomes while improving ecological resilience.

As the forests recover, the benefits ripple outward: cleaner water, stronger soils, restored habitats for rare bird species, and a more climate-resilient local economy. By uniting conservation with community livelihoods, the Mbeliling project shows how forest restoration can secure ecosystems and the future of the people who depend on them.



Image © Trillion Trees



SPOTLIGHT ON: AFRICA

Exposing injustice in the Gulf of Guinea

A recent report by **Blue Marine** revealed how industrial European fishing fleets exploit West African waters and crews in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. The report exposed racial inequities and criticised fishing companies for paying staff unjust low wages. Ultimately, the report urged for improving sustainable practices to protect both marine ecosystems and the communities who depend on them.



High seas protection along the Walvis Ridge in Namibia

Blue Marine has been a strong advocate for the High Seas Treaty, which was ratified in September. Alongside supporting the Treaty, Blue Marine has been working with partners in Namibia to advocate for the establishment of an MPA around Walvis Ridge, a biodiverse high seas underwater mountain range.



Improving supply chain transparency in Ghana

After a decade of work between **ClientEarth** and local partners in Ghana, Ghana became the first African country to issue a Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) license. FLEGT licenses verify legal timber exports, meaning Ghana's timber exports to the EU will be harvested and processed in full compliance with national laws.



Community forests in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Rainforest Trust helped to protect over 309,000 acres in the Democratic Republic of Congo with local partner GRACE Gorillas. Three new Community Forests were created, recognising the rights of communities and safeguarding vital habitats for species like the Eastern Lowland Gorilla and others within some of Africa's most biodiverse landscapes.



Image © Joe McKenna

Restoring forests in East Africa

Trillion Trees is supporting forest recovery in Uganda, identifying nurseries and acquiring 6,000 agroforestry seedlings. In Tanzania, they are maintaining 320 hectares of restored land and raising over 150,000 seedlings to restore habitat and create sustainable woodlots for communities.



Image © WWF via Trillion Trees

Regenerative approach to agriculture in Kenya

In the forested slopes of Mount Kenya, regenerative agriculture projects supported by **Rainforest Alliance** have helped farming communities adapt to climate-smart and ecosystem-friendly practices. These efforts improve conservation, crop yields, and adaptations for local farmers in the region.



Image © Rainforest Alliance



IMPACT STORIES: AFRICA

HOW SOUTH AFRICAN BANKS DEPEND ON NATURE

Global Canopy has been focusing on exploring the extent to which the agricultural lending portfolios of South Africa's largest commercial banks depend on nature. Their Accounting for Nature report marks a watershed moment for understanding how deeply financial systems depend on the natural world, focusing on South Africa's five largest banks. Agriculture represents just 2.4% of South Africa's GDP, yet it underpins national food security and fuels manufacturing and export sectors.

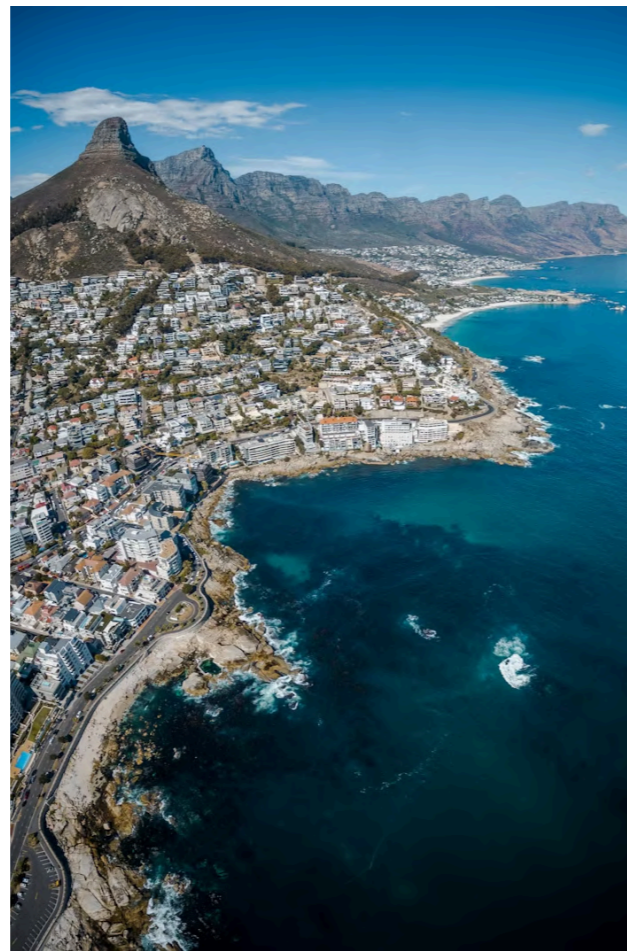
Using ENCORE, a tool developed by Global Canopy, UNEP-WCMC and UNEP-FI, to analyse four major banks' agricultural, forestry and fishing portfolios, the report finds that every client depends on at least one ecosystem service, with the majority showing "very high" dependence on several, especially water regulation, soil fertility, and pollination. One bank's portfolio analysis illustrated a high exposure of 66.5%, across six or more ecosystem services.

This dependence carries immense financial implications. As droughts intensify, soils degrade, and water systems falter across the globe, borrowers' ability to repay loans weakens by extension, turning nature loss into a material financial risk. These risks ripple across credit markets, food systems, and the broader economy.

By quantifying these linkages, Global Canopy makes nature visible within the machinery of finance. The report urges the South African Reserve Bank to integrate nature into its prudential policy framework, recommending stronger disclosure standards, shared data infrastructure, and the inclusion of nature-related risks in stress testing and scenario analysis.

Global Canopy's work in South Africa demonstrates how robust evidence can shift financial mindsets. It reframes biodiversity loss not as a distant ecological

issue but as a tangible financial exposure, one that directly affects credit, stability, and long-term economic resilience. The report sets out clear, practical steps on how to close the gap between climate and nature risk management, a divide that still characterises most financial systems worldwide. By advancing this integration, Global Canopy points toward a future where financial institutions recognise, value, and invest in natural services.



SPOTLIGHT ON: EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST

#TheBottomLine campaign to end bottom trawling in the UK

Building on the momentum of David Attenborough's OCEAN film, **Blue Marine** launched #TheBottomLine campaign with Oceana UK and OnlyOne, calling for an end to bottom trawling in UK MPAs. The campaign mobilised over 18,000 emails sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, and collaborated with celebrity ambassadors Stephen Fry and Theo James. The campaign is now in its second phase, driving support to close 41 English MPAs to bottom trawling.



Image © Blue Marine Foundation

1,300
Marine hectares in Greece protected by **Blue Marine**

Revealing financial risks of hurting nature in the United Kingdom

During London Climate Action Week, **Global Canopy** with the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and the University of Oxford released a landmark report showing how damage to nature drives financial losses for businesses and the economy. Reviewing 600+ studies, this report urges investors and policymakers to redirect finance toward activities that restore and protect nature.



Challenging lithium mining in Portugal

ClientEarth, UDCB, and MiningWatch Portugal have filed a complaint against the EU's decision to grant "strategic" status to the Mina do Barroso lithium project. The open pit mine threatens water sources, biodiversity, and traditional farming, setting a dangerous precedent for sacrificing rural communities in the name of the green transition.



Preventing bottom-trawling in the Netherlands and Denmark

Following successful protection of the English side of Dogger Bank, **Blue Marine** and partner Doggerland are working to advance protections on the Dutch and Danish side. They are also looking into restoring this region through the implementation of horse mussel beds. **ClientEarth** is also part of the NGO coalition working on this important case.



Government challenged to protect MPAs in France

ClientEarth alongside partner BLOOM filed a lawsuit against the French government to hold France accountable for bottom-trawling in "protected" marine areas despite a Europe-wide ban. This case is calling for compliance with EU conservation laws, ensuring protection of key areas with large carbon sinks, coral reefs, and important algae beds. So far, bottom-trawling has been banned in 4% of mainland waters.



5
Legal actions in Europe that challenge bottom trawling in MPAs by **ClientEarth**

IMPACT STORIES: EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST

LOCAL CAMPAIGN FOR MARINE PROTECTION

In an important move to mitigate the impact of overfishing in Greece, a presidential decree was recently signed to establish four new fishing-protected areas around the Greek island of Amorgos. It follows the announcement by the Greek prime minister last year of plans to protect 32% of Greece's waters.

Amorgos is a beautiful Cycladic Island in the heart of the Aegean Sea with impressive bays, clear blue waters and ideal diving spots. For years, the island's small-scale fishers have been trying to protect its coastal waters from overfishing and coastal pollution which has been consistently reducing their catch and income.

On April 17th 2024, at the Our Oceans conference in Athens, the Minister of Rural Development and Food formally committed to designating Greece's first community-led no-take zone. This landmark decision was driven by the collaborative efforts of Blue Marine, NGO partners, and the dedicated fishers of Amorgos, and aims to combat the detrimental effects that overfishing has had on local livelihoods, species, and habitats.

The decision also follows an 11-year campaign led by local fishers and supported by Blue Marine, the Cyclades Preservation Fund, and the Agricultural University of Athens. The "Amorgorama" initiative has become a national



example of collaboration between scientists, fishers, civil society, and policymakers.

The Amorgos MPA will include three no-take zones spanning 1,300 hectares of key biodiversity areas, as well as a seasonal fishing closure covering nearly 1.5 nautical miles or almost 30,000 hectares of sea – a significant closure given the size of the Mediterranean Sea. Additionally, fishing gear will be replaced with more sustainable alternatives to support ecological recovery. Once established, Amorgos will set a nationwide precedent for community-driven marine protection.

The protection of Amorgos is the first step toward Greece's commitment to establish 10% of its waters as no-fishing zones. For the fishers of Amorgos, it's more than a policy success – it's the realisation of a shared vision to restore marine life, revive fish stocks, and secure their livelihoods for generations to come.

Once in place, Amorgos will be the first fishing protected area designated by the Ministry of Fisheries that has been driven by the local community. Its establishment creates a new legislative framework for creating MPAs in Greece, proving a replicable model for broader marine protection. To build on this work, Blue Marine is already engaging with fishing communities in neighbouring islands to develop similar models.



GET TO KNOW: RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

The Global Returns Project is delighted to welcome Rainforest Alliance to our portfolio. They are a world-leading organisation driving regenerative agriculture through innovation, collaboration, and measurable impact.

GRP's support for Rainforest Alliance will focus specifically on their regenerative agriculture work, a vital frontier in restoring ecosystems and building resilience in farming communities.

Rainforest Alliance recently launched its Regenerative Agriculture Standard (RAS), a new certification designed to tackle pressing global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and soil degradation. The RAS's tested methodology includes 119 requirements focused on soil health, crop resilience, biodiversity, and critical social impacts. A complement to the organisation's globally recognisable Sustainable Agriculture Standard (SAS), the RAS applies a specialised approach, focusing on climate resilience at the heart of food production.

This new seal helps farmers improve yields and crop viability, while enabling companies to make credible, science-based claims about their regenerative practices. It represents a crucial step

in scaling regenerative agriculture across global supply chains, helping to restore degraded land and strengthen the livelihoods of those who depend on it.

A powerful example of this approach can be found at La Cumplida, a coffee farm in northern Nicaragua. Certified under the RAS, the farm's restored forests and improved soil health communicate the importance of regenerative agriculture. Coffee grown here is shaded under native tree canopies, reducing pests and improving pollination. Farm activities have diversified to include sustainable timber, honey production, and agroforestry. Both the surrounding environment and local community have benefitted from this sustainable shift, and bird surveys record the return of more than 240 species.



Image © Rainforest Alliance

EVENTS: JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

To continue to build momentum for our work – and to bring our supporters together – we host and attend in-person and virtual events, such as panels and networking opportunities in London. **Recent events include:**

FORESTS, FOOD AND THE FUTURE: LONDON CLIMATE ACTION WEEK SPOTLIGHT ON GUATEMALA, JUNE 2025

This event brought together leading voices in conservation and sustainable development to explore the vital links between forests, agriculture, and the future of our planet, with a focus on Guatemala's Selva Maya. Guests enjoyed welcome drinks before an insightful panel discussion featuring perspectives from the Rainforest Alliance, Global Canopy, and Trillion Trees. Speakers highlighted how regenerative agriculture can build thriving landscapes, how data-driven approaches are tackling deforestation in commodity supply chains, and how forest restoration efforts are helping to recover ecosystems affected by cattle ranching and illegal activity in the Maya Biosphere Reserve.



RESET CONNECT, JUNE 2025

Jack Chellman joined two panels at Reset Connect's Wealth and Investment Management Hub, hosted by ESG ACCORD (Accord Initiative), and offered insights on how philanthropy, sustainability, and finance intersect to drive meaningful change.



PRIVATE DINNER ON REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE, APRIL 2025

To kick off the financial year, GRP hosted a dinner focused on regenerative agriculture. CEO of the Rainforest Alliance, Santiago Gowland, shared insights on their pioneering regenerative agriculture initiatives, ahead of the organisation joining GRP's charity portfolio for the 2026 financial year.



IMPACT REPORT WEBINAR, JUNE 2025

GRP hosted a webinar after releasing our last impact report to celebrate the recent successes of our portfolio charities. The session shone a spotlight on inspiring work happening across GRP's network and the positive impact our supporters help create.



Contact us to learn more about joining our community: info@globalreturnsproject.earth
Stay up to date through our newsletter: <https://globalreturnsproject.earth/our-newsletter/>

THE GLOBAL RETURNS PROJECT

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The Global Returns Project

is a UK charity that helps individuals and businesses give to powerful charities protecting our planet – without fees or deductions. With experts on our team, we

research thousands of charities to find the fastest paths to global impact for all the planet's biggest problems. Then we prove it, again and again, with impact reports like these.

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