

# Annual Report 2023



Forest  
Peoples  
Programme



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Front page photo: A villager demonstrates Nipa palm fruit harvesting (locally known as “golpata”) in a community reserved area in a Sundarban mangrove, Bangladesh. Credit: Phnom Thano

Background photo: The sun sets over the River Kapuas in West Kalimantan, Borneo Credit: Naomi Baird, FPP

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*In memory of  
Abigail Hearn and Quinto Inuma Alvarado*



# About us

**Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) is a human rights organisation working with forest peoples to secure their rights to their lands and their livelihoods. We work alongside more than 60 partner organisations representing or supporting indigenous peoples and forest communities from across the globe.**

## Nearly all forests around the world are inhabited

**The peoples who live in these forests have customary rights over them and have developed ways of life and traditional knowledge that are attuned to their forest environments. Yet forests are commonly treated as empty lands controlled by the state and available for development, settlement, logging, plantations, dams, mines, oil wells, gas pipelines and agribusinesses. These encroachments often force peoples out of their forest homes, whilst many conservation schemes such as wilderness reserves and protected areas also deny forest peoples' rights.**

## Our Vision

**Forests are owned and controlled by forest peoples in ways that ensure sustainable livelihoods, equity, and well-being based on respect for their rights, knowledge, cultures, and identities.**

## Mission

**Forest Peoples Programme supports the rights of peoples who live in forests and depend on them for their livelihoods. We work to create political space for forest peoples to secure their rights, control their lands and decide their own futures.**

## Strategic Approaches

### Self-determination

**Supporting and advancing the exercise of self-determination by indigenous and forest peoples by strengthening territorial governance, mobilisation and representation, and the creation and use of political spaces where indigenous and forest peoples' voices can be heard.**

### Access to Justice

**Ensuring access to justice by developing and using accountability and redress mechanisms in both public and private institutions that are directly accessible to indigenous and forest peoples and their communities.**

### Legal and Policy Reform

**Partnered advocacy towards legal and policy reform and the development of best practice and standards consistent with indigenous and forest peoples' rights in international law.**

### Building Solidarity

**Networking, sharing information and building solidarity for coordinated action among a wide range of actors.**

# Director's message

2023 was an immensely productive year for FPP and our partners, serving to some extent as an antidote to heightening concerns over planetary crises, geopolitical divisions, national populist pushbacks against progressive agendas, and the precarious status of international rule of law.

Our Transformative Pathways project made great strides, including through innovative development of community-led cultural and biodiversity monitoring systems. The struggle to secure recognition of indigenous and forest peoples' land rights included strong community-led pushbacks against severe threats from corporate land grab and exclusionary conservation practices. This resulted in notable advances across the regions we work in, including as a result of legal actions brought in national courts and international fora, and the strategic use of global policy spaces related to climate, biodiversity and corporate accountability. In Indonesia for example, Asia Development Bank funding for a high-risk road and infrastructure project in Kalimantan was cancelled. This road would have cut through some of the last remaining intact forest in Indonesian Borneo and the territories of the numerous Dayak groups who have yet to have their lands recognised and secured.



As 2023 drew to a close, major new challenges were emerging that demand sustained advocacy. These include rights-denying amendments to the Forestry Law in Peru impacting all Amazonian indigenous peoples, a wave of evictions in the name of conservation impacting the Mau Ogiek in Kenya, the rapid rise in projects to market forest carbon in violation of indigenous and forest peoples' rights in Guyana, Peru, Colombia and Liberia, and the potential threats from the quest for transition minerals on indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation in Indonesia.

One of FPP's core strategic approaches as a solidarity organisation is the quality of relationships we foster with the peoples, communities and civil society partners we work closely with, often deepened over the course of decades. This mirrors the relational approach that is central to the cultures of the indigenous peoples and many of the forest peoples we work with – both in terms of their relationships with place and with people.

Deep and power-equalising relationships are a joy, because they manifest in meaningful engagement that transcends conventional professional engagement by deconstructing power disparities. However, they can also result in almost unbearable pain too, when we tragically lose friends and allies in the course of the work. In 2023 this was exemplified by the murder of Quinto Inuma Alvarado, a much admired and prominent Kichwa leader from the Santa Rosillo de Yanayacu community, in the San Martin region of the Peruvian Amazon. Quinto was a tireless defender of the human rights and territory of his community. This killing, which Quinto himself had repeatedly demanded State action to prevent, highlights the vulnerability of indigenous leaders who face constant threats in the region and across the globe. Sadly, we could list many other names of indigenous leaders killed, criminalised or injured for defending their peoples, cultures and forest territories over recent years. Their sacrifice strengthens our resolve to accompany their peoples and communities as they strive for justice.

Lastly, while it is also wonderful to foster and sustain FPP's relational approach internally, as part of our own organisational culture, in 2023 we mourned the loss of much-loved FPP colleague Abigail Hearn, who died suddenly after a very short illness leaving behind her husband and young daughter.

We dedicate this Annual Report to the memory of Quinto and Abi.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Lomax'.

Tom Lomax, Director



# Guiding principles

## Free, prior and informed consent

The legal principle of free prior and informed consent (FPIC) provides the culturally appropriate rights-based framework within which indigenous peoples can exercise the right to give or withhold their consent to activities that may affect their lands, territories, and resources. Compliance with FPIC means that those who wish to implement projects using these lands and resources – whether governments, private investors, or others – must consult the concerned peoples through their own representative institutions, negotiate with them in good faith, and respect their decision-making processes and their decisions to give or withhold consent based on a full and accurate understanding of the potential impacts on their collective rights.

FPIC is arguably the most important safeguard under international law from the perspective of ensuring self-determined decision-making in the context of regulating externally initiated activities. The right to give or withhold FPIC also applies to peoples who do not self-identify as indigenous but who have a strong cultural and physical connection to, and reliance on, the lands, territories and resources held under collective customary tenure. FPIC also features in the national laws of some countries. A growing number of indigenous and forest peoples are articulating how their FPIC is to be sought and consensus decisions taken in accordance with their customary laws, by developing their own FPIC Protocols and customary laws. FPP supports indigenous and forest peoples to demand respect for their right to FPIC, to develop their own FPIC protocols and laws and to insist on their implementation, and to seek redress from state and corporate actors where FPIC is not obtained.

## Self-determination

FPP works to realise indigenous and forest peoples' right to self-determination, a fundamental right of all peoples affirmed in common Article 1 of the ICCPR and ICESCR. International treaty bodies and regional human rights courts have confirmed that self-determination applies to indigenous and tribal peoples living within nation states. The right to self-determination includes the right to determine political status and freely pursue economic, social, and cultural development. Article 1 also contains the collective right of peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources, and in no case be deprived of their own means of subsistence. The right to self-determination of indigenous peoples is also reiterated in UNDRIP.

This means that under international law indigenous and forest peoples have the right to determine their own futures; to meaningful participation in the development of policies, programmes, laws, or regulations impacting on their human rights; to freely enjoy and decide how to use their natural resources; and to continue their chosen ways

of life and perpetuate their cultures, values, and belief systems. Our work to promote the realisation of the right of indigenous and forest peoples to self-determination, is guided by self-identified needs and priorities of the peoples themselves.

## Rights to lands, territories and resources

For indigenous and forest peoples to survive and flourish, and to sustainably steward their lands and forests, they need secure collective rights to own, use, manage and control the lands, territories, and resources they own and govern under their customary tenure systems and on which they depend for their own means of subsistence. Under international law, governments have an obligation to respect and protect these rights. FPP supports initiatives led by indigenous and forest peoples to assert their land, territory, and resource rights, map their ownership, use and stewardship of lands and forests, file land title claims, enhance territorial governance, and establish the conditions for flourishing and diverse local economies, livelihoods, and food systems. Their struggles to secure their land rights are inextricably linked to defence of their forests from environment harms and the realisation of their right to a clean, safe, healthy, and sustainable environment, rooted in cosmologies where nature and culture are often indivisible and struggles for land are "struggles for life", both human and otherwise.

Lands and natural resources in the territories of indigenous and forest peoples are often coveted by external actors – loggers, miners, ranchers, agribusiness, plantations, financiers, as well as by those pursuing exclusionary forms of conservation (including as a means of accessing carbon or other nature markets). Insisting on respect for indigenous and forest peoples' land and self-determination rights and seeking accountability where they are violated is at the core of FPP's engagement with these other sectors where we have a mandate from our partners to do so

## Gender Justice

Gender justice is embedded in all the work we do to support indigenous and forest peoples in their efforts to secure collective land tenure and practice self-determination. Our approach is rooted in the understanding that self-determination is a collective right and therefore needs the effective and meaningful participation of all members of a society to be fully realized - including women, men, transgender and non-gender binary people, elders and youth. We recognise the diverse cultural and customary norms of the societies we support, while upholding women's activism and knowledge as crucial to collective land rights movements and the realisation of access to justice for all. We recognise that indigenous and forest peoples are impacted by many different forms of discrimination. We seek to uphold

their collective and individual rights and guarantee non-discrimination on the basis of their identities as indigenous and women, as well as on factors such as sex, status, class, disability, age and more.

As a human rights organisation, our commitment to gender justice and non-discriminatory practices

## Local partners

FPP partners with indigenous and forest peoples, their community-based organisations, and other civil society organisations to support forest peoples' struggles for the recognition of their rights. Our relationships with peoples, communities, organisations and movements are rooted in FPP's principal objective of enhancing respect for and enjoyment of forest peoples' right to self-determination.

FPP is not prescriptive about the shape of our working relationships, but takes a context-specific approach, respecting that each community is different, and every community will evolve over time. The voices and preferences of the communities with whom we work take precedence at all times. Our relationships reflect the changing needs of rights holders and their organisations, and our readiness to be flexible and responsive wherever possible. We value long-term commitment to the peoples, communities, and civil society partners we work in solidarity with – and we recognise that the struggles they face can take many years and often decades to address.

FPP has for decades deliberately facilitated partners to access funding directly, despite structural barriers to direct funding that are evident and have been well reported on in recent years. In 2022, FPP reflected on our own role in supporting increased direct financing, including through



FPP provided gender-focussed communications training to support indigenous women in Peru to share their stories confidently in public and to speak out about the injustices they face. Kichwa women presented a radio programme, and recorded their own podcast. Credit: Frances Jenner, FPP

is informed by international human rights laws and standards, in particular the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and guided by statements made by Indigenous women's groups. Our approach is further detailed in FPP's 'Gender Framework and Policy'.

convening a Roundtable Dialogue on the role of support organisations (see publications). We see success in cases where as a result of our long-term solidarity-based support for partners and their capacity, we can swap roles so that partners become direct grantees. Should partners choose, FPP can become a partner/sub-grantee, which highlights the value of our role as a solidarity organisation to partners.

## Global allies

FPP works to connect local organisations, partners, and communities with global allies, knowing that the power of our movement is in our networks and alliances. We partner with international organisations including Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI), International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Land Rights Now, The International Land and Forest Tenure Facility, The Land Portal, The International Land Coalition (ILC), Global Landscapes Forum, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the International Labour Organisation. We also support and value our engagement with coalitions and networks, including the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, the UK NGO Forest Coalition, UK Corporate Justice Coalition, London Mining Network, BOND, EU Forest Coalition, and the European Corporate Justice Coalition, and many others.



At a Transformative Pathways side event at the CBD Working Group on Article 8(j), FPP and project members launch 'Sowing Seeds of Wisdom,' a COD-ILK publication that brings together a collection of articles authored by indigenous and local community knowledge bearers. Geneva, November 2023. Credit: Gordon John, PACOS Trust.



# Our global reach at a glance

## Global

- The Strategic Legal Response Centre (SLRC) supported 15 test cases in nine tropically forested countries and provided rapid response legal support to 15 communities in six countries
- Forest Visions Partnership directed unrestricted funding to eight partners for the sustainable management of lands and resources in line with their own visions
- Transformative Pathways project supported community land and resource governance, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods in five countries
- UN Convention on Biological Diversity – inputs on monitoring of human rights processes and outcomes under the

## Central & South America

### Colombia

- Cañamomo Lomaprieta reserve: The Resguardo revealed community use and occupation of areas declared ‘unused/wasteland’ by the state, and developed its FPIC law and contributed supporting testimony to IACHR in the case of the U’wa
- Organization of Displaced Populations positioned to conduct the first community-led HCV Screening process
- The People of the Centre (Nipodimaki (Uitoto), Pëesiohe (Andoke), Fééneminaa (Muinane) y Nonova ñini (Nonuya) presented evidence in the High Court on implementation of the Supreme Court Judgement on the future of life in the Colombian Amazon

### Costa Rica

- CERD issued two Urgent Action letters on violations of Bribri and Bröran land rights and murders of their leaders

- 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework
- Input to consultations on the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions
- Workshop on new biodiversity module for the Indigenous Navigator programme
- UN Environment Programme- inputs to define core human rights principles for conservation funders and conservation organisations
- Zero Tolerance Initiative granted funds in ten countries on 16 cases of violence and killings in global supply chains; Unilever published its Zero Tolerance Policy
- RSPO continued review of its Complaints Panel, accepting FPP’s critique of social audit practices

- Legal support provided for the trial of the murder of a Brörán indigenous leader
- The Bribri people made progress registering community members in their own database, while the Brörán Council of Elders adopted regulations outlining their organisational structure and functions
- Shipibo Regional Indigenous Guard Organisation exchanged knowledge and practices as part of consolidating self-government for the Shipibo Konibo Xetebo people.
- CERD issued two formal communications to the Peruvian State regarding its failure to protect Kichwa

### Peru

- **San Martín:** Kichwa people exposed Cordillera Azul carbon offsetting project to international scrutiny for dispossessing them of their lands.
- **Ucayali:** Shipibo rightsholders had a case against palm oil trader Louis Dreyfus Company admitted by Dutch OECD watchdog; At least three major palm oil buyers suspended Ocho Sur following indigenous resistance

## Europe

- The Palm Oil Collaboration Group developed guidance for assessors of corporate respect for land rights
- Forest Stewardship Council’s new Remedy Framework came into effect
- 70 indigenous and afro-descendant representatives shared and discussed experiences with climate finance
- Input to revision of OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the Green Climate Fund safeguards
- The Global Network on Indigenous-led Education (ILED) funded nine grassroots education projects, facilitated regional education-focused exchanges, and launched a youth fellowship programme

- collective land and rights from the imposition of the Cordillera Azul National Park
- ILED initiatives by Wampis Nation (community of Pampaintsa) to strengthen Wampis parenting in accordance with their traditional practices, knowledge and identity, and FECONAU (Santa Clara de Yarínacocha) on recovery of medicinal plants and related knowledge transmission.
- The Wampis Government defended their territory against the aggressive expansion of illegal mining and logging.

### Panama

- Support for reviving indigenous knowledge, sustainable agriculture and education projects with the Guna indigenous people (Guna Yala)

### Chile

- Women leaders from Colombia and Peru give evidence to VIII Regional Business and Human Rights Forum

- their rights linked to EU agricultural supply chains (▼ Brussels)
- Dutch National Contact Point for OECD admits palm oil complaint brought by Amazonian Indigenous organisations against Louis Dreyfus Company (Netherlands)
- Input to 10th Plenary of Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services attended by a partner from the gender programme (▼ Bonn)

### Guyana

- Complaint to ART’s grievance mechanism by the Amerindian Peoples Association about lack of participation and consent in the development of Guyana’s national carbon crediting scheme
- The Chinese Landing community requested precautionary measures at the IACHR.

### Suriname

- VIDS created a 3D map of forest product use for self-determined planning purposes in the Wayambo region, trained new community mapping teams from different indigenous regions, and implemented an initiative in the coastal community of Galibi on marine conservation and livelihoods.
- Legal support for Kaliña and Lokono representatives criminalised in context of protests against logging and mining.
- Saramaka attended the IACHR hearing and gathered evidence to challenge a logging road in their territory

## UK

- FPP partners engaged with the UK parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee, leading to recommendations to the UK Government on indigenous rights.
- Webinar with Chatham House on confronting marginalisation in climate action and conservation through direct funding
- Submission to UN CESCR’s List of Issues for the UK during its 7th periodic review led to questions to the UK on its approach to Business and Human Rights.
- Participation in Steering Committee of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Conserved Areas Registry (▼ Cambridge,UK)

## Africa

- **East Africa** Indigenous Women-led Community Assemblies from 13 forest and pastoralist communities met in Kenya, Uganda & Tanzania
- **Liberia** Capacity building for 14 communities, including on the Land Rights Act and Liberian protected area system
- Dispossession of community lands to make way for National Parks prevented
- Via the ‘Gbehzohn Declaration’, consensus promoted and reached, including among state land and forest agencies, that conservation needs to adopt an approach that respects community land rights and enables community-led conservation
- **Cameroon** Indigenous knowledge practices used to plan cultural activities with communities in south-east Cameroon
- Baka communities held discussions on sustainable biodiversity use
- Legal action and CERD Urgent Action letters on impact of CamVert palm oil plantation on Bagyéli communities

### Republic of Congo

- Multi-stakeholder meeting on reforming the Wildlife and Protected Areas Law to recognise indigenous and forest peoples’ rights
- FPP provided training on human rights in general, human rights due diligence, and technical tools for conducting legal analysis of subsequent laws and regulations related to natural resource management.

### DRC

- Kivu: Information and consultation sessions for the Batwa to prepare for African Commission’s decision on Kahuzi-Biega National Park

- Analysis of mining legislation & mining on partner communities and potential remedial avenues
- Inputs to the FPIC Guidelines adopted by ICCN in 2023.
- **Kenya** Nairobi: Indigenous women denounced land grabs for carbon markets at first African Climate Summit
- Sengwer indigenous people continued to reject GEF-funded Eldoret Water Fund project
- ILED project on forest restoration with Sengwer children from Embobut forest
- Strong media coverage of Ogiek evictions from Mau Forest
- Elgon Ogiek held mapping training for 11 indigenous communities from East/Central Africa, and negotiated with the authorities to prevent evictions
- Legal support to Mau Ogiek on implementation and monitoring of the 2022 African Court decision recognising their land title
- **Uganda** Legal support for Benet people challenging evictions & criminalisation by Uganda Wildlife Authority
- Legal support to the Batwa in their long-standing petition, currently before the Supreme Court
- Working with the Batwa to monitor human rights as part of Indigenous Navigator

## Asia

- **Bangladesh** Sundarbans/Khulna: FPP and global partners did an exchange visit to Sundarbans local communities and celebration of 20 years of partnership
- Dhaka: Policy workshop with government on community and civil society engagement in Bangladesh’s national process under the Global Biodiversity Framework
- **Thailand** IMPECT’s mapping and training work empowered communities to address conflicts and influence administration
- Bangkok: Mawakhi school team attended 7th International Conference on Language and Education
- **Indonesia** FSC-linked entities urged to uphold FSC standards and remedies in complaints

- against Royal Golden Eagle and Sinar Mas
- Sumatra Suku Anak Rawa, Akit and Sakai indigenous peoples held Asia Pulp and Paper and APRIL to their promises to remedy the takeover of their lands
- North Kalimantan: The ADB cancelled a high-risk road and infrastructure project affecting Dayak Lundayeh
- North Kalimantan: The Dayak Agabag persuaded several palm oil buyers to suspend sourcing from First Resources
- Community legal training, advocacy and monitoring of two pulpwood companies
- **Tuvalu** Supported local partner TNYC to organise community project on plastic waste clean-up.



# Land, forests and territories



Traditional houses have been constructed in distant parts of Nipodimaki territory as base camps for use by territorial self-delimitation teams. House-build 2023. Credit: Dayana Castro

**Recognising land rights is vital** for the security, cultural survival and livelihoods of forest peoples, and the ecosystems on which they depend. Forest Peoples Programme supports indigenous and forest peoples to secure their land rights by equipping them with tools to manage and safeguard their territories and create the political spaces to assert their rights at the national, regional, and international levels.

Via the **Forest Visions Partnership**, FPP continued to support self-determined projects with the Donderskamp community (Suriname), Resguardo Cañamomo Lomaprieta (Colombia), the Wampis and Kichwa Nations (Peru), Assoumindele and Se'eh Baka communities (Cameroon), the Toba Batak (Indonesia) and communities from the Krahn and Kru peoples in southeast Liberia. This

partnership directly supports forest peoples by providing flexible and multi-year (minimum four year) funding to support their self-determined visions for their lands. Supporting the resilience of indigenous culture at this crucial moment, when the geographic and political landscape is changing rapidly, is a vital foundation for protecting indigenous peoples' territories, combatting climate change, and preserving biodiversity.

The **Indigenous Navigator**, an indigenous-led programme for proactive **monitoring of human rights in indigenous territories and areas**, carried out community and national surveys in Cameroon, Uganda, Guyana, and Suriname. These surveys were consolidated through training on monitoring tools and international and national human rights frameworks. FPP worked with key collaborating

**“Communities do not want to hear speeches and read long reports, they want concrete action.”** *Huvat Biseh surveying FSC-certified logs without consent*

partners, including Tebtebba Foundation, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, to begin the development of new monitoring ‘modules’ or surveys to assess changes over time in climate change, biodiversity and business activities. These modules will allow communities to directly monitor these trends in their territories, and help inform and underscore their advocacy strategies

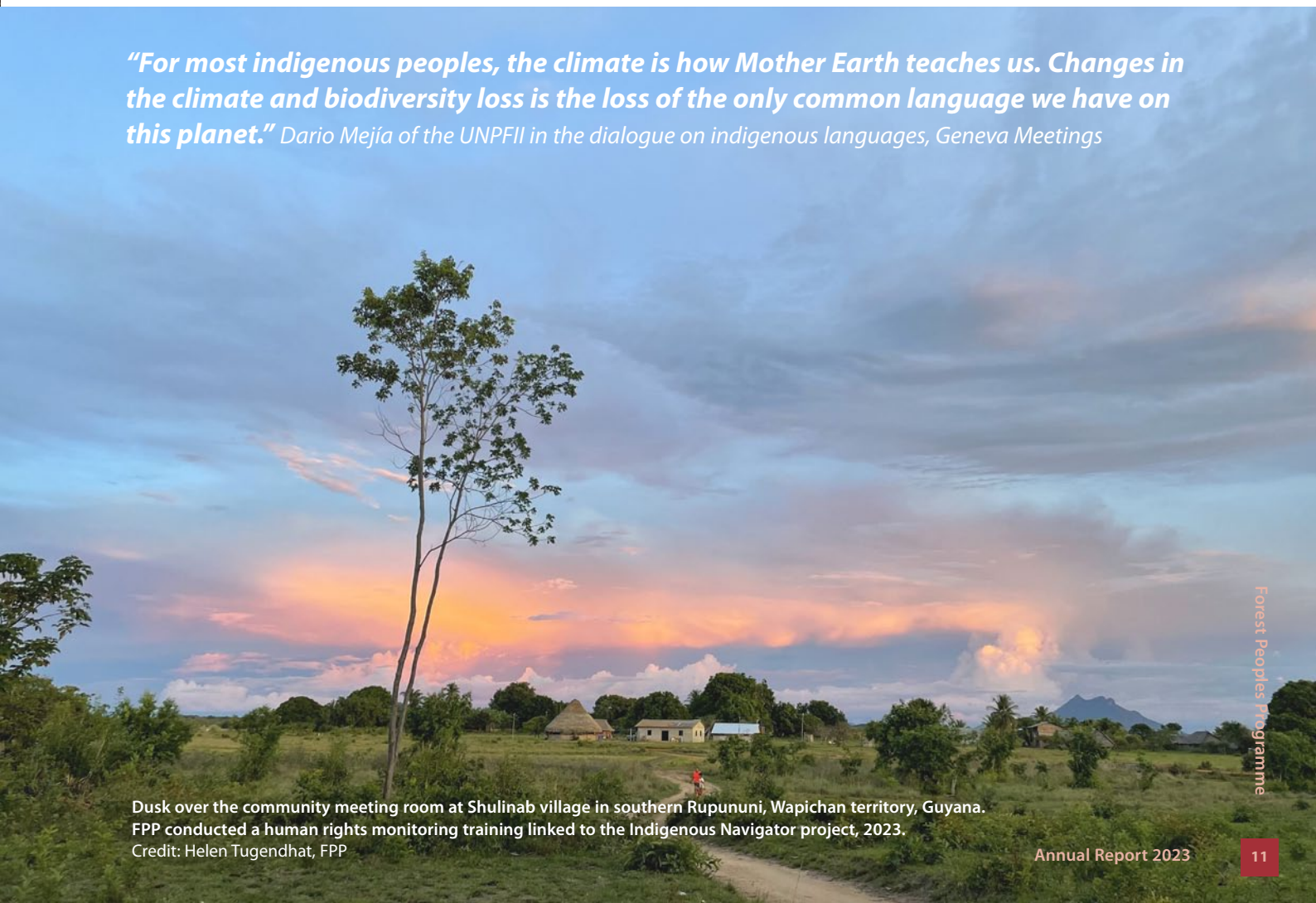
The **Transformative Pathways** project launched, in August 2022, moved into full implementation across four countries: Peru, Kenya, Thailand, and the Philippines. The project launched a newsletter and website to enhance communication and began detailed mapping and development of, and support for, self-determined land management for the implementation of progressive elements of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework agreed under the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022.

FPP continued advocating for **human rights to be at the core of conservation agendas**. This includes work with partners to challenge dispossession of lands by protected areas, where lands and resources have been taken, or where access has been restricted, in the name of conservation without consent of or adequate engagement with impacted communities, including in Kenya, Uganda, Liberia, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru and Indonesia.

Support for **community-led protection and conservation of biodiversity** continued in multiple ways, including with the East Africa indigenous women-led community assemblies, and through Transformative Pathways (mentioned above). The East Africa Assemblies brought together 13 indigenous forest and pastoralist peoples from across East Africa to build solidarity, share skills and strategise on community-controlled conservation, with a strong focus on the gender dimensions of the land rights struggle. Assemblies were held on Maasai land at Loliondo in Tanzania, on Ogiek land on Kenyan Mount Elgon, Benet land on the Ugandan side of Mt Elgon and Sengwer land at Tangul, Kenya. The Assemblies produced a strong statement that was read out to Presidents and others at the first African Climate Summit in Nairobi, as well as intervening powerfully in an African Commission meeting in Arusha to highlight the ongoing evictions of communities in the name of ‘fortress conservation’ at Ngorongoro (Tanzania), Mount Elgon (Uganda), Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of Congo) and the Mau forest (Kenya).

Inputs to **regional and international level conservation policy** continued, via FPP’s participation in the steering committee of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Conserved Areas (ICCA) Registry, a global reporting platform for indigenous or community-led conserved territories and areas which provides global recognition of their local contributions to biodiversity conservation. FPP also continued to engage in

*“For most indigenous peoples, the climate is how Mother Earth teaches us. Changes in the climate and biodiversity loss is the loss of the only common language we have on this planet.”* Dario Mejia of the UNPFII in the dialogue on indigenous languages, Geneva Meetings



Dusk over the community meeting room at Shulinab village in southern Rupununi, Wapichan territory, Guyana. FPP conducted a human rights monitoring training linked to the Indigenous Navigator project, 2023. Credit: Helen Tugendhat, FPP



implementation of the 'conservation target' of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, working with partners to create guidance on human rights-based approaches to conservation, and new, extended guidance on human rights law for conservation actors. This included supporting partners to provide inputs into ongoing work by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to define core human rights principles for conservation funders and conservation organisations. These guidance documents by UNEP provide practical ways in which NGOs and governments can support human rights as part of their approach to conservation. If correctly implemented, this would include securing land rights, ensuring participation, and enabling peoples and communities to determine their own conservation initiatives.

In 2023 FPP launched a new initiative called '**Conservation Pathways**', which aims to support communities to make use of the new commitments on rights, equity and participation in the Global Biodiversity Framework (see cultural identity and knowledge, page 25), in the target addressing the conservation of 30% of the Earth's surface by 2030 (Target 3). This project supports regional and national indigenous and forest peoples' organizations and their members to learn about the content and the options under Target 3, including protected areas, OECMs and indigenous and traditional territories. It provides tools and training for them to develop their own approaches for how they plan to engage with these conservation options, as well as developing understanding of their rights and how they can resist any misuse of Target 3, such as being evicted from their lands or being excluded from conservation management plans.

## Country focus

### Cameroon

FPP supported indigenous peoples in forest management and the preservation of cultural heritage. A key focus was on incorporating indigenous knowledge practices and ecological governance systems into the planning of traditional and cultural activities in Djoko community forest and Ngoyla Wildlife Reserve's community use areas. This entailed, amongst other things, identifying custodians of traditional knowledge and practices, elders and indigenous institutions willing and able to embark on a journey of revival of indigenous knowledge and practices to build back the governance systems and the resilience of their sacred sites and ancestral forests. FPP also facilitated meetings with the Baka community to support discussions among men, women and elders on sustainable biodiversity use and sharing best practices. Separate sessions for women encouraged their active participation, fostering collaboration and improving financial independence.

FPP, in collaboration with our partner ASBABUK, is working with several Baka communities around the Lobeke National Park to enhance access and use rights in the revised access and use agreement between

the Ministry of Forests and Fauna and Baka communities (represented by ASBABUK) living in and around the Lobeke, Boumba Bek, and Nki National Parks as well as the Ngoyla Fauna Reserve. In addition to this work, FPP is actively engaged in a community visioning and self-esteem development process with three Baka communities (Yenga Tengue, Yenga Doucement, and Zega) situated in the periphery of the Lobeke National Park. The aim of this initiative is to revitalize and strengthen Baka cultural identity and pride and create confidence among Baka communities that have long been marginalised. This is a long-term, ongoing piece of work with each community that seeks to support culturally appropriate Baka-led discussions in communities.

### Liberia

Changes in national legislation led to intensive work with partners on the possible expansion of the Liberian Protected Area system and the implications for community land rights. We were able to prevent widespread dispossession of communities from their land to make way for several National Parks, and began working with the Government to pursue community conservation approaches that protect communities' land rights. A pivotal moment was the

signing of the 'Gbehzo Declaration' in February 2023, in which the heads of the state land, forest and environment agencies were among 70 or so stakeholders participated in a consensus-building process that resulted in a commitment to a conservation approach that respects community land rights and enables community-led conservation.

### Republic of Congo

FPP continued to support 16 Baka and Bakwele communities in the Messok Dja area to strengthen their community governance. Regular field visits to the 16 target communities are still ongoing. These have included several missions focused on community-level governance, including missions to support the development of life plans / governance protocols in all 16 communities.

### Kenya

FPP continued to work with the Mt. Elgon Ogiek, Mau Ogiek, Sengwer and Aweer communities to seek avenues for securing their customary land. We supported the Mau Ogiek as they faced evictions despite the positive African Court rulings. The Elgon Ogiek organised a mapping training for 11 other indigenous communities from Tanzania, Uganda, DRC and Kenya,

**"Mapping is of great importance. Once [the community] knows their land, no one can harvest it without telling them."** Daisy Chepkopus of Indigenous Information Network, Kenya at a Transformative Pathways side event at the Geneva Meetings.

using the latest cutting-edge satellite mapping technology. The resulting spatial and land use plans help them manage their lands in line with their community sustainability bylaws and negotiate with the authorities.

### Democratic Republic of Congo

FPP's support for Batwa communities evicted from the Kahuzi-Biega National Park continued to strengthen Batwa capacity and unity between the Batwa trying to survive outside the Park, and those who returned to their ancestral lands in the Park and who are harassed by the Park authorities. The Batwa have long argued that, if allowed to return to their lands and work with the Park's management, they could significantly help protect Kahuzi-Biega's ecosystems. Despite park management moving from being held by ICCN (*Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature*), the government authority responsible for protected areas, to the

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), relationships between management and the Batwa remain poor. FPP hopes this will improve with the forthcoming ruling of the African Commission on the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, pressure from donors for a rights-based solution, and hopes for clear direction from the top of WCS.

### Colombia

FPP continued to support the Cañamomo Lomapieta Indigenous Council to document the full extent of their territories (which are only partially recognised under national law). Capacity-strengthening supported the reserve's mapping team to collect baseline data from 22 of the 32 communities, showing that areas declared 'unused/wasteland' by the state are used and occupied by communities. Support for the custodianship of the Sinifaná sacred site continued, enabling ongoing maintenance of the nurseries and

trees planted in 2022 that will be used for ceremonial purposes.

### Indonesia

FPP continued to support partners YMKL, AMAN Tano Batak, and local trade union SERBUNDO, to uphold the rights of the Toba Batak people. Their lands and incense forests in north Sumatra have been taken over by Toba Pulp Lestari (TPL), owned by Indonesian billionaire Sukanto Tanoto under the Royal Golden Eagle (RGE) corporate group. Following the Toba Batak's recognition as an indigenous people under local legislation, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry recognised the customary forests of three communities, one of which overlaps TPL; other communities are undergoing a verification process for recognition of their lands. TPL and other companies in the APRIL group (also owned by Tanoto) now have to pursue a process under the new Forest Stewardship Council



Demonstration by Chepkitale Indigenous People Development Project to community members on the quadrat method of data collection, November 2023. Credit: Chepkitale Indigenous People Development Project (CIPDP)



(FSC) Remedy Framework to try to re-join the FSC. FPP is supporting communities to engage with this Remedy Framework process and to try to secure remedy for past harms.

**Suriname**

The Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS) piloted the 'Planning our Future' Programme, in Konomerume (Donderkamp) in the Wayambo region, supported via FPP's Forest Visions Partnership. A 3D mapping exercise, involving men, women, elders, teachers, children and youth, collected information on forest resources and their use, with posters, photos, videos and storytelling. The final 3D map was digitised for use in the communities' advocacy strategies. VIDS technicians worked with local mappers from Trio and Kari'na villages, and Wayana mappers, to produce new and updated community-based maps. VIDS also worked with the

Galibi community to deepen awareness on conservation of their marine ecosystems including through interviews with local fishermen, educational trips for schoolchildren to marine areas, and sessions on the significance of Utapo Island for the community's fishing livelihood. With FPP support, VIDS published a book on their 30-year journey towards the recognition of indigenous collective rights in Suriname.

**Plans for 2024**

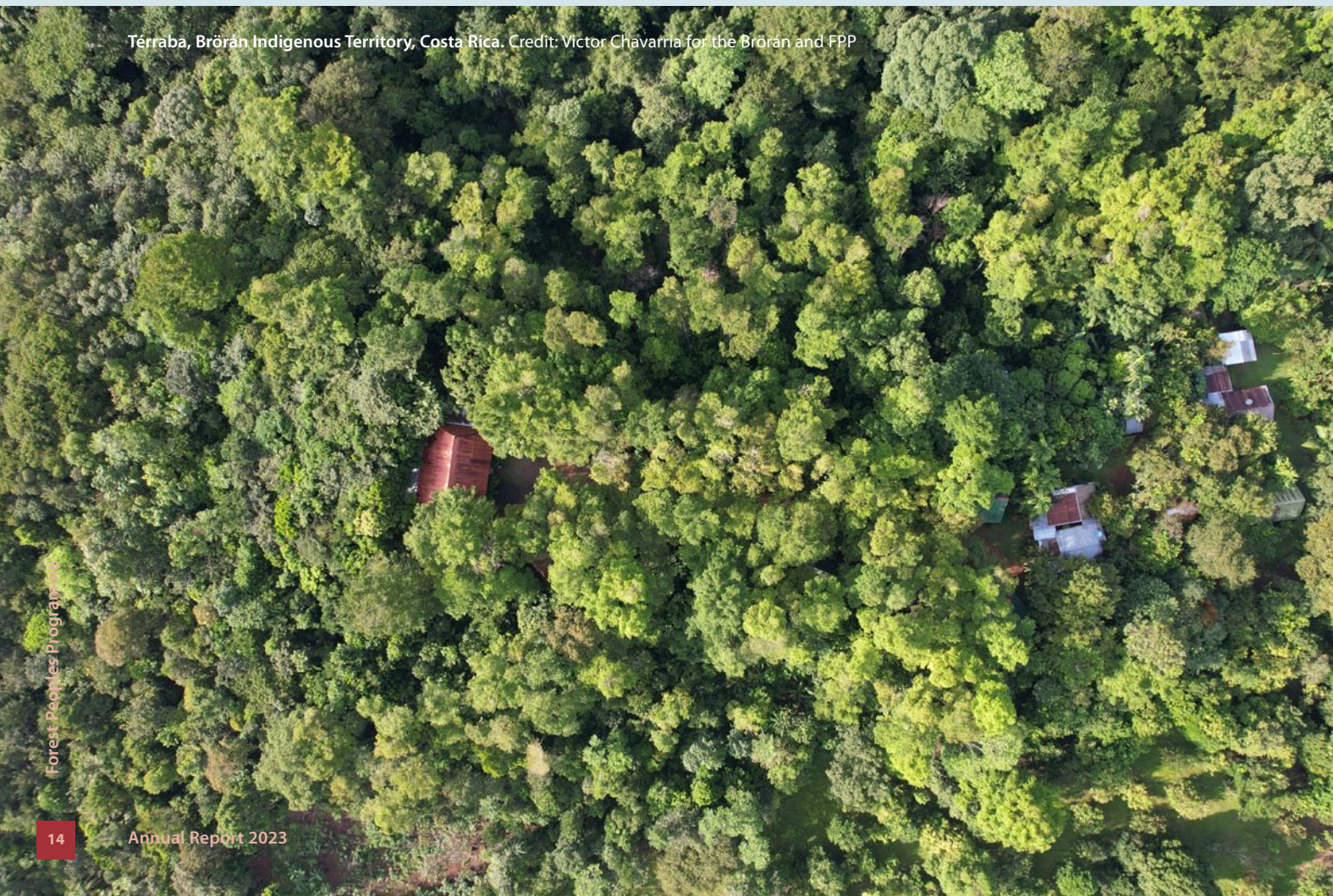
- Continue to partner with forest communities to strengthen their management of their lands, through support for local civil society, monitoring and evidence collection and advocacy on rights-based forest protection.
- Scale up the 'Forest Visions Partnership' programme of work, to significantly increase support for

forest peoples' self-determined visions

- Extend FPP's Strategic Legal Response Centre support for communities' 'assertion of their land, territory and resource rights.
- Build on the policy commitments in the Global Biodiversity Framework agreed in 2022, to place indigenous and other forest peoples' stewardship at the heart of conservation, restoration and sustainable use discussions.
- Support partner participation in COP16 of the biodiversity convention, advancing recognition of community-based monitoring, the links between human rights and the environment, and support for environmental human rights defenders.
- Promote and model rights-based conservation and push for greater material and financial support for community-led conservation.

***"To solve the world's problems we must have an inclusive collective approach, with recognition of the contribution and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples & local communities."** Lucy Mullenkei, International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity speaking at the GEF Assembly 2023*

Térraba, Brörán Indigenous Territory, Costa Rica. Credit: Victor Chavarría for the Brörán and FPP



# Global finance and trade



Barge at the pulp and paper company, APRIL's port next to Penyengat village loading Acacia, Indonesia. Credit: Harry Oktavian

FPP continued to focus on the **critical need for robust protections for human rights to ensure justice and sustainability in global finance and supply chains**. FPP assisted communities and local organisations in Colombia, Peru, Guyana, Liberia, Cameroon, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia to challenge harmful corporate conduct and finance, demand accountability in supply chains and emerging nature markets, and promote private sector and public sector reforms.

The **Zero Tolerance Initiative (ZTI) coalition**, facilitated by FPP, gained 26 new members in 2023. ZTI's goal is to end violence and killings in global supply chains and now has 104 members in 43 countries. 70% of the members are community groups or NGOs in the Global South. In 2023, the ZTI Urgent Response and Prevention Fund disbursed \$62,100 as 16 sub-grants across 10 countries (up from five grants in 2022). These sub-grants supported urgent responses, including emergency relocation of human rights defenders under threat, as well as preventative and collective protection measures in the following sectors: palm oil (4), illegal logging (4), oil extraction (3), conservation (2), mining (2), and renewable energy (1).

***"When it comes to carbon markets, rather than benefits-sharing, we want to talk about compensation because we are the ones doing the work. We are the ones monitoring and protecting these forests."** Immaculata Casimero, South Rupununi District Council, New York Climate Week*

In 2023 ZTI's collective efforts and effective collaboration with wider organisations to review and feed in to Unilever's Zero Tolerance Policy have led to Unilever publishing the most comprehensive Zero Tolerance Policy by any company, and the Voluntary Principles Initiative produced the first sector-wide guidance on human rights defenders in extractive industries. ZTI was a platform for coordinating the different advocacy streams around these policies.

FPP continued to engage with **voluntary supply chain standards** to protect forest peoples' rights in agroforestry sectors affecting traditional territories. **The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)** continued a review of its Complaints Panel, spurred by FPP providing evidence that the complaints system was not working. On the eve of the RSPO Roundtable in November, FPP released its report on 'How to re-build confidence in the audit system of certification schemes', containing a measured critique of the existing social audit practices and suggestions for improvement. RSPO began an initial study on de-linking the commercial relationship between Certification Bodies and auditees. FPP monitored and provided inputs into this process via the RSPO Assurance Standing Committee. FPP



**“We want to show to the world that indigenous knowledge can coexist with nature without harming it, so that we are not evicted in the name of conservation.”**

*Phoebe Ndiema of CIPDP at an event on Biodiversity Monitoring at Oxford University*

continued to contribute to the **Palm Oil Collaboration Group** through the working group on independent verification of corporate respect for land rights. The resulting finalised guidance for assessors will be piloted in 2024.

The new **FSC Remedy Framework**, which requires companies wanting to re-join the FSC to make remedy for social and environmental harms, came into effect in January 2023. FPP supported communities in Indonesia and engaged with FSC to prepare for its rollout (see below). In Colombia, the Organization of Displaced Populations’ (OPDS) complaint about a **High Conservation Value (HCV)** Screening report, enabling community-led classification of what constitutes critically important biological, ecological, social or cultural values that merit conservation as part of the HCV screening process, was accepted and upheld. Meetings between OPDS and HCV led to agreements on how the complaint will be closed and FPP assisted OPDS to be positioned to conduct the first ever genuine community-led HCV Screening process, paving the way for communities to map and protect their forest territories from exploitation by third parties. FPP continued as an active Steering Group member of the **Accountability Framework Initiative**, pushing for the integration of human rights and environmental due diligence in global commodity supply chains.

Working with indigenous organisations and allies, **FPP continued to push for protection of human rights in supply chain and corporate due diligence legislation** in the EU. We supported the development of a letter sent to EU policymakers by 27 individuals and organisations that represent indigenous and tribal peoples, and communities who share an experience of collective ownership, management and use of lands, territories and natural resources. The letter called for the internationally recognised rights of the signatories to be upheld in the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and was endorsed by 68 human rights and environmental organisations. This was instrumental to the text being revised and the EU agreeing in December to include protection of land and resource rights as well as an explicit prohibition of unlawful land evictions. Meanwhile, the final text of the EU Deforestation Regulation, which FPP, partners and allies have pushed forward for years, came into force in June.

Partner advocacy in the **UK policy landscape** proved fruitful in 2023. The rights of indigenous peoples

**“Only by recognising the rights, knowledge, innovations and values of Indigenous Peoples and Local communities will we be able to push forward the global agenda to sustainably use and conserve biodiversity.”** *Lakpa Nuri Sherpa, Environment Programme Coordinator, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and co-chair of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity*

received noticeable attention in the Environmental Audit Committee’s inquiry on global deforestation, resulting in useful recommendations to the UK Government, including the need to strengthen provisions in Schedule 17, The Environment Act (2021) to include indigenous and forest peoples’ human rights. Peers raised indigenous peoples’ rights during debate on the UK’s accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal; the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) briefings on carbon offsetting and the just transition both contained reference to specific FPP partner cases; and several Parliamentary questions were asked in both Houses. FPP also co-organised a webinar with Chatham House on ‘Confronting marginalisation in climate action and conservation’, with a focus on direct funding and a subsequent op-ed was published on the Chatham House Forest Governance and Legality website.

With the international debate about **nature markets** becoming increasingly polarised, FPP developed information materials in five languages to enable communities to make self-determined choices about such markets. We continued to support access to justice and remedy by communities faced with **carbon credit projects** imposed on customary lands without their free prior and informed consent (FPIC). This included a complaint to the Architecture for REDD+ Transitions (ART) grievance mechanism and strategic use of media and UN human rights bodies, resulting in significant national and international attention to the case of the Kichwa communities in Peru. FPP co-organised (with RRI, RFUS and RFN) a Climate Futures Dialogue during New York Climate Week, with over 70 representatives of indigenous and afro-descendant peoples from South America, Africa and Asia who discussed challenges and opportunities in different forms of climate finance.

Submission to Special Rapporteur on Women’s Rights to a clean and healthy environment FPP and partners prepared a submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment to inform his analysis and report on ‘Women, Girls and the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment’, which was presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2023. Experiences and testimonies from FPP’s partners highlighted the mutually reinforcing relationship between indigenous women’s and girls’ collective rights and a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.



Oil Palm plantations in Kapuas Hulu, Indonesia have caused extensive deforestation. Credit: Marcus Colchester, FPP

## Country focus

### Peru

FPP’s long-term support for the community of Santa Clara de Uchunya against land grabbing, deforestation and oil palm expansion made noteworthy gains in 2023. An OECD complaint lodged against one of the world’s biggest palm oil commodity traders, Louis Dreyfus Company in the Netherlands, proceeded towards the mediation phase, allowing Shipibo rights-holders to demand accountability from the company for its sourcing of palm oil from Ocho Sur. In October 2023, the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and four UN Special Rapporteurs sent communications to palm oil company Ocho Sur, its owners and investors, its international buyers, and the States responsible for regulating the companies involved, regarding the allegations of human rights violations raised by the community. This was in response to an allegations letter submitted by FPP and allies, in 2022, with a mandate from the community, and advocacy and information sharing with UN mechanisms during 2023. At least three major palm oil buyers in Europe and Asia have suspended Ocho Sur from their supply chains as a direct result of coordinated advocacy with partners.

Meanwhile, Kichwa organisations drew international attention to

the failure by French oil giant Total Energies to address human and territorial rights violations caused by its purchase of more than \$84 million dollars of carbon credits from the Cordillera Azul National Park – one of the world’s largest forest carbon projects – which dispossessed them of their ancestral lands.

FPP provided Kichwa organisations CEPKA, FEPIKECHA and FEPIKBHSAM with technical and legal advice to engage with community land titling programmes, resulting in tangible advances in the demarcation and titling of some communities, such as Shilcayo, Chipeza, Callanayaku, Ricardo Palma, Sinchi Runa de Llucanayaku, and Shuchuyaku, under the PTRT3 land titling project. FPP also supported the Kichwa’s ongoing advocacy and legal actions to challenge violations of their territorial rights by the Cordillera Escalera and Cordillera Azul protected areas, including with State bodies, conservation NGOs and funders, the IUCN and international carbon offset buyers such as Total Energies.

### Guyana

FPP assisted indigenous organisations and communities to gain information about – and challenge the lack of participation and consent in – Guyana’s certification of carbon

credits under TREES (The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard). This included a formal complaint to the ART (Architecture for REDD+ Transactions) grievance mechanism and an allegations letter to UN special mechanisms.

### Liberia

In the south/south-east, FPP supported our long-standing partner SESDev (Social Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development) to carry out needs assessments and capacity building with 14 communities affected by industrial agriculture, logging and mining, as a basis for exploring future legal and accountability support to these communities. As part of this work, FPP distributed a community briefing paper on the 2018 Land Rights Act to empower communities to advocate for their customary land rights, where these are threatened by corporate interests. FPP also supported our partner SESDev to participate in the National Oil Palm Platform of Liberia and in the CSO Oil Palm Working Group to coordinate efforts to hold oil palm companies to account for their human rights and environmental harms. FPP also continued to monitor and provide legal and technical advice to Liberian civil society partners seeking to challenge moves by the government and private sector to



market forest carbon, given the failure to consult and inform communities in the areas of interest, and the high likelihood that this would be predicated on or incentivise state capture of community lands for exclusionary conservation.

### Kenya

FPP supported partners to attend the first African Climate Summit in July 2023. Although voices such as theirs – objecting to land grabs in the name of marketing forest carbon – were in general locked out, members of the East Africa Indigenous Women-led Assembly managed to speak at a key moment in the Summit, addressing Presidents and other African leaders. However, at the summit President Ruto touted the massive financial opportunities of the carbon market, and subsequently announced that all Kenya’s ‘watertowers’ (the highland forest watershed areas) should be cleared of people (meaning forest communities). In November, hundreds of Ogiek were subsequently evicted from the Mau Forest by Kenya Forest

Service in the name of ‘conservation’ despite the rulings of the African Court and local courts. FPP supported the Mau Ogiek in their high-profile response, including via BBC and other international media attention, pointing out that Kenya’s government appeared to be trying to cement its full territorial – and therefore financial – control over an increasingly lucrative asset, by evicting those best placed to conserve their forests.

FPP also continued to accompany the Sengwer indigenous community of Embobut forest to assert their rights against the \$3 million GEF-funded Eldoret-Iten Water Fund project, which claims to protect biodiversity and the integrity and resilience of critical ecosystems. The Sengwer fear that this is a pretext for a carbon offsetting process that will condone evicting them from their lands, based on their experience of previous projects (funded by the World Bank and EU) during which the Sengwer suffered large-scale evictions and human rights abuses.

### Indonesia

FPP and partners continued to engage in several RSPO complaints against Indonesian companies to ensure the certification body enforces its standards on human rights. In the absence of an RSPO ruling on the complaint about First Resources’ alleged “shadow companies,” FPP supported the Dayak Agabag in seeking alternative ways to resolve long-standing land conflicts with these companies. Engagement with First Resources buyers led several to suspend sourcing from the company. FPP also pushed for the effective rollout of the FSC’s Remedy Framework. FPP and partners pressed FSC-Indonesia, the FSC Board, independent assessors, and companies to ensure that FSC upholds its commitments and standards in complaints against Royal Golden Eagle (RGE) and Sinar Mas, and that adequate remedy is provided to impacted communities. We also supported the Suku Anak Rawa, Akit and Sakai indigenous peoples to hold the Asia Pulp and Paper and

APRIL corporations to their promises to agree a remedy plan with the rightsholders for the takeover of their lands.

FPP, KITVL and University of Amsterdam published *Forest Politics in Indonesia: Drivers of Deforestation and Dispossession* which documents the struggle over control of land, timber and other resources in Indonesia’s forest zones. It explores how clientelistic exchange relations between political, bureaucratic and economic actors undermine the country’s natural resource and forest governance and allow forest peoples’ lands to be taken over with impunity.

After sustained advocacy by FPP, local partners and international allies, a high-risk road and infrastructure project in Kalimantan, proposed/funded by Asia Development Bank (ABD), was cancelled. This road would have cut through some of the last remaining intact forest in Indonesian Borneo and the territories of the numerous Dayak groups who have

yet to have their lands recognised and secured.

### Plans for 2024

- Continue to work with our partners towards improved **corporate and investor accountability** by:
  - strengthening the **content and enforcement of laws (e.g. EU, UK) and commodity certification and industry assessment standards** (e.g. RSPO, FSC and ART), with a particular focus on rigorous auditing and verification processes, enforcement of grievance mechanisms and access to remedies; and,
  - identifying **and exposing the links between human rights violations** experienced by indigenous and forest peoples, and the **responsibilities and obligations** of downstream actors, investors, and opaque corporate groups/shadow companies in the agricultural, extractive and nature market sectors.
  - pushing the development of

**corporate accountability laws at national level** in countries where indigenous and forest peoples live.

- Continue scoping for potentially increased work on **transition and conflict minerals** (including in Indonesia and DRC) and the use of certification schemes – and the law – to push for accountability in the mining sector.
- **Support communities to mobilise, heal and unite** to assert their human rights in response to divisive threats to their lands, territories and resources from corporate actors.
- Advocate for human rights protection in market and non-market **climate and biodiversity finance** approaches, including through strong grievance mechanisms, and for indigenous and forest peoples to receive direct and equitable financing from these mechanisms.

Sacred forest area carved out of the oil palm plantation surrounding it. Left like an island in the desolation. A cultural site disconnected and de-contextualised (socially and environmentally). Credit: Tom Lomax, FPP







Nipodimaki witness in the High Court alerts judge to threats to future generations stemming from uncontrolled deforestation in the Colombian Amazon. Credit: Dayana Castro

FPP’s legal programme supports indigenous and forest peoples to use legal tools for maximum effectiveness – often in partnership with local lawyers and civil society organisations – to gain control over their traditional lands, territories, and resources. Throughout 2023, our lawyers and legal experts continued to provide advice and support to indigenous peoples and other forest peoples across the geographic and thematic portfolio of FPP’s work, including through the **expanded operation of FPP’s Strategic Legal Response Centre (SLRC)**. This spanned grassroots capacity-building and regional sharing activities, the use of national and regional courts, human rights law mechanisms and grievance mechanisms, and support for legal reform and human rights advocacy at the national level.

The programme supported **strategic legal approaches to drive supply-chain accountability** in Indonesia, Liberia, Cameroon, Colombia and Peru. This included advocating for and piloting new processes using the FSC Remedy Framework in Indonesia, challenging a commodity trader sourcing palm oil in Peru, entrenching freezes on palm oil expansion in Liberia, and formulation of proposals for a

community-led High Conservation Value (HCV) screening process in Montes de Maria, Colombia. There was also continuing support for cases to challenge oil palm concessions in Cameroon.

FPP legal support to partners also contributed to **international case law and jurisprudence** and increased pressure on governments to respect the communities’ rights. An example is FPP’s engagement with UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) regarding the Kichwa people in Peru which led to two Urgent Action letters to the Peruvian State. These addressed the need for collective titling of Kichwa lands and regaining of rights over forest territories which they have long protected, but where the state is marketing the forest carbon in the Cordillera Azul National park without their consent to some of the world’s biggest oil companies. FPP continued legal action in Cameroon on behalf of the Bagyéli community whose land rights and cultural survival are threatened by CamVert’s palm oil plantation, while in parallel filing a submission to CERD. This resulted in CERD issuing a robust Urgent Action letter to the State in September 2023. FPP submissions to CERD also resulted in

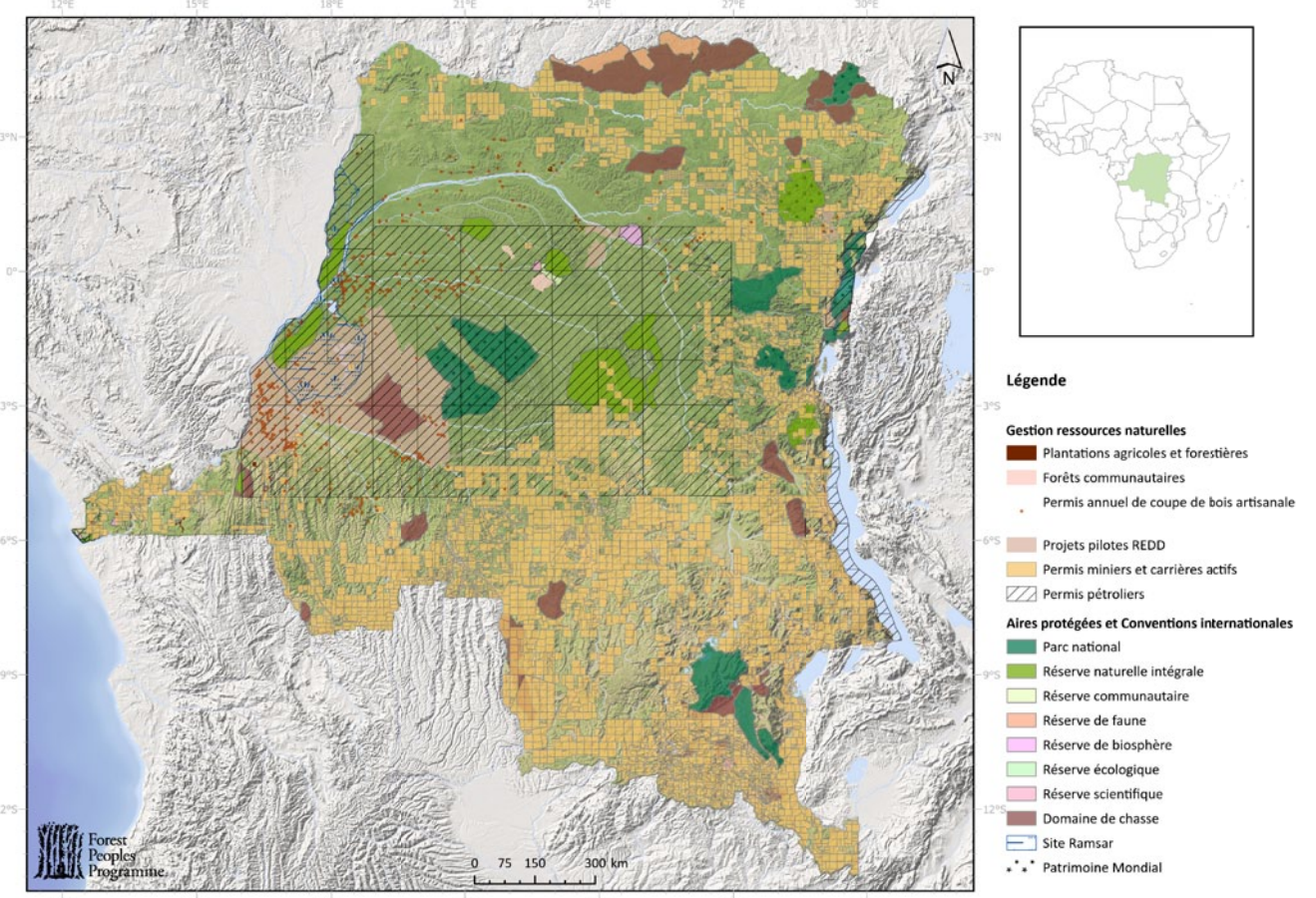
two Urgent Action letters to the government of Costa Rica on violations of the Bribri and Bröran peoples’ land rights and impunity for the murders of their leaders. In Guyana, FPP assisted the indigenous community of Chinese Landing to file a request for and obtained precautionary measures at the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights under which the State is to protect them from threats, harassment and acts of violence.

FPP’s contribution to **international standard setting processes** also continued in 2023 in close collaboration with indigenous peoples and their support organizations, including providing input to the revision of the OECD’s Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and of the Green Climate Fund social and environmental safeguards. In parallel with FPP advocacy to ensure that indigenous peoples’ rights language was included in the EU Deforestation Regulation, FPP pushed for respect for indigenous peoples’ rights overseas to be guaranteed under the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and UK regulatory reform processes.

FPP expanded its work across the four SLRC pillars, **strategic litigation and legal reform, rapid legal response, capacity building, and strengthening the community of practice**. The SLRC provided flexible support for strategic legal cases and legal reform at national and regional levels, and the implementation of judgements upholding indigenous peoples’ land and self-governance rights in nine countries, including Kenya

(implementation of Mau Ogiek African Court decision and ongoing case of Mt Elgon Ogiek), Suriname (support for the Saramaka people to attend a hearing before the Inter-American Commission), Republic of Congo (reform of Wildlife and Protected Areas Bill), and Colombia (implementation of Constitutional Court decision of the Emberá Chami). The SLRC helped to protect indigenous peoples from threats of intimidation and harm, and in cases where they were criminalised in the pursuit of their land rights by enabling urgent legal responses for 21 human rights defenders at risk in 15 communities across six countries, including Peru (the murder of a Kichwa leader), Uganda (evictions and criminalization of the Mosopisyeke of Benet indigenous people) and Indonesia (threats by police and criminalisation of community members in north and west Sumatra).

The SLRC’s legal capacity building, training and **support for community assertion of their own customary laws and legal systems** continued in Indonesia, Colombia, Peru, Liberia, Kenya and Guyana, and included East Africa Indigenous Women-led Community Assemblies and meetings of Shipibo Forest Guards in the Peruvian Amazon. The SLRC also continued to strengthen the global community of practice working on indigenous peoples’ land rights in tropically forested countries in collaboration with networks and partners, and through expanded engagement with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



As in several other countries in Africa, national legislation in DRC vests most land in the State, and permits significant (and often contradictory) overlaps in the allocation of land and resource rights – for example the grant of mining rights in conservation areas. National legislation is in turn superimposed on customary systems of land rights that are largely unrecognised – impeding the enjoyment of rights by indigenous peoples as well as local communities, and often leading to conflict. The new law on indigenous peoples provides an opportunity to address some of these issues. Map created by Audrey Versteegen, FPP, using data from sources publicly available.



## Country focus

### Peru

FPP continued to provide legal support to the Shipibo-Konibo community whose ground-breaking OECD complaint, challenging one of the world's biggest commodity traders for sourcing palm oil from deforested indigenous lands, was deemed admissible by the Dutch National Contact Point. FPP also co-facilitated a meeting of the Shipibo Regional Indigenous Guard Organisation and its members, including 14 native communities of the Shipibo Konibo people, the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Council (COSHICOX), and representatives of regional and national indigenous organizations, in the community of Santa Clara de Yarinacocha. The guards exchanged knowledge and practices on their role as a form of territorial security spanning eight million hectares of Shipibo territory, with a view to 'stop being governed and to start governing'.

### Colombia

FPP provided technical assistance to the Cañamomo Lomapieta Indigenous Reserve for development of their autonomous FPIC law and to give supporting testimony to the Inter American Court of Human Rights in the case of the U'wa (an ongoing emblematic international legal case through which indigenous U'wa People seek justice for violation of FPIC and related rights by extractive industry companies and the Colombian State). At a hearing of the High Court in October, the Amazonian Pësiëhë (Andoke), Nonova ïini (Nonuya), Feeneminaa (Muinane) and Nipode-speaking Uitoto peoples (the 'People of the Centre') raised serious alarms regarding climate change and uncontrolled advance of the agricultural frontier and large-scale

deforestation, which threatens their lands, territories and resources and their future survival in the Colombian Amazon. Petitions presented to the court by the People of the Centre additionally communicated misgivings about the top-down implementation of Supreme Court Judgement STC 4360/2018, and called for the government to guarantee the direct and effective indigenous participation in forest policy instruments and agreements aimed at halting deforestation and mitigating climate change. High Court decisions regarding indigenous peoples' interventions in the implementation of Sentence STC4360/18 are expected in early 2024.

### Liberia

Building on FPP and partners' work over the past decade to support communities to challenge and successfully freeze planned oil palm expansion by Liberia's two biggest concessionaires, FPP's focus in 2023 shifted towards implementation of the Land Rights Act to 'lock in' those gains on a more permanent basis, including in the contexts of agribusiness concessions, initiatives to expand the country's protected areas framework, and in relation to the emerging market in forest carbon. Across those sectors the common thread was the imperative to ensure community land rights are respected and to advance high-quality community land titling. Accordingly, FPP partnered with civil society and local lawyers to deliver legal trainings and disseminate legal informational materials on the implications of the Land Rights Act, involving both government, civil society actors and donors, as well as working directly with affected and potentially-affected communities. FPP also supported the CSO Working Group on Land

Reform to get legal advice on how to address challenges its members are seeing in the land titling process, including to inform advocacy directed at strengthening the performance and procedures of the Liberia Land Authority in relation to community land titling.

### Republic of Congo

FPP continued to advocate for reform of the Wildlife and Protected Areas Law to recognise indigenous and forest peoples' land, resource and FPIC rights. We supported a multi-stakeholder validation meeting on the law with community representatives, government, civil society and other stakeholders. While continuing to monitor the review of legislation, including the Wildlife and Protected Areas Bill, FPP, together with its partner APETDS, took a number of urgent actions, including making a public statement on the content of a new environmental law passed in August 2023, after being pushed through by the President at the last minute as an emergency procedure, to denounce the non-inclusive process that led to its passage, and submitting a compilation of legal comments and concerns to key ministries in collaboration with other CSOs.

### Democratic Republic of Congo

FPP conducted a rights-based analysis of existing mining legislation and assessed the impact of small and large-scale mining on partner communities and potential remedial avenues in the two provinces of South Kivu and Tshopo. A convening of relevant parties was organised in Kinshasa in June 2023 to launch the rights-based legal analysis. The rights-based analysis was deepened and illustrated into materials to support a legal empowerment approach. In



Representatives from Congolese civil society (including APETDS, FPP's partner in the Congo) and FPP staff gather in Brazzaville to discuss and agree civil society contributions to the draft law on wildlife and protected areas. The Wildlife and Protected Areas Advocacy Task Force, which was established as a result of this meeting, continued to advocate for the inclusion of indigenous peoples' rights in various legal reform processes throughout 2023. Credit: Marien Nzikou Massala

parallel, research and investigations have continued to lay the groundwork for potential strategic avenues for advocacy and litigation – including to challenge expropriation of land for mining, prevent deforestation and protect communities' rights under current regulations. Engagement at the national level continues in order to catch opportunities to influence ongoing sectorial reforms as well as filing potential application decrees at national and/or provincial levels – underpinned by work with affected communities to ensure that their experiences and needs guide ongoing strategy development. FPP supported five information and consultation sessions to assist the Batwa to decide their next steps and develop their strategy for furthering the implementation of the awaited decision of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights on Kahuzi-Biega National Park.

### Uganda

FPP's legal team continued to provide legal support and representation

to the Batwa in their long-standing petition, currently before the Supreme Court of Uganda, in which they are demanding restitution of the ancestral lands from which they were unlawfully evicted nearly three decades ago. The SLRC provided rapid response for the Mosopisyeke of Benet indigenous people to address the legal challenges resulting from impoundment of animals, evictions and burning of homes, assault, harassment and criminalisation of communities attempting to exercise their customary land rights in areas that are controlled by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA).

### Kenya

SLRC, together with FPP's Gender Programme, supported Mau Ogiek Council of External Experts and Ogiek Council of Elders to hold meetings to rally the Ogiek people to push for implementation of the 2022 African Court decision recognising their land title, and to select community members to monitor the implementation of the decision and

engage with the Kenyan government. This included a workshop specifically for Mau Ogiek women who wanted to better understand the verdict and its implementation. SLRC also supported advocacy by Ogiek of Mount Elgon and other forest indigenous communities against ongoing evictions. The office for Minority and Marginalised Affairs, created by President Ruto, was colonised by other, more powerful players who sought to define who these groups are. SLRC supported the Elgon Ogiek and others to engage with this process including participation in the inaugural 'Minorities Rights Day' event on 18th December, to ensure fair representation and a clear voice for the marginalised.

The SLRC, together with FPP's Gender Programme, helped fund the fourth Community Assembly in East Africa on Sengwer land at Embobut forest in Kenya. This brought communities together to reflect on advocacy and legal strategies, including the use of legal cases, and acted as a land rights

***"If we want to see concrete results in the climate crisis, we have to start recognising the rights of indigenous peoples on the same level as any other human being and to recognise their governance and to include them in decision-making. Only then will we talk about real nature-based solutions."*** *Marisol García Apagüño at the Land Portal Webinar on Indigenous Rights and Carbon Markets, August 2023*



dialogue and a regional training. The Assembly helped to build cohesion between the various communities, allowing them to better learn from each other and support their collective struggles.

#### Cameroon

FPP continued to pursue legal action on behalf of the Bagyéli community impacted by CamVert's palm oil plantation. However, due to extremely slow progress before the court, FPP in parallel filed a submission to CERD, which resulted in a robust Urgent Action letter from CERD to Cameroon in September 2023 and a further letter in December 2023.

In response to the abuses (which are unfortunately not widely reported but represent the most common forms of violations of the dignity of the Baka peoples) suffered by the Baka at the hands of the dominant Bantu communities, FPP, through the SLRC funds, is training members of the Baka association, ASBABUK, on the various approaches to access to justice, including the constitution of evidence, the identification of the bodies playing a jurisdictional role around the Lobeke National Park and their methods of referral. This initiative also involves working with the administrative, traditional, and judicial police authorities, and providing them with the tools they need to carry out their jurisdictional roles effectively.

#### Suriname

The Kaliña and Lokono indigenous peoples' 2015 land rights decision of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (I/A Court H.R.) has yet to be implemented. SLRC facilitated legal support for them to address criminalisation and threats due to their protests against mining and logging (legal and illegal) in their communities. SLRC also supported the Saramaka people in their efforts to have their 2007 I/A Court H.R. judgement implemented, by facilitating their attendance

at a hearing of the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights and enabling them to start gathering evidence for a domestic legal case on the construction of a 42 km road to a logging concession area in their territory.

#### Costa Rica

SLRC supported a local law firm in the trial of the murder of Jehry Rivera, a Brörán indigenous leader. His killer was found guilty and sentenced to 22 years, but a retrial was ordered on technical grounds, causing heightened distrust and insecurity in the indigenous territories. FPP and the local law firm are committed to engaging in the retrial. FPP also continued to support the Bribri and Brörán to seek implementation of their precautionary measures before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to guarantee the safety of indigenous representatives and in submissions to CERD, which resulted in two early warning letters to Costa Rica requesting information on implementation of land restitution and investigations on violence against indigenous leaders.

#### Indonesia

Actions on recognition of land rights included SLRC organising with a local NGO partner WALHI Jambi and community leaders in three villages to build stronger awareness around land rights struggles and increase community participation in the protection and recognition of their customary areas. This was coupled with advocacy on the pulpwood company PT WKS (part of APP and Sinar Mas group) and the local government, the governor of Jambi and the forestry department in Jambi, to obtain commitments to resolve land rights issues and ensure territorial recognition. The communities also started developing a field monitoring plan on the activities of the pulpwood company, PT. Wira Karya Sakti, which has had major negative impacts on the environment and community

livelihoods. The results of the field monitoring will be used to test the feasibility of an FSC complaint about the company.

#### Plans for 2024

- Support the implementation of precautionary measures issued by the Inter-American Commission for the Bribri and Brörán in Costa Rica, for the Emberá Chami in Colombia, and for the Chinese Landing community in Guyana to ensure the safety of indigenous rights defenders and community members.
- Pursue precautionary measures for the Kichwa community of Santa Rosillo de Yanayaku in Peru.
- Strengthen engagement relating to agribusiness, conservation, mining, carbon markets and other sectors.
- Continue support to partners to bring complaints to international and regional human rights mechanisms and to national courts.
- Explore working with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to develop a model law on conservation with a focus on human rights and community conservation.
- Expand people-to-people exchanges and legal trainings in Africa and Latin America to share communities' learning about local, national, regional and international legal strategies, including on evictions from conservation areas, criminalisation and violence, and development of their own FPIC protocols.
- Work to align mining standards with international human rights law, in the context of increased renewable technology mineral extraction on forest peoples' lands.
- Support communities affected by carbon markets and press for standards and practices that guarantee respect for indigenous peoples' rights and provide remedies for rights violations.

# Cultural identity and knowledge



Community members of the Samburu indigenous community working together to map traditional land and resources at their resource centre, by combining traditional knowledge with technology, Kitamany, Kenya. Credit: Indigenous Information Network (IIN)

FPP continued to support indigenous peoples' inputs to the processes of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**. Following the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at COP-15 in December 2022, FPP focused on developing the Global Biodiversity Framework's monitoring system, for adoption by COP-16 in 2024. We worked closely with the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and collaborators, including UNEP-WCMC, International Land Coalition, FAO, International Labour Organization and IWGIA, participating in expert meetings on indicators relevant to indigenous peoples and local communities, and the entire monitoring framework. FPP took part in consultations on the future institutional arrangements of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions in Geneva and its new programme of work up to 2030. In Geneva, FPP also hosted a 2-day workshop to gather inputs for a new biodiversity module for the Indigenous Navigator based on community-based monitoring approaches.

We maintained active participation in the **Human Rights in Biodiversity Working Group**, working with SwedBio

and other organisations to improve understanding of the links between human rights and biodiversity action, and how to implement a human rights-based approach. The team also worked closely with the network of Centers of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge, and participated in the 10th Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in August. FPP is a contributing author in the ongoing IPBES Assessment on Business and Biodiversity.

Our long-standing **collaborative partnership on cultural and biological diversity** continued with partners and communities in Suriname, Guyana, Panama, Thailand, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Antigua, Tuvalu, and Madagascar. This partnership focuses on strengthening inclusive and strong leadership, customary sustainable use of resources, conservation and restoration, sustainable livelihoods, revitalisation of traditional knowledge, and empowerment of local groups to participate in key processes at national and international levels (see country details below). The partnership celebrated its 20-year anniversary at a meeting

**“Communication and engagement with everyone – women, children, youth, elders – in indigenous communities is essential for successful restoration. Inclusion is how we drive action.”** Lucy Mulenkei, *International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity*



of partners in Bangladesh, hosted by Unnayan Onneshan. The meeting incorporated a boat journey into the Sundarbans mangrove forests for exchange and solidarity visits with the community cooperatives supported by the project: golpata harvesters, snail collectors, honey collectors, fishers and crab farmers, as well as women's cooperatives. FPP provided training on the legal and policy context, in particular the new Global Biodiversity Framework and the processes and opportunities for getting engaged. The visit demonstrated the positive impacts of long-term community support and creating space for mutual sharing and learning on community motivation, trust and leadership. The collaborative partnership's actions in critical coastal forest (and marine) areas included our partner Fanamby's work in Madagascar managing sustainable fisheries, protecting marine habitats, monitoring fish stocks and mangrove restoration programs, particularly involving women. In Tuvalu our partner TNYC carried out clean-up campaigns tackling long-standing issues of plastic waste and soil degradation.

'Shifting the Narrative' is an online workshop series that focuses on how to effectively and ethically support indigenous peoples, women and marginalised groups through communications work. It seeks to create a learning space for communicators to better support

indigenous self-representation, with a gender justice lens so they can use media as a tool for visibility and justice.

We continued to support the secretariat of the **Global Network on Indigenous-led Education (ILED)** financially and with FPP staff time inputs. The network supports grassroots education projects with the help of various donors, and now has [12 active members](#) and three regional facilitators. The most recent member, [the Wiwa peoples from Colombia](#), will use their ILED small grant to promote ancestral knowledge transmission, focusing on the Dumana language. Lessons from exchange visits between women groups involved in indigenous education in Gujarat, India, and Guna Yala, Panamá were shared in a webinar, and we held an in-depth interview with our Latin America and the Caribbean regional coordinator Norma Zamora on [Gender and Indigenous Education in Latin-America](#). The new [ILED Youth Fellowship Programme](#) provided resources, training, networking and support for five young indigenous leaders active in educational projects, and their community mentors. On ILED's Instagram you can ["Meet the fellows"](#) and [learn more about their projects](#). The ILED team produced its [first annual report covering 2022 and 2023](#) and started a podcast, available on [Spotify](#) and [YouTube](#).

## Country focus

### Bangladesh

FPP's partner Unnayan Onneshan facilitates three community cooperatives in the Sundarbans as hubs for collective learning and actions for sustainable production. In 2023, they focussed on fishing profitability and women's empowerment in agriculture while addressing climate change impacts. This had a gender focus, with specific women's cooperatives, and was supported by the Gender Programme

The Banojibi cooperative worked on projects reinforcing traditional agricultural knowledge and legal training to deter forest entry. Youth training covered topics like livestock rearing and land reclamation. A collaborative riverbank afforestation project tackled erosion. In October, Unnayan Onneshan organised a policy workshop with government departments, including the Forest Department, to discuss the Global Biodiversity Framework and the contributions of local communities. There was a lot of media attention

and the officials' statements were extremely supportive. After the workshop, there was a very good and unprecedented, informal meeting between the government, the youth network, and other NGOs.

### Cameroon

In 2023, FPP continued working with Assoumindele and Se'eh Baka communities in south-east Cameroon to facilitate community dialogues aimed at raising awareness that would lead to eventually developing a roadmap for integrating indigenous knowledge practices and ecological governance systems (IKPEGS) in the use and management of the Djoko community forest. These spaces brought together elders and other community members who are interested to begin a journey of revival of indigenous knowledge and practices, to build back the governance systems and the resilience of their sacred sites and ancestral forests.

### Panama

With FPP support, our partner FPCI led initiatives to empower the Usdub community in Guna Yala. Bilateral meetings with community elders resulted in the construction of facilities for the Masar Ibegungalu Research Institute, dedicated to Guna culture. Workshops educated Usdub producers on indigenous knowledge and biodiversity. Banana and cassava cultivation, and conservation efforts in coconut production areas were expanded. An ecological analysis assessed ecosystem resilience, offering crucial insights into community sustainability. FPCI received an ILED follow-up grant, to organise tours for older students in the science clubs of two schools to illegal mining sites in the nearby protected area, and to Naibegalu farm, as well as a walking trail with knowledge holders focusing on trees of cultural importance. The students are applying practical monitoring techniques, like camera traps and drones, to help the future leadership respond to the threats facing the Guna communities.

### Kenya

An ILED small grant enabled the Berur women's group of the Sengwer community of Kabolet to start re-educating their youth about the Sengwer language and culture, including the use and conservation of forest resources. In 2023, the women running the Sengwer cultural centers' tree nursery worked with schoolchildren to plant and conserve trees, and learn about indigenous flowering trees to help restore honey production in the community.

### Thailand

In the Northern Highlands, FPP continued working with IMPECT Association. In 2023, IMPECT organised educational meetings and exchanges among watershed and environmental network members, fostering cooperation with local and national administrations. They focused on legal forestry education, leadership training, and enhancing women's participation. They also used GIS technology for mapping, collaborating with administrations to obtain historical land-use data and gathering community knowledge during public meetings. This provided clear insights on territorial structure and land use, empowering the community to address conflicts and influence administration. Through an ILED small grant, FPP also supported the Mawakhi community's language and cultural heritage youth project, and the Mawakhi school team's

attendance at the 7th International Conference on Language and Education in Bangkok, where they co-hosted a panel discussion: ["Celebrating Indigenous Resilience and Innovation in Thailand, India, and the Philippines"](#).

### Peru

ILED supported the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampis Nation (GTANW) to carry out interviews with elders to collect histories of childcare, cultural care practices, types of food and the treatment of illnesses to recover Wampis practices related to childcare and parenting. Another ILED partner, the Federation of Native Communities of Ucayali and Afluentes (FECONAU) strengthened the Shipibo Konibo medicinal plant knowledge system, by collecting 757 medicinal plants and cultivating them with the families involved in the project.

### Colombia

With assistance from the RAI, Wellspring, CLUA and other donors, continuing support was given in 2023 to Nipodimaki People women and youths in Amazonas and Caquetá departments to document and recall traditional knowledge, including through the development of a vocabulary and lexicon in the Nipode language, and via the audiovisual documentation of traditional farming and sustainable use practices, ritual songs and craftwork.

## Plans for 2024

- Ensure the adopted guidance for the Global Biodiversity Framework's (national) engagement, implementation, reporting and monitoring is as participatory as possible (community-based monitoring).
- Continue working with the Human Rights in Biodiversity Working Group to advance human rights and biodiversity linkages, including developing practical guidance on human rights-based approaches.
- Engage with and provide inputs in to the [Inter-governmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#), including through the network of [Centers of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge](#).
- Final year of the current phase of the collaborative partnership on cultural and biological diversity – evaluate and discuss future directions.
- Continue full engagement in the ILED Network:
  - Expand ILED Youth Fellowship Programme to 10 youth/mentor duos by 2025
  - Launch ILED spotlight award for woman teachers
  - Sustain ILED small grant support to members: e.g. to renovate the Sengwer's resource centre at Kabolet, Kenya, for indigenous language classes
  - Design and plans for publication of Nipode vocabulary (Colombia).



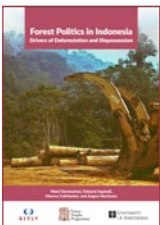
Community member of the Lisu indigenous group planting trees in the community forest in the Laowu community, Vieng Haeng district, Chiang Mai province, Thailand. Credit: IMPECT



# Publications

**Forest Politics in Indonesia: Drivers of Deforestation and Dispossession** (En, Fr) March 2023

This report shows that informal clientelistic exchange relations between political, bureaucratic and economic actors – involving exchanges of favours of mutual benefit – are a pervasive feature of governance in Indonesia, and explains how they undermine natural resource and forest governance.



international human rights law, as repeatedly urged by human rights treaty bodies, to recognise, protect and promote the collective and individual human rights of indigenous peoples.

**AIDSEP y Forest Peoples Programme presentan análisis de los derechos indígenas frente a los fondos climáticos internacionales y mercados de carbono en la Amazonía peruana / Indigenous jurisdiction and rights and the dangers of the carbon market** (Sp) August 2023

This report presents an analysis of the main climate funds in Peru and their implications for the rights and proposals of Amazonian indigenous peoples. The report is more relevant now than ever, since Peru is in a stage of promoting climate funds for the carbon market and green agribusiness, which is not enough to stop deforestation or guarantee the protection of collective rights and territories of indigenous peoples



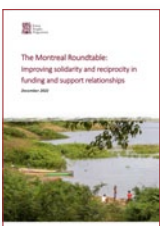
**Critical Next Step in the Decolonisation of Land Relations: Restitution of Protected Areas to Indigenous Communities** (En, Fr, Sp, Swahili) March 2023

Briefing 03 in the series Transforming Conservation: from conflict to justice. This briefing arises from research into restitution of state Protected Areas (PAs).



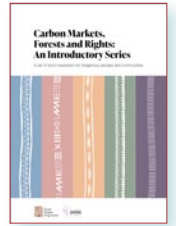
**The Montreal Roundtable: Improving solidarity and reciprocity in funding and support relationships** (En, Sp) March 2023

In December 2022, Forest Peoples Programme convened a roundtable discussion exploring how to improve direct and indirect financial and technical support for the actions of indigenous peoples and communities in managing, using, conserving, and claiming their territories and resources.



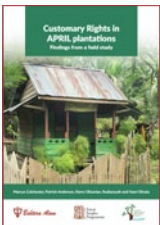
**Carbon Markets, Forests and Rights: An introductory series for indigenous peoples and communities** (En, Fr, Sp, Bahasa Indonesia, Portuguese) September 2023

Many indigenous peoples and communities are already confronted by carbon market developments in their territories and are expressing that they need more information on this topic to understand what these markets might mean for them. The technical and complex language that is often used in discussions around these markets is not helping. These 'explainers' are a first step in responding to the demand from communities for clearer information. They focus specifically on the link between carbon markets, forests and indigenous peoples' rights.



**Customary rights in APRIL Plantations: Findings from a field study** (En, Bahasa Indonesia) April 2023

An independent field study reveals that indigenous peoples in Indonesia lost large parts of their customary territories to a pulp and paper company's (APRIL) plantations, without having their rights recognised, and without their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).



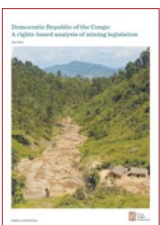
**ILED Annual Report 2022- 2023** (En, Sp) November 2023

This is the first annual report of the Global Network on Indigenous-Led Education (ILED) since the network was created in 2021. It offers information on the activities and achievements of the network and its members over the past year, including the various grassroots education initiatives supported by the ILED small grant mechanism; the exchange visits between women's groups of the network, the publications and participation in various events.



**Democratic Republic of the Congo: A rights-based analysis of mining legislation** (En, Fr) June 2023

This report provides an analysis of existing mining legislation in DRC from a rule of law and human rights perspective. It examines the legal framework pertaining to land tenure and mining, as well as the capacity of public authorities to respect and apply principles of due diligence, accountability, transparency and the legality of decision-making procedures.



**How to re-build confidence in the audit system of certification schemes** (En, Bahasa Indonesia) November 2023

This report summarises why social audits fail to uphold certification standards and offers possible solutions to re-build confidence in the audit system. It provides examples to demonstrate the systemic malpractice and lack of redress present in a wide range of certification schemes and highlights the current flaws in the social audit process.



**Promoting positive human rights outcomes for Indigenous Peoples: Key considerations for UK policymakers** (En) September 2023

This briefing sets out key opportunities for the UK to fulfil its existing obligations under



# Films and videos

**Dispossession**

Documentary showing the exclusionary conservation model faced by the Kichwa people of Peru. (in Spanish with English subtitles)



**Local Biodiversity Outlooks**

**Ruma'mus Ung Gio: Honouring the sacred ancestral ties to water**

This short film shows how water is a vital element for the Warembungan people in Indonesia.



**Transformative Pathways Project**

**Facing Extinction, Defending Life**

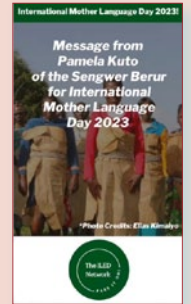
Co-Creation between Transformative Pathways Partner LifeMosaic and many indigenous leaders, filmmakers and advisors from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Polynesia. (Available in English, Illocano, Indonesian, Maa, Portuguese, Spanish and Swahili)



**Instagram Collaboration Videos**

**ILED Network and Forest Peoples Programme**

International Mother Language Day 2023 – Message from Pamela Kuto of the Sengwer Beru.



**ILED Network and Forest Peoples Programme**

International Day of Mother Language 2023 – Alí García Segura from the Bribri people. Alí García Segura speaks about the need to transform education and revitalise indigenous languages, like Bribri.



**Indigenous Peoples' Voices on Biodiversity** Made by AIPP

To commemorate the International Day of Biodiversity (2023), AIPP created a number of videos that showcased the perspectives of indigenous peoples, Women and Youth and emphasised the crucial role of recognising, respecting and upholding collective rights of Indigenous Peoples to their lands, territories, and resources.



**DeJusticia and Forest Peoples Programme**

People of the Centre, Dejusticia and FPP: What does government-to-government dialogue mean in the Colombian Amazon? (Spanish only)



**Zero Tolerance Initiative**

**Zero Tolerance Initiative - First Regional Meeting of ZTI Latin America**

Human and Environmental Rights Defenders share their experiences at ZTI's first regional meeting in Ecuador.





# Financial summary

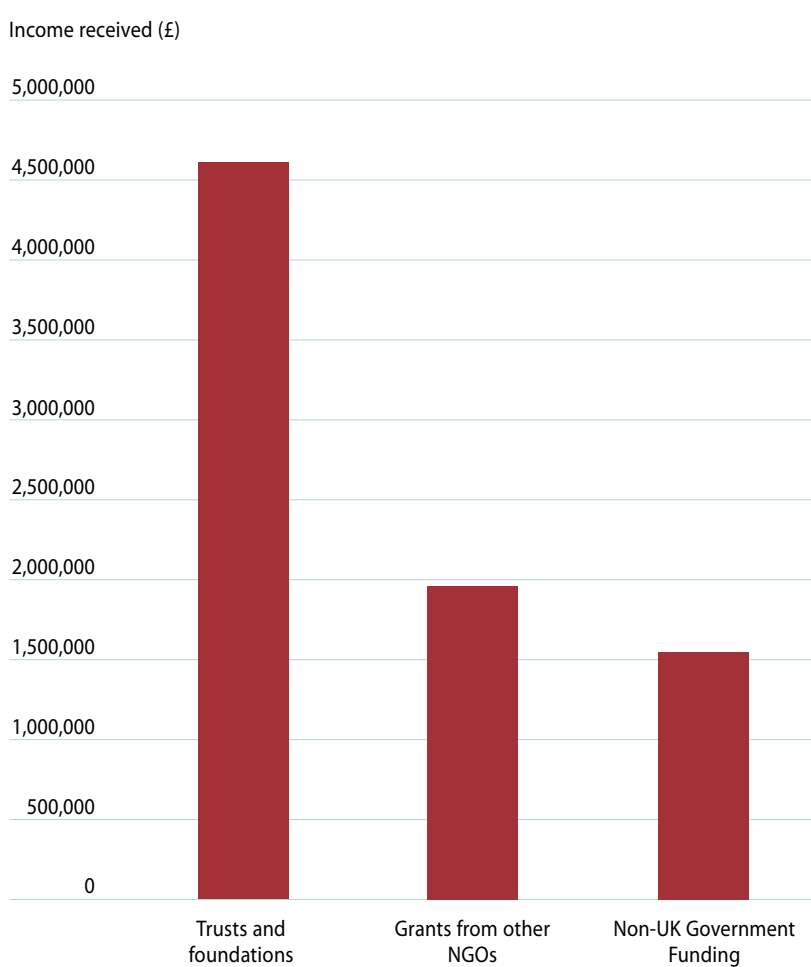
We offer our sincere thanks to all of our donors for their support for our programmes of work and institutional support in 2023. As with 2022, we entered 2023 in a relatively secure financial position, partly due to the ongoing multi-year funding grants from Ford Build, Arcus Foundation, File Foundation, Arcadia, SwedBio, CLUA, BMUV, Packard Foundation, Wellspring and Good Energies, which allow us to follow through the work from one year to the next with confidence but also gives space to focus on the work on the ground without the immediate concern of cliff edges in funding. However, to meet the demands of the work, fundraising continued as a priority during 2023 to replace the end of some of these long-term grants, as well as the one-year grants we receive. As a result, our overall income for 2023 grew to £8,237,000 particularly due to an expansion of our work in Indonesia, Thailand, East Africa, the Congo Basin and our focus on institutional strengthening.

The comparatively smaller grants that we receive importantly provide more flexibility to the work. We also highly value the growing unrestricted funding that we receive, which is essential in shoring up all the work and enables us to be responsive to urgent needs. We are very fortunate to be a recipient of a five-year Ford BUILD grant that began in 2022, which is allowing us to invest in measures at both an operational and strategic level but will also help to secure the work of FPP going forward.

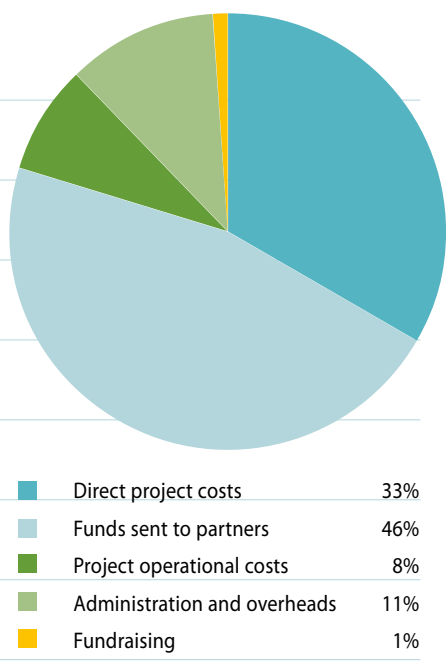
After the lifting of restrictions from the COVID pandemic, we have increased our activities at both the local and global level. The increased funding FPP received has also allowed us to expand our team, particularly in these areas. This ensured that during 2023 we were able to implement our mission and strengthen our operational and strategic organisational resilience.

Our financial statements are available through our website.

**FPP sources of funding 2023 – £8,237,000**



**FPP expenditure 2023 – £6,899,000**



# Board of trustees and staff

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- Séamus P Finn** Treasurer
- Richard Williams** Chair of Audit Committee
- Marie-Josée Artist**
- Lucy Erickson**
- Robie Halip** Deputy Chair
- Carol Kalafatic**
- Sarah Roberts**
- Patrica Borraz Fernández**
- Peter Kitelo**

**Staff**

**Key Management Personnel on FPP's Programme Coordination and Management Team (PCMT)**

- Tom Lomax** Director, Senior Lawyer
- Louise Henson** Managing Director
- Helen Tugendhat** Coordinator, Environmental Governance Programme
- Oda Almás Smith** Coordinator, Responsible Finance Programme
- Cathal Doyle** Coordinator, Legal and Human Rights Programme
- Anouska Perram** Senior Lawyer and Congo Basin Programme Coordinator
- Brian Rault** Institutional and Grants Finance Manager
- Tom Dixon** Communication and Media Manager

**FPP Staff**

- Patrick Anderson** Policy Advisor, Indonesia
- María del Rosario Arango Zambrano** Project Officer, Colombia
- Amelia Arreguin Prado** Project Officer
- Dalton Aweleka Gbapo** Project Officer
- Naomi Baird** Indonesia Programme Assistant and ZTI Project Officer
- Ligia Baracat** UK Policy Project Officer
- Yaizha Campanario Baque** Programme Assistant (LHRP and RFP)
- Clare Bracegirdle** Project Officer
- Joji Cariño** Senior Policy Advisor
- Marianne Chevé** Finance Officer
- Xilonem Clarke** Project Officer
- Marcus Colchester** Senior Policy Advisor
- Fiona Cottrell** Strategic Finance Manager
- Jane Dennett** Administration Assistant
- Lara Dominguez** Lawyer
- Jehovana Espinoza** Project Finance Officer
- Gavin Fielding** Project Officer and Finance Officer
- Maurizio Farhan Ferrari** Senior Policy Advisor



Gathering of FPP staff at the Annual General Meeting, July 2023

- Jason Gardiner** Junior Lawyer (Bernstein fellowship)
- Antoine Gibert** EU Policy and Advocacy officer
- Tom Griffiths** Senior Policy Advisor
- Josephine Haworth-Lee** Gender Project Officer
- Meg Hall** Head of Programme Engagement
- Abigail Hearn** Management Accounts and Project Finance Officer
- Kate Holberton** Programme Assistant, Congo Basin
- Arif Jamal** Finance Officer
- Suzanne Iloki** Finance Officer
- Frances Jenner** Communication and Media Officer
- Caroline de Jong** Policy Advisor
- Justin Kenrick** Senior Policy Advisor
- Chris Kidd** Policy Advisor
- Lassana Kone** Lawyer
- Cath Long** Policy Advisor
- Adam Lunn** ZTI Global Facilitator
- Angus MacInnes** Project Officer
- Lina Martínez** Administration Officer, Colombia
- Lan Mei** Lawyer and Indonesia Programme Coordinator
- Angela Paola Mera Mejía** Peru Project Officer
- Chantelle Murtagh** Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Lead; Project Manager
- Joel Missoka** Field Officer, Cameroon
- Kate Newman** Logistics and Administration Manager; Charity Secretary
- Stephen Nounah** Lawyer, Cameroon
- Macnight Nsioh** Country Lead, Cameroon
- Susana Núñez Lendo** Project Officer
- Julia Overton** Publications Coordinator
- Manjeet Panesar** Grant Finance Manager
- Matías Pérez Ojeda del Arco** Peru Advocacy Coordinator

- Agata Pilarz** Project Manager
- Jake Randall** Assistant Communication Officer
- Sarah Roberts** Finance Advisor
- Oscar Roberts** Finance Administration Support
- Tom Rowley** Mapping and Monitoring Officer
- Nelsith Sangama** Peru Project Officer
- Niya Seklemova** Digital Communication Officer
- Sally Taylor** Finance Officer
- Francesca Thornberry** Congo Basin Programme Coordinator (Maternity Cover)
- Nathalia Ulloa** Costa Rica Programme Coordinator
- Clare Whitmore** Technical Liaison Officer
- Audrey Versteegen** Mapping and Monitoring Officer
- Tom Younger** Peru Programme Coordinator and Policy Advisor

**Of Counsel**  
**Fergus MacKay**

**Associates**

In 2023 our group of Associates acted as advisors to our Board and Staff. Associates are experts in their field, and are invited, known and trusted allies of our work. We thank:

- Helen Newing**
- Jérémie Gilbert**
- Norman Jiwan**
- Conrad Feather**
- Catherine Clarke**
- Gordon Bennett**

**Volunteers and Interns**

We thank:  
**Anni Bangiev** (until September 2023)  
SLRC

Background photo: Newly built cultural and spiritual house at Salitre, Bribri Territory, Costa Rica. Credit: Nathalia Ulloa, FPP





# Forest Peoples Programme

Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) is a company limited by guarantee (England & Wales) Reg. No. 3868836, registered office address: 1c Fosseway Business Centre, Stratford Road, Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 9NQ, England & Wales Registered Charity No. 1082158

FPP holds Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC and has Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

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The illustrations on this back cover are:  
Left: *Hunting Charm, Iban Dayak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Drawing by Marcus Colchester, FPP.*  
Right: *Drawing of Ancestral Altar Guardian, Bahau Dayak, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Drawing by Marcus Colchester, FPP*

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