

2025 Annual Report

Progress Despite Pressure

Forests, People, Climate (FPC) is a collaborative of philanthropic funders, civil society, and community-based organizations seeking to halt and reverse tropical deforestation while supporting just, sustainable development.

Table of Contents

Protecting Tropical Forests: High Stakes and High Ambitions	2
Report Highlights	5
Forests, People, and Climate in 2025	
Context and Progress	6
What FPC Funds: Our Three Pathways	9
All Eyes Were on Brazil in 2025	12
Mobilization and Recognition Amid Setbacks	13
Brazil's Emerging Socio-bioeconomy Agenda	18
What to watch in 2026	21
Collective Action in Indonesia	22
Carbon Market Reopening: Governance On Paper	23
Data, Disaster, and Collective Action	25
The 1.4 Million Hectare Question	27
What to watch in 2026	28
Forging Pathways for Committed Partners in the Congo Basin	29
Shifting Funding Practices	30
Scaling Up Fit-for-Purpose Regranting Architecture	32
Two Legal Breakthroughs, One Long Road in the DRC	34
Focusing on the Mining-Forests-Rights Nexus	35
What to watch in 2026	39
Funding Snapshot: Investing in Durable Solutions	40
Looking Forward with Gratitude to FPC Partners	44
Endnotes	46



Protecting Tropical Forests: High Stakes and High Ambitions

Dear Friends of FPC,

For many of us, our connection to forests is shaped by experiences in the places we know and love. We think of a trail, a creek running through the woods, a familiar landscape where we experience the wonder of nature. Across cultures and geographies, forests offer opportunities for reflection, sustenance, and connection.

These same forests also help regulate the climate systems on which we all depend. They store carbon, shape rainfall, cool landscapes, and make the goal of limiting warming possible. Nearly every credible climate pathway depends on forests remaining standing and healthy. These places we love are essential to the future we are trying to protect.

The climate headlines of 2025 made it difficult to remain optimistic, and the geopolitical fragmentation we see today will make globally coordinated action harder. But the coalitions working to defend forests remain one of the climate field's most resilient achievements. They were built over decades to continue advancing solutions even when political conditions shift.

When multilateral systems and top-down solutions falter, the work of building durable, sustaining coalitions on the ground becomes the more reliable path. Our partners have spent decades doing exactly that, and the depth of presence and commitment they have built does not reset with every election. They have weathered storms before, and remain the leaders who will carry us through this climate emergency.

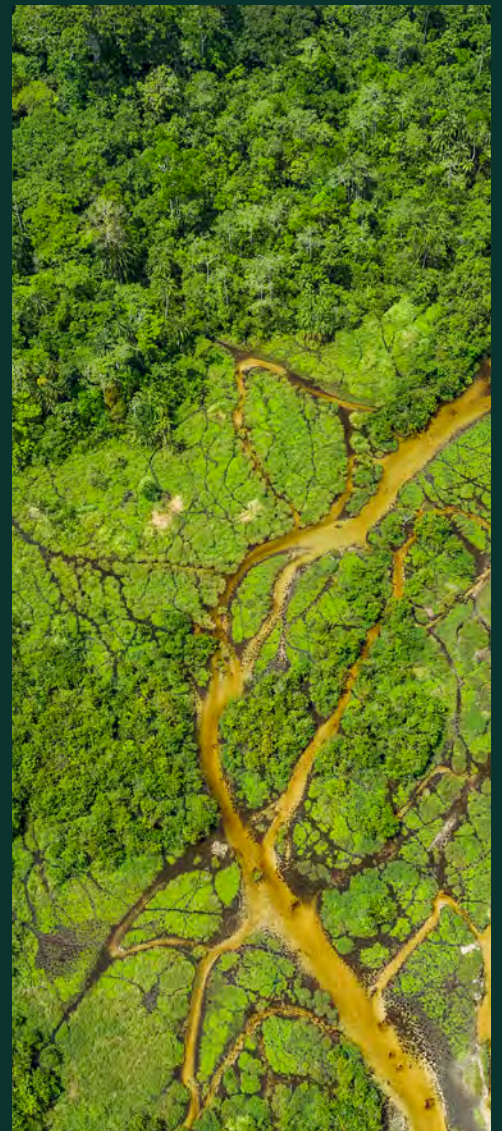


Photo: iStock.com / Guenterguni

The results last year were meaningful. Brazil demarcated more Indigenous land than in the previous ten years combined. At the COP30 climate negotiations hosted in Belém, Brazil, 5,000 Indigenous representatives shaped the terms of the conversation in ways that would have been unimaginable a decade ago, and Indigenous women and youth gained increased visibility. For Afro-descendant Peoples, COP30 built on gains from the 2024 biodiversity negotiations in Cali, Colombia, with their rights and roles named across multiple decision texts for the first time in climate negotiations. Communities in the Congo Basin now have clear, direct channels for financial support. And at New York Climate Week, thirty-four governments formally acknowledged, for the first time, that subsidies, debt, and tax systems must be reformed for forests to survive.

These are examples of hard fought gains, built over years. Researchers produced evidence that made denial harder and carefully considered how to best communicate that evidence. Locally relevant organizations organized public support and developed the capacity to act when political windows opened. Funders patiently supported the hard work of strengthening institutions to advance lasting change.

We know it is possible to arrest deforestation. We have evidence of what works. To halt and reverse forest loss while advancing just, sustainable development, the work ahead requires change across three interconnected systems. We must protect forests and those who have defended them for generations, make standing forests more financially valuable than those that are cut down, and build broad support for strong public policy. No single organization can shift these systems alone. FPC exists to mobilize resources, align strategies, and shift power in order to enable these systemic shifts.

As official development assistance and multilateral climate finance contract, private philanthropy has become one of the few sources of long-term, coordinated support that can move independently of political cycles. FPC is still in its



Photo: Priscila Tapajowara / Mídia Indígena



early years, but in 2025 the collaborative and its members continued to grow this long-term funding approach, making US\$277.5 million in grants—up over 80% from 2024.

This report tells stories the 2025 headlines overlooked. They are stories of resilience, adaptation, and steady progress in a field navigating disruption and building toward something more durable.

Thank you for supporting the power of collective action.



Lindsey Allen
Executive Director
Forests, People, Climate



Photo: barkah wibowo on Unsplash



Report Highlights

36%

drop in tropical primary forest loss in 2025, the largest single-year decline on record.

34

governments at New York Climate Week, formally acknowledged that subsidies, debt, and tax systems must be reformed for forests to survive.

Photo: iStock.com / Jagannath Karmakar



70,000+

people from Indigenous, Afro-descendant, local community, social, and environmental movements joined the People's Summit in the city of Belém.

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1.4M

hectares committed to Indigenous communities by the Indonesian government's at COP30.



\$1.8B

was committed by the Forest Tenure Funders Group's COP30 Pledge.

Photo: AdobeStock / Roger de la Harpe

\$135M

was committed by FPC in alignment with the pledge.



Forests, People, and Climate in 2025

Context and Progress

Forests are fundamental to any credible path to limiting global warming. Globally, they hold roughly 870 gigatonnes of carbon, nearly double all fossil fuel emissions since the start of the industrial era,¹ making their protection one of the most consequential climate interventions available. Countries have also built forests into their climate commitments, which collectively rely on forests to deliver roughly a quarter of planned emission reductions under the Paris Agreement.² The emissions pathways that keep a stable climate within reach all assume that forests continue functioning as major carbon sinks.³ Tropical forests in particular act as a brake on climate change, absorbing carbon and buying time to decarbonize the parts of the global economy that are hardest to transition.⁴ Climate impacts grow more severe with every fraction of a degree, and forests must play a role in closing that gap.⁵

Beyond their role as a climate solution, forests are home to the Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and local communities (IP, AD, and LC) who have stewarded them for generations. IP, AD, and LC are consistently the most effective stewards of the world's forests, but the enabling conditions for continued stewardship remain inadequate. Formal legal recognition extends to less than half (43%) of the land held and used by Indigenous Peoples and local communities.⁶ IP, AD, and LC women and youth face even greater obstacles to land recognition. Insecure tenure and inadequate direct finance are mutually reinforcing barriers that systematically undermine the actors most capable of delivering lasting forest protection.



Photo: iStock.com / Frank Ramspott



In 2025, sustained advocacy by IP, AD, and LC leaders and their allies produced two major commitments to address both of these barriers:

- The Forest Tenure Funders Group's COP30 Pledge committed US\$1.8 billion to support IP, AD, and LC land and forest tenure rights from 2026–2030—endorsed by 39 government and philanthropic donors.⁷ FPC committed US\$135 million in alignment with this pledge, and several FPC member foundations directly endorsed it.
- The FCLP's Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment brought 14 countries and one sub-national government together around a commitment to collectively recognize and strengthen 160 million hectares of Indigenous Peoples and local community lands by 2030.⁸

The core idea behind FPC is that the health of forest ecosystems cannot be separated from people, power, and institutions. Forests are lost when the incentives to clear them are more powerful than those protecting them. UNEP estimates that annual investment in forests must more than triple from US\$84 billion in 2023 to US\$300 billion by 2030 to keep climate goals within reach⁹ but the financing gap is instead growing as capital continues to flow in the opposite direction. Harmful subsidies outweigh green forest finance by over 200:1, and private financial institutions provided an estimated US\$8.9 trillion in active financing to companies with high deforestation risk as of late 2024.¹⁰

Closing that gap requires reforming the financial architecture that drives deforestation, and in 2025, coordinated advocacy made strides in that direction. At New York Climate Week, the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership announced the Forest Finance Roadmap for Action, bringing together global North and South governments around six priority actions—including supply chain reform, high-integrity jurisdictional forest credits, and sovereign debt management—that have not frequently been present in the work of forest-focused groups.¹¹ The Tropical Forest Forever Facility, which aims to mobilize US\$125 billion

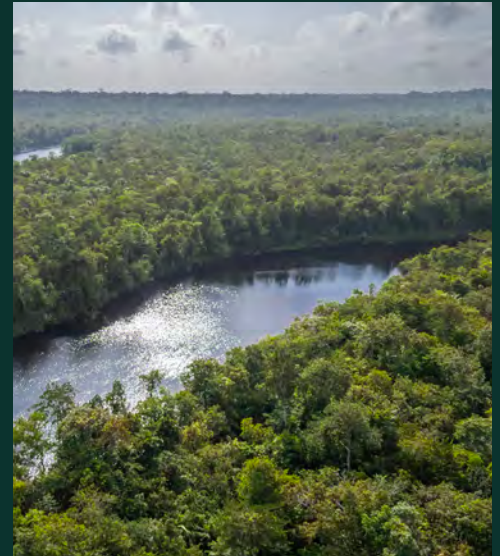


Photo: iStock.com / Tarcisio Schneider

41%
reduction in primary
forest loss across
Brazil in 2025.



to compensate countries for preserving tropical forests, announced an initial US\$6.7 billion at COP30, along with a commitment to allocate a minimum of 20% of payments to Indigenous Peoples and local communities¹²

After years of record losses of tropical forests, 2025 showed us that there is hope to slow down deforestation.

Following 2024's record-breaking loss of 6.7 million hectares of primary rainforest (an area the size of Panama), tropical primary forest loss fell to 4.3 million hectares in 2025, down 36%.¹³ Much of that year-over-year decline reflected the receding of 2024's extreme fire season, but the more significant signal is in the non-fire numbers. Several tropical forest countries that strengthened forest governance through policy, law enforcement, and corporate commitments saw reduced or stabilized forest loss in 2025 (including Brazil and Indonesia).¹⁴

The 2025 data demonstrate that the right combination of policy, finance, and sustained pressure can change the trajectory, but translating this into durable global progress requires working across scales and sustaining the effort beyond any single political moment. The global commitments secured in 2025 are important, but fragile. Implementation will require lasting political will, institutional capacity that takes years to build, and safeguards that are only as strong as the accountability systems behind them.

FPC exists because no small group of organizations can shift the systems that determine whether forests stand or fall. Shifting the financial incentives that make deforestation profitable, securing the rights of the people who protect forests most effectively, and building the political conditions for durable policy require a collaborative that connects global to local and outlasts political cycles.



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The numbers behind the story

To keep track of collective progress of forest, people, and climate issues, FPC monitors ten Global Measures, available [here](#).

What FPC Funds:

Our Three Pathways

FPC's funding moves along a set of interconnected pathways. The approach rests on three reinforcing conditions: tropical forests survive when the people who steward them have secure rights, when the economics favor standing forests over cleared ones, and when the political conditions for durable action are sustained over time.



Safeguard Tropical Forests and the Communities Stewarding Them



The first pathway is the most direct: protect forests by protecting the people, governance systems, and institutional conditions that make protection possible. For FPC, this means securing land and resource rights for Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and local communities, strengthening the forest governance and law enforcement systems, and protecting and restoring the critical ecosystems most at risk. But it does not begin and end there. Territorial protection works best when paired with the economic conditions that make stewardship viable: sustainable livelihoods and local economies rooted in healthy forests rather than extracting from them. It also requires building the organizational infrastructure that allows local groups to access conservation finance, engage with institutions, and hold them accountable. Hard-won rights are reversible when the people who secured them cannot organize, advocate, or sustain political pressure over time.

Shift Finance and Markets to Favor Standing Forests



The global financial system, as currently designed, rewards forest clearance and penalizes forest protection. Agricultural commodity production drives the majority of tropical deforestation,¹⁵ and the banks, subsidy structures, and trade systems that finance it dwarf the resources flowing to protection.¹⁶ For FPC, shifting this logic means simultaneous work on supply chains, carbon markets, climate finance flows, and the financial architecture itself—the debt, tax, and subsidy rules that lock forest-rich countries into extraction rather than enabling forest-positive economies. Without changing these structural incentives, project-level forest protection gains will always be swimming against the current.



Strengthen Public Support and Advance Strong Policy



The political and communications infrastructure that makes the first two pathways possible is critical. Policies protecting forests and community rights require political will to pass and political durability to survive. Yet, broader enabling conditions that support this work, such as organizational strengthening, protection of civic space, and the capacity of civil society to coordinate and respond are often challenging to measure and easy to underinvest in. FPC's support for independent journalism, civil society research, strategic communications, coalition-building, and other system-level functions helps ensure that evidence reaches decision-makers, public pressure reaches markets, and the political case for forests is kept alive across cycles of volatility and backlash. With multilateral climate frameworks under pressure, rising political headwinds in key forest countries, and the ever-present risk of policy reversal, building this infrastructure is an essential prerequisite.



Photo: Joel Redman / If Not Us Then Who





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All eyes Were on Brazil in 2025



Despite facing headwinds in environmental legislation and community protections, Brazil entered the COP30 climate talks it hosted in Belém with impressive results. 🌿

Deforestation fell by more than 11% in both the Amazon and nearby Cerrado ecosystems from August 2024 to July 2025.¹⁷ In the Amazon, this represents the fourth consecutive year of decline and a 50% reduction in deforestation over the past four years.¹⁸ COP30 also saw a historic mobilization by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and local communities in Belém. Meanwhile, the socio-bioeconomy agenda that seeks to advance food security, agroecology, and low-carbon job creation, gained significant momentum at COP30 and in Brazilian national policy, offering a longer-term economic vision aligned with forest protection.

11%

Deforestation fell by more than 11% in both the Amazon and Cerrado. 🌿



Mobilization and Recognition Amid Setbacks

In 2025, the Brazilian Amazon became a focal point for both the momentum and the fragility of forest governance. Global attention intensified as the world prepared to gather in Belém for COP30, while domestic legislative and regulatory setbacks weakened protections built over decades by forest communities and civil society. But the year also showed the strength of existing solutions, as deforestation continued to decline, and civil society mobilized to defend environmental protections and keep forest protection on the political agenda.

In July, Brazil's Congress passed sweeping legislation that significantly simplified and reduced in scope the country's environmental licensing framework, enabling projects with environmental and social impacts to proceed through simplified, self-declaratory procedures and, in some cases, stripping mandatory consultation protections from Indigenous and traditional communities.¹⁹ The constitutionality of the new legislation was questioned at the Supreme Court.

On a different front, the Soy Moratorium, one of the greatest transnational conservation campaigning successes over the last couple of decades, is at risk. Established in 2006, the Moratorium is a voluntary agreement whereby major soy traders committed not to source soybeans from deforested lands. In early 2026, legislative changes in the Amazon state of Mato Grosso eliminated government subsidies for companies taking part in the moratorium. Consequently, the very same traders that signed the Moratorium withdrew from it.²⁰ Despite being two decades old, the agreement also faces a new lobby-driven investigation by Brazil's competition authority, brought after complaints from agribusiness groups, over alleged anti-competitiveness.²¹ National and international efforts are now underway to defend the Moratorium and keep it in place.

Civil society mobilized to defend environmental protections and keep forest protection on the political agenda.



Amid those challenges, land ownership continues to be a source of conflict. A large share of lands occupied and stewarded by Indigenous Peoples lack legal recognition, and even already-recognized territories face mounting challenges to their protected status. Although Indigenous rights are protected by Brazil's constitution, those protections are under sustained attack. At the center of these efforts is the Marco Temporal,²² a legal thesis that would restrict the designation of new Indigenous territories and open more land to industrial activity and deforestation. Although Brazil's Supreme Court has declared the thesis unconstitutional, ongoing efforts to reintroduce it leave Indigenous communities vulnerable to illegal occupation, land conflicts, and erosion of constitutional protections.²³

5,000+

Indigenous Peoples attended the COP30 conference in Belém, Brazil. ●●



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Photo: iStock.com / Tarcisio Schneider

The same communities most affected by these developments also organized, negotiated, and claimed new ground at COP30 in November. The conference—held in Belém, the “gateway to the Amazon”—marked a major opportunity to spotlight the challenges the Amazon faces and the needs of those who inhabit it. Many civil society organizations, including FPC's partners, were central to this organizing effort, supporting the coalitions, convenings, and advocacy strategies that shaped how forest communities and civil society engaged at the COP.

800+

Indigenous representatives participated in COP30 negotiations. ●●



Over 5,000 Indigenous Peoples attended the conference, with over 800 Indigenous negotiators from Brazil and around the world participating directly in Blue Zone debates—more than double the previous record for Indigenous representatives in the Blue Zone.²⁴ The People’s Summit, held in parallel, brought together more than 70,000 participants from Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community organizations alongside broader social and environmental movements.²⁵ The Yaku Mama Flotilla helped bring visibility to Indigenous leaders, especially women and youth, as they traveled along the Amazon River to Belém.²⁶ The Global South House, led by Global South stakeholders, including FPC partners, created a dedicated space for these actors to shape an agenda grounded in their own priorities and pathways.

70,000+

people from Indigenous, Afro-descendant, local community, social, and environmental movements joined the People’s Summit in the city of Belém. ●●



Photo: Xuthoria Creative Commons 4.0

COP30 also marked a significant win for the formal recognition of Afro-descendants. These communities, whose ancestors formed settlements of formerly enslaved people, have lived in and relied on forests for generations, and have a strong track record of forest protection. Their territories show up to 55% lower deforestation rates than comparable sites.²⁷ Building on the milestone recognition of Afro-descendants’ role in nature protection at CBD COP16, the bi-annual UN biodiversity conference, in 2024, Afro-descendant

organizations secured further gains at COP30. Notably, they were included in the Belém Declaration on Hunger, Poverty, and Human-Centered Climate Action and in the UNFCCC's Just Energy Transition Program, the first direct reference to enhancing equitable access to climate finance for people of African descent within the UNFCCC process.²⁸ The work of connecting and consolidating these gains across the UN Climate Change and Biodiversity agendas continues.

COP30 saw unprecedented recognition and participation of IP, AD, and LC—the result of decades of work to increase their visibility. Women and youth from these groups also gained ground, though they continue to face significant barriers to meaningful participation in decision-making. Meanwhile, a fourth consecutive year of declining Amazonian deforestation shows that collective efforts to stop forest loss are working. The Brazilian Amazon showed us that forest communities and their allies can build international legitimacy and shape global agendas, even as they face domestic setbacks to rights and environmental protection. Our task now is to scale these strategies so that the wins of the past year continue in the years ahead.



Photo: Xuthoria Creative Commons 4.0



Catalytic Capital for the Agricultural Transition Fund

One of the more concrete structural innovations to emerge from COP30 was the launch of the Catalytic Capital for the Agricultural Transition fund (CCAT) in Brazil. Managed by VOX Capital and advised by The Nature Conservancy, CCAT launched with an anchor commitment of US\$50 million from the Moore Foundation, Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, Instituto Arapyaú, Porticus, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, and others. Brazil has 100 million hectares of degraded pastureland capable of meeting future global demand for beef and soy, if producers can access the financing needed to restore it.²⁹ Most of that land operates at only 30% of its productivity potential, not because the agronomic case for restoration is weak, but because the financial case hasn't been made. CCAT is designed to make this financial case.

Most producers in Brazil lack access to the long-term, flexible financing needed to implement improved practices and rehabilitate degraded land. By deploying investment tools designed to reduce risk including subordinated debt, guarantees, and concessional capital, CCAT aims to unlock US\$800 million in commercial investment by 2028, with a longer-term goal of mobilizing US\$10 billion in total capital by 2030.³⁰ CCAT offers "mezzanine" financing designed to bridge smaller operations up to the scale and criteria required to access Brazil's existing rural credit programs, unlocking public financing that is largely out of reach for most producers. The logic connects directly to FPC's Brazilian Amazon strategy: productive intensification on degraded land, rather than expansion into standing forests, is the economic complement to territorial protection.



Photo: iStock.com / Paralaxis

Brazil's Emerging Socio-bioeconomy Agenda

For forest communities across Brazil, the economy is inseparable from the forest itself and does not need to be a driver of destruction. Socio-bioeconomy works to build on this reality, generating economic activity through local products while centering the cultural, social, and territorial needs of communities. In Brazil, this means forest economies built on products like açaí, Brazil nuts, cacao, rubber, and guaraná, goods rooted in centuries of Indigenous and traditional land stewardship. A WRI study found that fully

\$8.3B

could be generated per year across the nine Brazilian Amazon states. ●●



Photos: iStock.com / Parallaxis

developing the Amazon bioeconomy could add US\$8.3 billion to GDP per year across the nine Brazilian Amazon states and generate 312,000 additional jobs, particularly benefiting Black and Indigenous communities.³¹ With 83% of deforestation in the Amazon driven by demand for beef, soy, and mining, socio-bioeconomy offers an alternative to extraction that communities can govern on their own terms.³²

Brazilian socio-bioeconomy has gained traction in national and international forums. In 2023, Brazil established its first federal Secretariat of Bioeconomy,³³ and in 2024 launched its first national bioeconomy strategy and made bioeconomy a centerpiece of its G20 presidency.³⁴ This

312,000

new jobs could be generated, particularly benefiting Black and Indigenous communities. ●●



work carried forward into 2025 through the launch of the Bioeconomy Challenge, which aims to translate high-level principles into concrete strategies with a dedicated unit on socio-bioeconomy.³⁵ At the national level, Brazil's National Bioeconomy Development Plan (PNDBio) was approved in March 2026 following a long participatory process that included public consultations and regional workshops.³⁶ The plan explicitly prioritizes traditional communities, family farmers, and Indigenous Peoples, with a strong emphasis on value chains tied to sociobiodiversity products. Subnational governments across the Amazon are also advancing their own socio-bioeconomy policies.

FPC funders supported a range of Amazonian socio-bioeconomy efforts in 2025, helping develop work across the region. **IMAFLOA's** Origens Brasil network is building ethical trade and traceability systems for non-timber forest products from Indigenous lands and conservation units, while **Instituto Interelos** is developing açai and fish farming value chains in the Verde para Sempre extractive reserve in Pará. Across the broader Pan-Amazon, **Conexsus** is working in six countries to improve public policies and expand markets for sociobiodiversity products. **WRI Brasil** supports the Pan-

63+

organizations from over 20 countries joined Brazil's Bioeconomy Challenge at COP30, committing to turn bioeconomy principles into measurable action by 2028. ●●



Photo: Priscila Tapajowara / If Not Us Then Who

Amazon Network for the Bioeconomy, and **ÓSocioBio** is systematizing data on sociobiodiversity economies to inform governance and broaden institutional engagement—building the market systems and knowledge base that will determine whether PNDBio’s ambitions reach the communities it is designed to serve.

These efforts do not just represent wins for specific communities, but are part of a systemic solution. The socio-bioeconomy offers a viable alternative to deforestation-driven growth, ensuring a green and fair transition to a more sustainable and equitable development model in the Amazon.

The socio-bioeconomy is helping redefine growth in the Amazon: sustainable, equitable, and deforestation-free.



Photo: iStock.com / Paralaxis



Photo: iStock.com / Anna Carolina Negri



What to watch in 2026

▪ **Can socio-bioeconomy advance faster after COP30?**

After socio-bioeconomy was recognized as a climate solution at COP30, the Bioeconomy Challenge and the Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030 are key opportunities we are organizing around to leverage financing and political will toward expanding socio-bioeconomy. This means moving from a near-term transition in the Amazon to a broader shift away from extractive development models worldwide.

▪ **How will the link between transition minerals, mining, and Indigenous rights be governed?**

The energy transition's demand for minerals is driving extractive pressure into areas that overlap heavily with Indigenous and traditional territories across the Amazon. Brazil's Congress has a two-year window to define rules around mining in Indigenous lands. How that regulatory process unfolds, and whether civil society can shape it toward rights-respecting frameworks, is one of the most consequential governance questions in the region. Ensuring communities' rights to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for these projects is essential. FPC will continue to support civil society to uphold rights where regulations fall short, while also continuing to advance supply chain reform to reduce demand for extraction.

▪ **How can a strong, resilient and diverse transnational advocacy coalition be reactivated to effectively prevent further soy expansion in the Amazon?**

The world has changed dramatically since the Soy Moratorium was established in 2006, and so has the operating environment in which civil society organizations work. Upholding the key principles that made the Soy Moratorium a success will require effective coordination across the supply chain, from local to transnational organizations. FPC is working to organize funders and support our partners in securing the Soy Moratorium and to ensure a strong, collaborative, and strategic path forward if the Moratorium is not upheld. This is particularly critical at a time of fragmented public attention, strong corporate pushback, and limiting financial constraints for those trying to protect the Amazon from soy expansion as a driver of further deforestation.



Collective Action in Indonesia

Photo: Kynan Tegar / If Not Us Then Who



In 2025, Indonesia saw movement on all three of the systems FPC works to shift: financial incentives for standing forests, the rights of the people who protect them, and the governance conditions that make progress durable. 🌱

Indonesia reopened its carbon market in 2025 with stronger rules and a new governance framework, and six provinces registered under the leading jurisdictional REDD+ standard, ART TREES, which is designed to verify emission reduction credits through rigorous standards for monitoring, accounting, and transparency. At COP30, Indonesia pledged to recognize an additional 1.4 million hectares of Indigenous Peoples' territories. A civil society network built deliberately over two years mobilized across sectors for a swift response when Cyclone Senyar struck Sumatra in November. Despite intensifying threats, the developments of 2025 have laid the groundwork for lasting change in Indonesia's forest sector if the momentum behind them is sustained.

1.4M

hectares of Indigenous Peoples' territories pledged to be recognized. 🌱





Carbon Market Reopening: Governance On Paper

In October 2025, Presidential Regulation 110/2025 reopened Indonesia’s international carbon market after a four-year moratorium.³⁷ It was a calculated bet to re-enter on Indonesia’s own terms, with a nationally-redesigned framework. The regulation established a centralized Carbon Unit Registry to prevent double-counting and elevated coordination to the Coordinating Minister level—creating the institutional architecture for interagency coherence that previous frameworks lacked.³⁸

The reopening brings significant potential to unlock forest-positive finance at scale, and Indonesia is emerging as the global proving ground for jurisdictional REDD+. Jurisdictional approaches to carbon markets operate at a national or subnational level rather than a project level, helping ensure more integrity and standardization by applying a consistent approach to each region when monitoring deforestation. Done well, jurisdictional carbon markets can direct meaningful revenue toward keeping forests standing while strengthening the rights of the communities who protect them.³⁹ The potential to increase state revenues from jurisdictional REDD+ was part of the government’s decision to reopen the market, and it has signaled it wants carbon markets “fully operational in 2026.”⁴⁰ The GREEN for Riau initiative, which is a province-wide forest and peatland program supported by UN-REDD and funded by the UK, is the most advanced among the new initiatives.⁴¹

Whether that potential is realized depends on whether community rights are built into the process from the start. The risks of expedience are already visible in East Kalimantan, where a separate World Bank-funded jurisdictional program has been running since 2019. In

39

Indigenous forest permits have been secured by KKI Warsi, ensuring sustainable land management that benefits local communities.



Photo: Kynan Tegar

2024, a coalition of civil society organizations led by the Indigenous rights NGO Perkumpulan Nurani Perempuan filed a complaint that the Indigenous Dayak Bahau people had never been meaningfully consulted, despite the program's formal safeguard commitments to do so in advance.⁴² The failure here was not a lack of standards but a mismatch between what the program required on paper and what provincial governance could deliver.

FPC-supported partners are working to demonstrate that jurisdictional REDD+ can advance rights as well as reduce emissions—unlocking the larger-scale financing that a credible proof of concept can attract. **KKI Warsi** is supporting communities to secure social forestry permits, including 39 permits for Indigenous forests, ensuring sustainable land management that benefits communities while cooperating with other civil society organizations to share their expertise. Meanwhile, Kawari invests directly in jurisdictional processes and community consultations, and the Jurisdictional REDD+ Technical Assistance Partnership (JTAP) provides technical assistance for provincial governments.



Photo: Kynan Tegar / If Not Us Then Who

Data, Disaster, and Collective Action

The spatial record of what is actually happening to Indonesia's forests has long existed, but has seldom broken through to the public. **Auriga Nusantara** had long produced rigorous analysis mapping forest loss against mining concessions, palm oil permits, and Indigenous land claims. Through intentional investment in cross-sector convening connecting data scientists, journalists, youth groups, and academic researchers, FPC-supported strategic communications created the conditions for Auriga's data to take on a life of its own. The government has now invited Auriga to discussions with the Minister of Forestry and the House of Representatives, marking a notable shift from the previous administration that rejected civil society data.

28

company licenses were revoked after a civil society campaign demonstrated that deforestation contributed to deadly flooding. ●●



Photo: Kynan Tegar



Photo: iStock.com / Yusuf Anton Mohamad

When Cyclone Senyar struck Sumatra in November 2025, triggering flooding, killing over 1,200 people⁴³ and displacing hundreds of thousands, this data infrastructure became a campaigning tool. Organizations layered Auriga's deforestation maps with meteorological data and economic cost modeling to build a public case for the destruction as a policy failure, demonstrating that deforestation by companies led to landslides.⁴⁴ The campaign garnered public attention and the government revoked the licenses of 28 companies whose actions contributed to the floods.⁴⁵

Indonesia has a vibrant civil society, but cross-sector coordination across environmental, civic, and democratic organizations has not always come naturally. Over two years, deliberate FPC investment helped build those connections. In 2025, three crises tested whether that network would hold. When the government announced plans in January to clear 20 million hectares for food and energy projects⁴⁶, environmental, civic, and democratic organizations responded together. When nationwide protests in August led to the detention of more than 4,000 activists,⁴⁷ the same coalition responded. When Cyclone Senyar hit in November, this coalition worked collectively again. Each crisis touched different sectors and different constituencies. But the network mobilized across all three, offering evidence of what sustained, deliberate investment in civil society can produce.



Photo: Kynan Tegar

The 1.4 Million Hectare Question

The Indonesian government's COP30 commitment to allocate 1.4 million hectares to Indigenous communities for customary forest management was accompanied by a National Roadmap and a Ministry of Forestry Task Force with six civil society members.⁴⁸ The civil society task force, five of them FPC-supported grantees, immediately encountered constraints. Field verification of customary forest claims requires mobilizing teams to remote areas at significant cost, and the government has limited budget allocation for this.



Photo: Kynan Tegar



Photo: Joel Redman / If Not Us Then Who

A proposed workaround, training local experts to conduct verification according to national standards rather than mobilizing central teams, is promising but requires significant capacity-building to undertake at the necessary scale. Overlapping claims between customary territories and existing private concessions and government priority projects add further complications that require case-by-case negotiation. FPC-supported civil society partners are positioned both to press for delivery on the commitment and to help solve the implementation problems that could otherwise stall it. **BRWA** is accelerating the mapping and formal registration of customary territories in Papua; **HuMa** is providing legal analysis directly within the Task Force secretariat; and **AMAN** is mobilizing Indigenous communities to hold the commitment politically accountable.

5 out of 6

civil society members on Indonesia's Ministry of Forestry Task Force for Indigenous forest rights are FPC-supported grantees. ●●

What to watch in 2026

▪ **Can Indonesia's new carbon market rules hold up once trading begins?**

The regulation's architecture is sound, but the test is whether regulations are finalized before large-scale transactions begin in July, whether the national carbon registry becomes operational in time, and whether government ministries coordinate effectively and prioritize safeguards over short-term revenue. If transactions outpace governance, the integrity problems that triggered the original moratorium could resurface. FPC partners are working to ensure that consultation frameworks and governance prerequisites are in place before trading begins.

▪ **Can the East Kalimantan consultation failure shape practice elsewhere?**

The complaint filed by Perkumpulan Nurani Perempuan on behalf of the Dayak Bahau people established that community consultation must be meaningful, well-resourced, and completed before transactions begin. FPC-supported partners are working to embed that standard into how jurisdictional programs are designed and sequenced going forward—in Indonesia and in other forest nations where jurisdictional REDD+ is taking hold.

▪ **Will the 1.4 million hectare customary forest commitment generate actual land recognition on the ground?**

The Task Force is established, field verification training has begun, and 330,000 hectares have been formally recognized to date. Known capacity and budget constraints make delivery on the remainder of the commitment uncertain, but FPC partners are working directly within the delivery process to close that gap.

▪ **Will the cross-sector civil society network built in 2025 be sustained in a tightening political environment?**

Several organizers remain under prosecution, and heightened surveillance and legal pressure are making coordination harder for civil society. These political headwinds heighten the importance of continued support for civil society organizing. Whether the cross-sector solidarity that emerged in 2025 can continue under increased scrutiny is among the most consequential questions for Indonesia's political trajectory in 2026.





Forging Pathways for Committed Partners in the Congo Basin

Photo: Alfred Mtumba / If Not Us Then Who



The Congo Basin is the second-largest tropical forest and one of the most biodiverse regions in the world yet receives 4% of the international forest finance going to other tropical forest basins.⁴⁹

Estimates of the cost of durable forest protection in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) dwarf what the region currently receives. In per-hectare terms, the Congo Basin currently receives US\$0.21–US\$0.50 in tropical forest finance per year, while meaningful forest protection in the DRC would require an estimated US\$10–US\$15 per hectare, implying a US\$330 million annual shortfall in forestry development assistance.⁵⁰ In 2025, FPC worked to strengthen donor understanding, regranting infrastructure, and civil society networks that could change those numbers.

\$330M

The funding gap FPC is working to close for Congo Basin forest protection.



Shifting Funding Practices

The Congo Basin⁵¹ contains 70% of Africa's tropical forest, absorbs over 600 million tons of carbon annually, and functions as the planet's last major net tropical carbon sink.⁵² Yet the region receives a small fraction of the climate finance flowing to other tropical basins, and even that is slow to reach communities.⁵³

This financial gap reflects inconsistent funding patterns that have made it difficult to build and sustain long-term strategies in the region. Donors have often set the priorities, rather than allowing civil society organizations to direct funding toward the most strategic opportunities.

4%

the share of international forest finance the Congo Basin received is in relation to other tropical forest regions. ●●



Photo: Alfred Mtumba / If Not Us Then Who

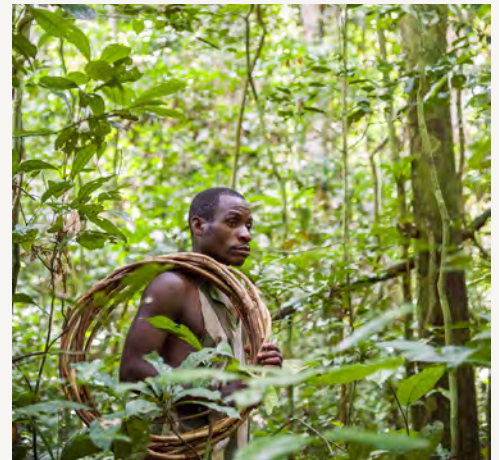


Photo: iStock.com / USO

As FPC aims to increase funding for this critical region, we stand on the shoulders of the organizations and leaders that have persisted in pushing for change over the past several decades. In 2025, FPC began exploring work that can help build capacity for consistent, long-term investment to advance systems-level change over time—recognizing that donor funding gaps and regional instability have inhibited progress, FPC supported educating donors about a region sometimes seen as too risky, strengthening locally-led regranting architecture, and completing a diagnostic study of the civil society landscape across five countries—Cameroon, Central African Republic, the DRC, Gabon, and

70%

of Africa's tropical forest is contained in the Congo Basin — the planet's last major net tropical carbon sink. ●●



the Republic of the Congo. FPC also established monthly donor coordination meetings to strengthen collaboration and learning around funders' strategies in the region.

These efforts to strengthen donor networks into the Congo Basin are well timed, as government support to advance enabling conditions for ecosystem protection is also showing signs of alignment. The Brazzaville Declaration, signed by the DRC, the Republic of the Congo, and Indonesia in 2018, established shared commitments to peatland protection,⁵⁴ signaling that regional governments are willing to engage on these issues. However, to fully translate these political openings into action, there must be expanded funding infrastructure and increased civil society capacity.

5

countries across the Congo Basin saw FPC strengthen locally-led regranting, educate donors, and complete a full diagnostic of the civil society landscape. ●●



Photo: Hugo Metz / If Not Us Then Who



Scaling Up Fit-for-Purpose Regranting Architecture

FPC's internal diagnostic produced a systematic map of civil society actors and potential regranting mechanisms across the five focal Congo Basin countries. The diagnostic showed the limitations of the region's regranting mechanisms. Acknowledging decades of work done by organizations on legal reform and supporting forest governance, a critical missing piece was the architecture for regranting at scale.

There are several existing channels to move funding into the region, including organizations such as Rights and Resources Initiative and Synchronicity Earth with established local, long-running partnerships in the Congo Basin, and three emerging regional funds: the Congo Basin Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Fund, the Community Fund for Forests, and the REPALAC Fund. Building on this foundation, some of the most promising opportunities for future regranting lie in ad hoc coalitions of civil society organizations with deep field experience, shared agendas, and strong local grounding. While individual organizations may be perceived by donors as having limited administrative and financial capacity, they can form credible and effective channels as a collective.



Photo: Hugo Metz / If Not Us Then Who



These coalitions matter because they are a strong and realistic way to extend support into places that standard funding models have consistently failed to reach. That includes the Central African Republic, where the ratification of ILO Convention 169 has not been matched by sustained funding in one of the region's most difficult operating environments; Gabon, where significant forest cover and middle-income classification have stymied necessary funding to civil society; and the Republic of the Congo, where one of the world's largest tropical peatland systems faces mounting oil and large-scale agriculture pressure alongside neighboring underserved landscapes in the DRC.

Local civil society coalitions can move funding credibly together, even where individual organizations cannot alone. ●●



Photo: iStock.com / Kimja Vanderheyden



Two Legal Breakthroughs, One Long Road in the DRC

The Democratic Republic of the Congo produced two significant legal developments in 2025. In April, the DRC launched a multi-stakeholder consultation framework with 118 entities, including government, Indigenous representatives, and civil society, to begin implementing the landmark 2022 Law on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Pygmy Peoples.⁵⁵ The law had passed thanks to fourteen years of advocacy but was largely unimplemented for three years.

In July, President Tshisekedi signed the country's first-ever Land-Use Planning Law (Law No. 25/045), addressing the fragmented, colonial-era land governance system and formally recognizing customary land rights for the first time.⁵⁶ The law creates a framework for coherent, rights-based land allocation across sectors. The law's passage was the result of sustained advocacy led by a civil society coalition including CTIDD, CFLEDD, CRI, CAGDFT, Congo-Watch, and DGPA, with RRI technical and financial support—the same ecosystem in which FPC is now deepening its investment.

FPC-supported grantee partners, building on decades of work, contributed to the advocacy processes that produced both laws. One has trained ten community tenure lawyers in Cameroon and will expand this work to the DRC, supporting communities in carbon rights negotiations. Another has been at the forefront of campaigning against oil and gas concessions in the DRC.

Both laws matter to communities in the region and are critical to maintaining standing forests. They also illustrate that the path from legal achievement to implemented reality requires regulatory texts, community mapping, legal capacity, interagency coordination, and political durability, none of which can be assumed in a country where political instability is persistent and mineral extraction pressures are accelerating.

118

entities — including government, Indigenous representatives, and civil society — brought together in the DRC's multi-stakeholder consultation framework in 2025. ●●



Focusing on the Mining–Forests–Rights Nexus

Transition minerals and rare earth extraction are accelerating across the Congo Basin, particularly in the DRC.⁵⁷ The same landscapes that contain one of the world's most important carbon sinks also contain significant deposits of cobalt, coltan, and other minerals essential for the global energy transition. Forest protection goals risk being overwhelmed not only by traditional agricultural expansion but also by a new wave of transition mineral extraction justified by alleged climate necessity. In the DRC's copper–cobalt belt alone, the provinces of Lualaba and Haut–Katanga lost 1.38 million hectares of tree cover between 2001 and 2024, with losses concentrated along the mining corridor.⁵⁸ Civil society organizations, including FPC grantees, are at the forefront of efforts to defend forest territories and community rights against accelerating extraction in the region. **Synchronicity Earth's** Congo Basin Programme, supported by FPC, helps partners to defend against threats from mining and dams in the DRC and Cameroon. Regional platforms including **REPALEAC** and **SAILD** are working to ensure that community voices reach international forums where these trade–offs are being decided.

FPC–supported civil society organizations are defending forest territories and community rights against accelerating mineral extraction across the Congo Basin. ●●



Photo: Alfred Mtumba / If Not Us Then Who



The IMF: How Debt Relief Drives Deforestation

Most Congo Basin countries are either in or at risk of debt distress, with debt-to-GDP ratios averaging 26% of GDP.⁵⁹ When countries turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during debt crises, their agreements typically require both tightened public budgets (austerity) and boosting commodity exports through extractive production. Austerity and export drives increase dependence on extractive sectors and undercut the environmental oversight that might constrain their unsustainable expansion.

In Cameroon, under two successive IMF agreements requiring budget tightening, and with global cocoa prices rising tenfold since 2020, Cameroon's cocoa producers vastly expanded their operations. This expansion was done in part through deforestation, which directly undercuts the service that these forests provide in regulating rainfall on which these cocoa crops depend. More broadly, more than half of Cameroon's recent tree cover loss has come from primary forests. The loss of primary forests makes Cameroon more vulnerable to the climate shocks that will eventually damage the same agricultural sectors driving the clearing, therefore making Cameroon's economy even more fragile and potentially leading to additional debt, starting the cycle over.

Cameroon and other Congo Basin countries are not alone. Research from Boston University's Global Development Policy Center, published in the 2025 Land Gap Report, traced the full cycle of debt and deforestation across four decades. Of nearly 36,000 restructuring conditions applied to low- and middle-income countries by the IMF, only 34 pertained explicitly to forest management. Between 2000 and 2020, IMF programs were, on average, associated with a 9.2% increase in annual deforestation, with each loan correlated with the loss of roughly 396 km² of forest.⁶⁰

A cross-regional coalition of FPC partners is advancing concrete solutions to the debt-deforestation cycle.



Photo: iStock.com / Violettenlandungoy

To protect forests and people globally, there is an urgent need to update and align the rules and norms of our international financial architecture with sustainable development pathways, such as revisiting austerity measures, which the IMF itself, for over a decade, has acknowledged are ineffective for economic growth.⁶¹ FPC's partners are working together, across regions and fields of expertise, to advance concrete solutions to financial reforms that are grounded, responsive to country contexts, and support ecological and economic health.



Photo: Alfred Mtumba / If Not Us Then Who

Why the Collaborative Makes Sense in the Congo Basin

The Congo Basin shows FPC's contribution clearly. The region urgently needs donor coordination, regranting infrastructure, and civil society capacity-building mechanisms where there has long been underinvestment. Big institutional actors too often consult governments, not communities, and design programs for civil society rather than asking civil society to design them.

4

ways FPC's Congo Basin approach differs from business as usual: participatory strategy, local funding, community-led allocation, and long-term relationships. ●●



Photo: iStock.com / Roger de la Harpe



Photo: Alfred Mtumba / If Not Us Then Who

FPC's approach is different in four concrete ways: the Congo Basin strategy was developed through a genuinely participatory process with civil society across FPC's five focus countries in the region; the donor coordination meetings have helped shift funders' strategies toward local and national civil society; the ad hoc coalition model is designed to reduce dependence on intermediaries and enable communities to make strategic choices about fund allocation; and long-term relationships, not one- or two-year project cycles, are the explicit aspiration.

The ad hoc coalition model is designed to get funding directly to communities. ●●



What to watch in 2026

▪ **Can capacity-building pave the way for more grantmaking in the future?**

2026 will be pivotal in testing the architecture FPC helped expand in 2025. Whether funding moves efficiently through the ad hoc coalition model to reach civil society organizations on the ground will be the first practical test of whether the infrastructure supported in 2025 is fit-for-purpose.

▪ **Will the DRC's 2022 Indigenous rights law and 2025 land-use planning law generate enforceable community protections?**

Both laws represent significant legal advances backed by years of advocacy, but the DRC has a history of landmark legislation that is largely unimplemented. Upholding and enforcing these laws amid ongoing instability will require political will, institutional capacity, and financial resources. Civil society organizations need adequate support to hold the government accountable for these commitments.

▪ **Will the acceleration of transition mineral extraction across the Basin produce safeguards or simply accelerate extraction?**

To ensure the mining-forests-rights nexus produces rights-respecting governance frameworks rather than becoming another mechanism for dispossessing forest communities, civil society will need a voice in shaping regulatory processes that are already moving fast and attracting significant geopolitical interest.



Funding Snapshot: Investing in Durable Solutions

As a collective, FPC recognizes that the challenge ahead requires partners to have a diversified set of funders

providing flexible, longer-term funding. Bilateral and multilateral donors, private philanthropies, civil society organizations, and Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local community leaders all have essential roles in reducing deforestation, strengthening community resilience, and sustaining long-term change. Within the broader funding ecosystem, FPC's philanthropic donors play a distinct catalytic role. Over the past year, FPC seeded new funding mechanisms, backed locally-led efforts that traditional funders may have viewed as too risky or too nascent, and expanded the scope of organizations seen as a credible recipient of large-scale support.

This annual funding snapshot serves as one high-level overview of progress towards FPC's pathways for change. FPC places a high value on data, evidence, and transparency. Shared visibility into our coalition's funding helps donors and partners see how individual grants fit into the broader picture, allowing the collective and members of the global community to identify gaps and emerging trends, enabling FPC to make more strategic decisions over time.

In 2025, FPC and its aligned donors channeled US\$277.5 million to 371 organizations, an increase in funding of 80.5% over the US\$153.7 million reported in 2024.⁶² These direct and aligned contributions by FPC donors supported our six thematic strategies and three geographic strategies. Funding to Supply Chains received the largest share (29%), followed by IP, AD, and LC (26%), and Enabling Conditions (17%). While the mix of the most-funded strategies shifted slightly compared to 2024, nearly all strategies received more support in absolute terms from FPC donors in 2025.



Funding by Approach

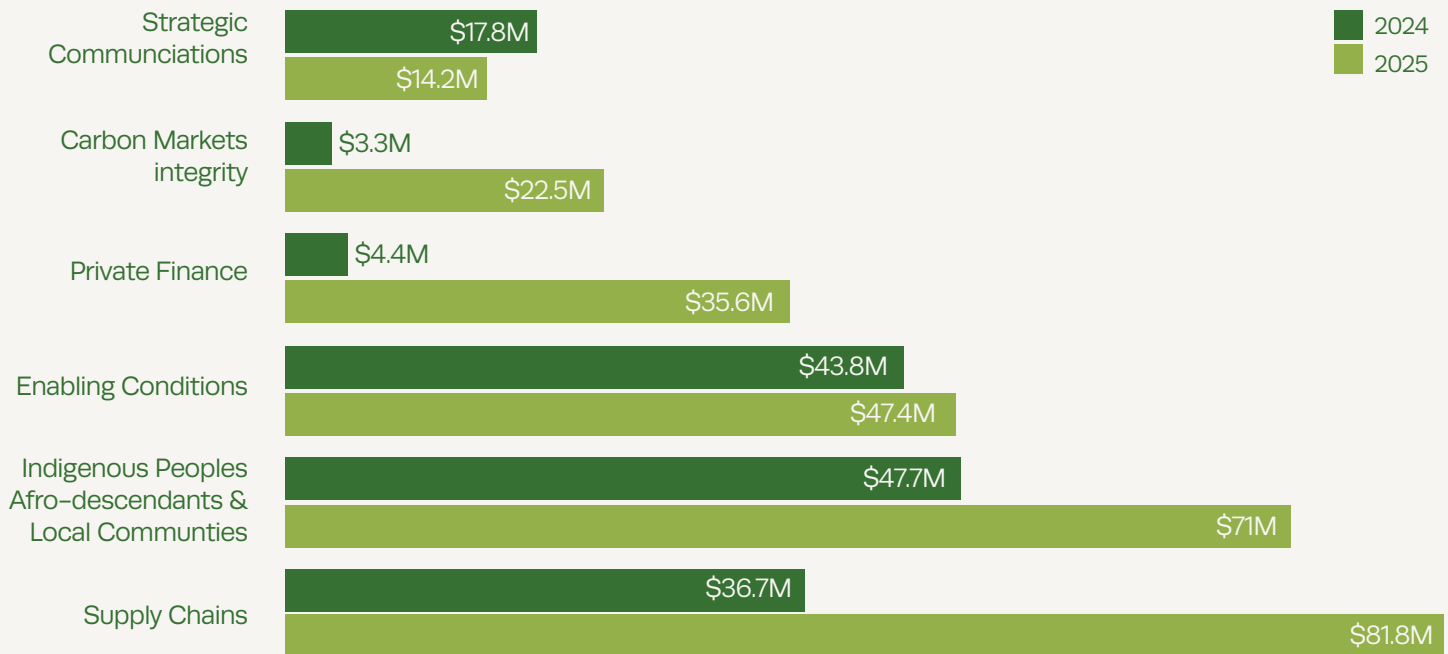
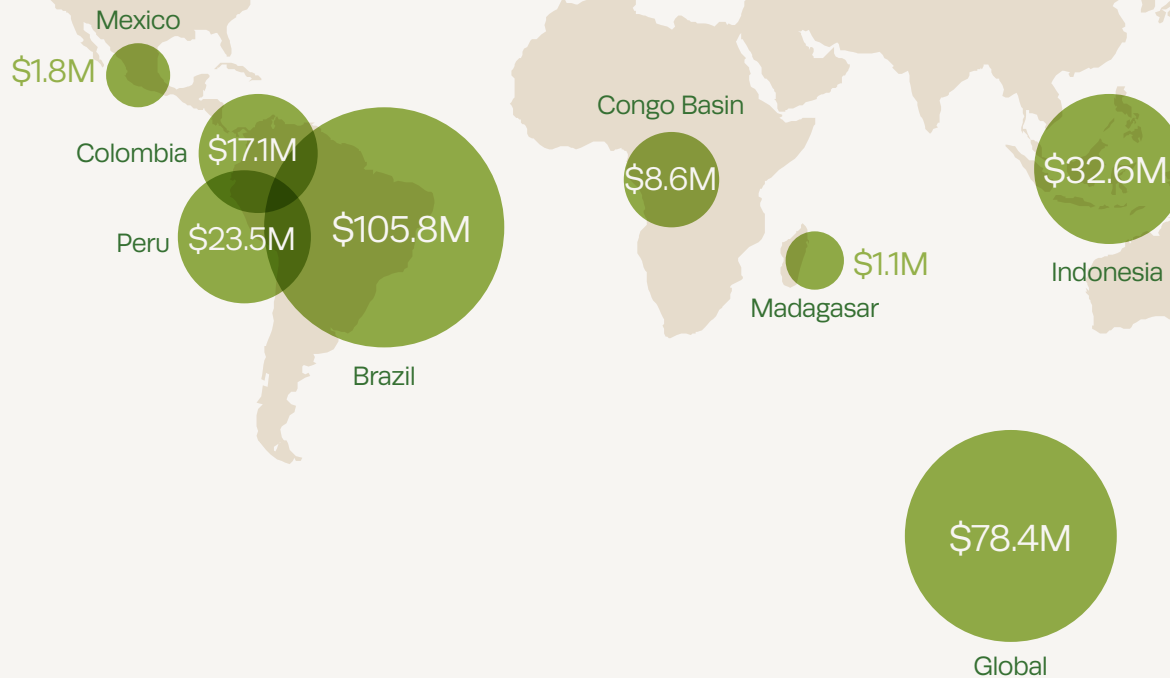


Figure note: This figure presents a consolidated thematic view of FPC funding. Grants tagged to the three geographic strategies (i.e., Brazilian Amazon, Indonesia, and Congo Basin) have been remapped to thematic strategies based on their tagged focus area(s), in order to show how geographically targeted funding also contributes to FPC's broader thematic priorities.

Funding by Implementation Geography



In 2025, funding went to FPC's three priority regions, as well as to other geographies where projects also advanced FPC's thematic priorities. Of FPC's three core geographic priorities, the largest share went to the Brazilian Amazon, followed by Indonesia, and the Congo Basin. Together, these landscapes are the anchor for FPC's geographic portfolio. Funding to the Congo Basin continues to remain persistently lower than other geographies, signaling a need for increased investment in the region. Outside of these three areas, significant funding was also directed to Peru (US\$23.5 million) and Colombia (US\$17.1 million) in 2025. The amount of targeted funding reaching organizations based in tropical forest countries and regions increased in absolute terms in 2025, even as its share of total funding declined slightly to 45.4%. This reflected faster overall growth in globally oriented strategies such as Supply Chains, Private Finance, and Carbon Markets Integrity.

Figure note: Brazil, Indonesia, and Congo Basin may include some activities not captured by the core geographic strategy, such as activities in other parts of Brazil (e.g., the Cerrado), or activities aligned with FPC's global strategies.

Looking Forward with Gratitude to FPC Partners

The world's forests faced compounding pressures in 2025.

Against this backdrop, this report documents a story of durable coalitions holding under pressure, of communities asserting rights they spent decades securing, and of philanthropic partnerships sustaining the unglamorous institutional work that structural change requires.

We are grateful to the civil society organizations, researchers, community leaders, and Indigenous and Afro-descendant advocates who did not wait for political conditions to improve but who instead acted.

The path ahead requires political will, institutional capacity, and the kind of long-term, coordinated philanthropic support that moves independently from political cycles.

FPC was built for exactly this moment. We are grateful to our partners for building it with us. None of this happened through a single institution or a single grant. It happened because of the coordinated, sustained commitment of FPC's partners.



Photo: Kynan Tegar

Our Funder Community

FPC extends its deepest gratitude to the foundations, bilateral donors, and philanthropic partners whose financial support and strategic engagement made this work possible:



Organizations Mentioned by Section

Brazil

Instituto Conexões Sustentáveis (Conexsus)
Instituto de Manejo e Certificação Florestal e Agrícola (IMAFLORA)
Instituto Interelos
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Observatório das Economias da Sociobiodiversidade (ÓSocioBio)
World Resources Institute (WRI)

Indonesia

Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN)
Architecture for REDD+ Transactions (ART)
Auriga Nusantara
Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat (BRWA)
Jurisdictional REDD+ Technical Assistance Partnership (JTAP)
The Kawari Fund (Kawari)
Komunitas Konservasi Indonesia – WARSI (KKI Warsi)
Perkumpulan HuMa Indonesia (HuMa)

Congo Basin

Centre D'Appui à la Gestion Durable des Forêts Tropicales (CAGDFT)
Centre des Technologies Innovatrices et le Développement Durable (CTIDD)
Coalition des Femmes Leaders pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable (CFLEDD)
Community Fund for Forests
Congo Basin Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Fund
Congolese Resources Institute (CRI)
Congo-Watch
Dynamique des Groupes des Peuples Autochtones (DGPA)
Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la Gestion Durable des Écosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale (REPALEAC)
Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI)
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Synchronicity Earth



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Forests, People, Climate (FPC) is a collaborative of philanthropic funders, civil society and community-based organizations seeking to halt and reverse tropical deforestation while supporting just, sustainable development. We focus on equitable and enduring solutions that safeguard tropical forests and support those stewarding them, in particular Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and Local Communities in tropical forest countries. For more information, please contact us at info@forestspeopleclimate.org

