

# U.S. Agency for International Development Report to Congress on Programs in Forestry and the Conservation of Biodiversity During Fiscal Year 2021: Results and Funding

## Introduction

Pursuant to Sections 118(f) and 119(h) of Part I of Public Law 87-195, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) submits this report on our programming to conserve forests and biodiversity during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.

Billions of people benefit from wild species every day. According to a 2022 intergovernmental [assessment](#), one in five people on the planet rely on wild plants, algae, and fungi for food, medicine, income, and other purposes. But biodiversity loss, coupled with climate change, threatens to undermine global development progress, making USAID’s work to conserve natural systems and improve the lives of people who depend on them more important than ever.

Through support from Congressional appropriations in FY 2021, USAID worked in more than 60 countries to address the most pressing threats to biodiversity conservation, including those linked to other key sectoral priorities such as climate change, food security, and health. Guided by our [Biodiversity Policy](#), our cross-sectoral programming integrates conservation with other development goals to support the resilience of vulnerable and marginalized communities who depend on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems for food, jobs, and security. USAID recognizes the important role of Indigenous Peoples in biodiversity conservation as stewards of a wide range of critical ecosystems and works to ensure that they benefit from conservation programming and meet their own development objectives.

With deforestation and unsustainable land use driving habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss, and contributing to nearly one-quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, USAID’s biodiversity conservation programming helps to fight the climate crisis and build the resilience of people and ecosystems to climate impacts. As USAID Administrator Samantha Power noted, “conserving biodiversity and forests is one of the most important steps we can take to mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss while reducing the risk of disease spillover and potential future pandemics.” USAID, through its new [Climate Strategy](#) and the U.S. government’s [Plan to Conserve Global Forests](#), continues to work toward reversing alarming trends in deforestation by partnering with governments, the private sector, and communities to promote climate-smart agriculture, combat corruption and conservation crimes, and support good governance for the benefit of people and nature.

## Funding Overview

Table 1 presents a summary of USAID’s FY 2021 funding for biodiversity, combating wildlife trafficking, and forestry activities, by region and Operating Unit. USAID employs specific, strategic criteria to identify and fund biodiversity programming and ensure the Agency achieves conservation outcomes in biologically significant areas.

USAID conserves biodiversity in priority places—countries and regions designated as “Tier One” in USAID’s Biodiversity Policy—and integrates biodiversity considerations with other development objectives. USAID’s international biodiversity programs received \$319.75 million

during FY 2021, which financed activities in more than 60 countries. USAID allocated approximately 56 percent of these funds to 13 Tier One countries and regions, including Indonesia, Colombia, Brazil, and the Central African Regional Program for the Environment.

To combat wildlife trafficking, USAID invested \$55.59 million in FY 2021 funds to support the prevention or reduction of poaching and illegal trade in animals—including illegal fishing of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine species. USAID’s comprehensive strategy strengthens law enforcement from parks to ports, reduces consumer demand for illegal wildlife products, and builds international cooperation. USAID invested \$43.3 million in great ape conservation, including support for critical habitat for gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans. USAID’s forestry activities promote the conservation and sustainable management of forests. In FY 2021, USAID’s forestry investments totaled \$256.5 million in more than 50 countries, with \$249.1 million focused on tropical forests.

In addition to direct biodiversity funding, more than \$32 million in other USAID funding indirectly contributed to biodiversity conservation. For example, funding streams for natural resources and the environment reduce emissions from deforestation and the degradation of woodlands, and such programs manage and protect watersheds, fisheries, and mangrove forests.

### **Spotlight on Community-Based Conservation & Private Sector Engagement**

USAID investments are fighting the triple global emergencies of biodiversity loss, climate change, and disease emergence, while improving livelihoods and helping communities develop sustainably. In Liberia, under a five-year program, USAID worked with local governments and communities to conserve more than 54,000 hectares of biologically significant landscapes, through 11 Community Forest Management Agreements and three Community Policy Agreements, ensuring that conservation efforts can be sustained in the years to come.

Partnerships with the private sector are another vital tool for expanding economic growth while conserving biodiversity. In Brazil, in FY 2021 USAID developed more than 120 partnerships with 71 companies ranging from large technology firms like Google to local forest-based firms to conserve biodiversity over 13.2 million acres in the Amazon. The project also strengthened value chains for 52 Amazon products such as açai, Brazil nuts, and timber, benefiting nearly 79,000 people. In Mozambique, USAID partnered with Produtos Naturais and the Gorongosa Project to link coffee, cashew, and honey smallholder farmers with markets in seven of the nation’s largest cities. In Nepal, USAID supported a successful model of private sector engagement by purchasing group insurance to conserve community forests and to protect firefighters from fire-related injury and casualties.

In FY 2021, USAID awarded the first four community-based conservation awards in a new family of private sector partnerships under the Health, Ecosystems, and Agriculture for Resilient, Thriving Societies (HEARTH) program, which engages the private sector in cross-sectoral efforts to improve the well-being of people and the planet. As of May 2022, USAID has co-created 14 new partnerships with companies in agriculture, mining, tourism, and education in countries across Africa and Asia. These awards aim to accelerate progress toward biodiversity conservation, climate goals, health, education, and good governance.

### **Spotlight on Biodiversity & Forest Management**

Recognizing the intertwined nature of the biodiversity and climate change crises, USAID and its partners are finding solutions that support both biodiversity and climate targets, while mitigating deforestation and strengthening sustainable forest management. In India, USAID helped develop three forest management plans that resulted in an estimated 600,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions reduced or sequestered (equivalent to 129,000 cars taken off the road) and improved water and air quality for more than 500,000 households. In Zambia, USAID helped develop new land use and forest change maps to improve sustainable forest management and promote a policy environment that stimulates private sector investment.

USAID is working to support the sustainable management of the world's largest tropical forests in the Amazon Basin, the Congo Basin, and Southeast Asia. In the Congo Basin, improved management of more than 2.7 million hectares of forest, an area about the size of Hawaii, has prevented the release of 3.5 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually, the equivalent of taking more than 684,000 cars off the road. In the Amazon Basin, SERVIR, a joint initiative between USAID, NASA, and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, is strengthening the capacity of governments and civil society to use geospatial technologies and provides cost-effective monitoring tools to assess changes in forest cover. In Cambodia's Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, a USAID project to train rangers and community members on sustainable natural resources management and biodiversity conservation, resulted in improved management of 166,000 hectares and 581,860 metric tons of avoided carbon dioxide emissions (equivalent to taking 114,000 vehicles off the road for a year).

### **Spotlight on Conservation Crime**

Conservation crime fosters conflict and drives corruption, especially in poor and rural communities, reducing both safety and opportunities for legal livelihoods. Aligned with broader U.S. government initiatives, USAID implements a comprehensive approach to combat conservation crime including wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing, logging, and mining.

USAID combats conservation crime by targeting natural resource corruption and through the use of innovative technologies. In FY 2021, USAID partnered with the World Wildlife Fund to produce 40 reports, fact sheets, and other documents and to deliver 18 knowledge sharing events to more than 1,000 individuals worldwide on topics such as monitoring court cases to prevent corrupt verdicts and assessing corruption risks that undermine law enforcement action. On the technology front, in FY 2021, USAID partnered with TRAFFIC and the aviation sector to help develop a mobile reporting app, the Wildlife Sentinel, to empower airport transportation staff to anonymously report suspicions of wildlife trafficking to law enforcement.

Strengthening the rule of law is another essential tool to fight wildlife trafficking. In the Philippines, USAID trained more than 425 national and local government personnel and community members as wildlife enforcement officers. Globally, USAID's support to INTERPOL elevated the importance of wildlife crime as a transnational crime within police forces across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Empowering communities to conserve their natural resources through community monitoring is one key in the fight against conservation crime. In Bangladesh, USAID supported the

establishment of 32 community patrol groups and 13 elephant response teams, which rescued wildlife from poachers and intervened to protect crops from elephants. In the Congo Basin, communities patrolled more than 208,000 miles of protected areas in FY 2021, double the amount patrolled in the prior year.

In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, USAID is supporting implementation of the 2008 amendment to the U.S. Lacey Act that criminalized the importation of illegally sourced wood products into the United States. In FY 2021, the partnership increased stakeholder awareness of tools and progress to combat illegal logging, conducted training for government counterparts overseas, and continued developing timber reference databases that will help authorities and wood-products businesses identify tree species and places of origin.

## **Regional Overview**

### ***Africa***

USAID addresses biodiversity conservation through multi-sectoral activities that focus on forestry and sustainable landscapes, marine and wildlife management, and local community natural resource management. In Tanzania, USAID implements a program that both improves natural resource management and supports community family health in and around protected areas. In FY 2021, the program trained nearly 8,000 people from community groups in conservation and sustainable natural resource management, including monitoring chimpanzees and conducting patrols to discourage illegal activities in community lands. In northeast Madagascar, USAID restored nearly 1,000 hectares of habitat—an area about three times the size of Central Park in New York City—to maintain forest connectivity for wildlife migration and genetic diversity, enabling endangered species, such as lemurs, to adapt to climate change and other pressures.

More than 200 million Africans rely on fisheries for their primary source of protein, making sustainable management of that resource essential. In Malawi, USAID is helping to develop evidence-based, district-wide fisheries management plans, in conjunction with training fisheries association members, to better manage Lake Malawi's resources. In FY 2021, the Agency trained 7,500 fisheries association members and brought nearly 1.16 million hectares of Lake Malawi, an area about the size of Puerto Rico, under improved natural resources management. In Senegal, USAID's fisheries, biodiversity, and livelihoods activity promoted leadership among women, women's access to economic resources, and youth engagement. Direct support to female seafood processors reached 84 women's groups (nearly 1,500 women) with training and technical assistance on how to access market information, financial literacy, and processing technologies. The same project also supported the restoration of coastal mangroves, which are vital nurseries for many fish species.

### ***Asia***

Tracking changes in forest cover will help ensure that environmental safeguards and biodiversity conservation are the basis of Southeast Asia's long-term economic growth. In FY 2021, USAID introduced an interactive tool called the Deforestation App, which tracks forest cover change over the last 20 years using satellite imagery and infrastructure data from the Mekong Infrastructure Tracker geodatabase.

Fisheries are a critical food source globally and are under threat from illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. An estimated 24 percent of marine catch in the Pacific Ocean is unreported each year, leading to gross revenue losses of up to \$8.3 billion for the formal economy. In Bangladesh, in an effort to conserve hilsa fish, catfish, and non-commercial megafauna like sea turtles and dolphins, USAID supported research to determine peak spawning season to implement a ban period in certain fishing zones. USAID mobilized 400 community fish guards and trained an additional 30 people to combat IUU fishing in the region.

In the highlands of Papua New Guinea, USAID facilitated the signing of the country's first community-based Conservation Deed, a legally binding document signed by the leaders of eight clans, to conserve biodiversity and improve sustainable community use of natural resources. This deed represents 892 traditional landowners and created the Mt. Goplom Conservation Area, which covers 4,070 hectares of pristine montane rainforest.

USAID is also working to disrupt illegal wildlife trade. In FY 21, in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, USAID support trained more than 120 regional and international judicial leaders throughout the region; published tools to help investigators and prosecutors in building strong, successful cases against wildlife criminals; and collaborated with the ASEAN Chiefs of Police to incorporate combating wildlife trafficking (CWT) techniques across ASEAN countries. In addition, USAID supported a study of consumer demand in FY 2021 that demonstrated that those who had seen USAID-supported demand reduction campaigns in Thailand had a much lower intent to buy ivory in 2020 (37 percent) than they had two years earlier (79 percent).

### ***Latin America and the Caribbean***

Across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), USAID promotes the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources, reduces deforestation and increases landscape restoration, and combats corruption and conservation crimes. In FY 2021, USAID support for conservation enterprises and the development of value-added supply chains in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve led to the creation of 10,450 jobs and more than \$15 million of sales from forest and agroforestry enterprises. Over time, these communities are projected to earn more than \$3 million from these enterprises, along with social infrastructure investments, providing them with a sustainable and stable source of income.

USAID also prioritizes engagement with Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendent communities, women, and other marginalized groups who are often the most dependent on natural resources-based livelihoods and therefore the most vulnerable. Along the Honduran coast, USAID supported Miskitu Indigenous Territorial Councils in developing a management plan to more sustainably manage Caratasca Lagoon resources, and produced communications materials promoting sustainable fishing practices in the local Miskitu language. USAID efforts also led to women playing more influential roles in fishery and biocommerce boards.

In the Amazon region, USAID improved the management of 1.47 million hectares of biologically significant habitat by supporting Indigenous Peoples in territorial planning processes, development of good management practices, and creation of Indigenous enterprises

with environmental and social standards. In FY 2021, USAID trained members of Indigenous communities in Brazil to monitor forestry activities in their territories, increasing their security in the fight against illegal logging. In addition, USAID is also helping ensure Indigenous voices are heard on a regional scale. In Colombia, with USAID's support, the National Indigenous Federation of the Amazon participated in sessions of the Amazon Regional Roundtable, where recommendations on land use management are made to governmental bodies.

In Peru, USAID provided data, guidance, and technical support to the national Ministries of Environment, Agriculture, and Production to reduce forest loss and ecosystem degradation from illegal gold mining, reduce mining-related environmental mercury emissions, and reforest publicly protected areas destroyed by illegal mining. The new methods for accelerating reforestation were adopted by Peru's National Parks Service.

**Table 1: USAID’s FY 2021 funding for Biodiversity, Combating Wildlife Trafficking, and Forestry Activities**

<b>Operating Unit (OU) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)</b>	<b>Investments in Biodiversity, during Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, in US\$<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Investments in Combating Wildlife Trafficking, during FY 2021, in US\$<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Investments in Forests &amp; Forestry, during FY 2021, in US\$<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Biodiversity Directive Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>321,500,000</b>		
<b>Total Funding for all USAID’s OUs<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>319,750,000</b>	<b>55,592,280</b>	<b>254,795,902</b>
<i>of which, Total USAID Funding in Tropical Countries<sup>4</sup></i>	311,750,000	54,842,280	249,145,902
Total Funding in Countries and Regions Designated as “Tier One” Under <a href="#">USAID’s Biodiversity Policy</a> (highlighted blue)	180,400,000	30,600,000	145,941,054
Transfers to U.S. Government Partner Agencies <sup>5</sup>	32,650,000	9,800,000	21,120,000
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>			
USAID Africa Regional	4,250,000	300,000	750,000
USAID Central Africa Regional	43,000,000	11,000,000	30,146,520
- <i>USAID funding</i>	32,500,000	5,500,000	22,146,520
- <i>Directed to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)</i>	10,500,000	5,500,000	8,000,000
East Africa Regional	5,000,000	2,000,000	400,000
Southern Africa Regional	8,000,000	3,500,000	500,000
West Africa Regional	8,000,000	2,000,000	5,465,000
Republic of Ethiopia	2,000,000	0	912,450
Republic of Ghana	2,000,000	0	0
Republic of Kenya	9,000,000	3,800,000	950,000
Republic of Liberia	5,500,000	0	5,250,000
Republic of Madagascar	7,250,000	500,000	3,650,000
Republic of Malawi	3,000,000	300,000	1,850,000
Republic of Mozambique	7,000,000	2,800,000	3,000,000
Republic of Senegal	2,000,000	0	0

United Republic of Tanzania	7,500,000	2,000,000	1,475,095
Republic of Uganda	4,500,000	700,000	1,120,000
Republic of Zambia	3,000,000	750,000	2,210,000
Republic of Zimbabwe	500,000	0	250,000
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa Total</b>	<b>121,500,000</b>	<b>29,650,000</b>	<b>57,928,970</b>
<b>USAID Asia</b>			
Asia Regional	1,750,000	500,000	762,004
Pacific Islands Regional	8,000,000	300,000	7,349,400
Regional Development Mission for Asia	7,900,000	3,500,000	4,438,000
People's Republic of Bangladesh	9,875,000	800,000	12,375,000
Kingdom of Cambodia	5,700,000	700,000	6,823,246
Republic of India	3,000,000	0	9,000,000
Republic of Indonesia	17,000,000	2,000,000	11,332,000
Democratic Federal Republic of Nepal	8,000,000	750,000	5,650,000
Republic of the Philippines	12,000,000	2,600,000	7,241,322
Socialist Republic of Vietnam	10,000,000	3,500,000	10,163,717
<b>USAID Asia Total</b>	<b>83,225,000</b>	<b>14,650,000</b>	<b>75,134,689</b>
<b>USAID Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)</b>			
LAC Regional	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
South America Regional	10,500,000	500,000	9,085,000
Caribbean Development Program	4,500,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Central America Regional	2,000,000	0	1,075,000
Federative Republic of Brazil	17,000,000	500,000	17,000,000
Republic of Colombia	19,750,000	0	34,750,000
Republic of Ecuador	4,000,000	1,750,000	3,700,000
Republic of Guatemala	6,600,000	450,000	6,196,000
- <i>USAID Funding</i>	4,350,000	250,000	5,796,000
- <i>Directed to DOI</i>	2,250,000	200,000	400,000
Republic of Haiti	0	0	4,665,000
Republic of Honduras	6,075,000	0	200,000
United Mexican States	0	0	11,887,500
Republic of Peru	11,500,000	400,000	8,449,500
<b>USAID Latin America and the Caribbean Total</b>	<b>82,925,000</b>	<b>4,600,000</b>	<b>99,008,000</b>



<b>USAID Central Bureaus</b>			
Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI)	32,100,000	6,692,280	22,413,648
- USAID Funding	12,350,000	2,592,280	6,693,648
- <i>Directed to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, DOI</i>	12,500,000	4,100,000	6,500,000
- <i>Directed to U.S. Forest Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture)</i>	7,250,000	0	6,220,000
<b>USAID Central Bureaus Total</b>	<b>32,100,000</b>	<b>6,692,280</b>	<b>22,413,648</b>
<b>U.S. Department of State<sup>6</sup></b>			
Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) <sup>7</sup>	1,750,000	0	1,750,000
<b>U.S. Department of State Total</b>	<b>1,750,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,750,000</b>

### Funding Table Notes

<sup>1</sup> Biodiversity funding levels and attributions to Combating Wildlife Trafficking and Forests & Forestry are accurate as of 12 August 2022.

<sup>2</sup> This total includes USAID Biodiversity funding and State/OES funding for Lacey Act implementation.

<sup>3</sup> These budget allocations or attributions are USAID-only. They do not include the State/OES allocation of Biodiversity funds and the associated attribution of these funds to Forests and Forestry.

<sup>4</sup> A total for Tropical Countries is calculated to meet requirements for reporting on Tropical Forests. All operating units focus on tropical countries except USAID/Nepal.

<sup>5</sup> The FY21 Appropriations Act directs USAID to transfer environment funds to specific agencies, noted in the table for Central Africa Regional mission, Guatemala mission, and DDI Bureau.

<sup>6</sup> Department of State Combating Wildlife Trafficking directive funds, and attributions of non-directive funds to Biodiversity, CWT, or Forests and Forestry, are not represented in this funding table.

<sup>7</sup> Department of State/OES receives half of the Biodiversity funds designated for meeting a \$3.5 million directive to help stakeholders in partner countries comply with the 2008 amendment to the U.S. Lacey Act, requiring plant products including those from trees (wood, paper, etc.) to be sourced legally in the country of origin. All of this work is attributable to the Forests and Forestry column.