Strategy
2018 - 2030
Rainforest Foundation Norway is one of the world’s leading organisations in the field of rights-based rainforest protection. We are working for a world where the environment is protected and human rights are fulfilled.

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Introduction: Rights-based rainforest protection towards 2030

Only three areas of large, contiguous tropical rainforest remain on Earth: the Amazon, the Congo Basin and parts of Southeast Asia and Oceania, in particular the island of New Guinea. Over millions of years, rainforests have evolved into the most species-rich land ecosystem. However, since 1950, half of these forests have been cut down and destroyed. The next decade will be crucial for reversing this development, protecting the ancient rainforests with their myriad of known and unknown species and irreplaceable ecosystems for the future. When logging machines and industrial agriculture take over, thousands of plant and animal species disappear forever, and the people who live in and from the rainforest lose their resources. That in itself is a disaster. But even more is at stake: scientists have proven that rainforests have a key role in combating man-made climate change. Their dense vegetation stores millions of
tonnes of carbon and functions as a climate regulator that pumps warm and humid air across the northern and southern hemispheres. It has also become clear that rainforests produce rainfall and regulate precipitation over large areas far beyond the tropics. Rainforest ecosystems are vital to the world’s climate and food production.

It is essential to preserve the three remaining large rainforest areas – in the Amazon, Congo Basin and on the island of New Guinea – in order to maintain the earth’s ecosystem services. Recognition of this fundamental fact constitutes the basis for Rainforest Foundation Norway’s work towards 2030, as outlined in the strategy presented here.

Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) has been deeply involved in rainforest protection since 1989. Our specific focus is the intersection of the struggle to ensure living rainforests and the fight for the human rights of local forest-dependent peoples. This rights-based approach protects the rainforest while also helping to reduce poverty: globally, by maintaining rainforest ecosystem services, and locally, by providing development opportunities to communities based on their own resources, culture and knowledge traditions.

The strategy for 2018–2030 continues Rainforest Foundation Norway’s rights-based approach, and takes it a step further. We will intensify our efforts aimed at getting companies and investors to stop rainforest destruction, and towards authorities for the establishment of national and international frameworks for sustainable rainforest management. The protection of indigenous peoples’ territories will remain a cornerstone of our work. RFN and partner organisations have gained experience and expertise that give us opportunities for influencing the framework for integrated management of the large rainforest areas that these territories belong to. Our approach, linking knowledge about local realities with national and international processes, can contribute towards valuable solutions. This provides Rainforest Foundation Norway with a basis for taking on a more important and significantly more visible international role during the coming decade.

Major international frameworks support our objectives. The UN Sustainable Development Goals link the ambition of halting deforestation and protecting the world’s biological diversity with the global goals of eradicating hunger and poverty. This makes rainforest protection one of the most important challenges on the international environment and development agenda. Further, the 2015 Paris Agreement identifies forest protection as a key instrument for avoiding dangerous climate change.

RFN’s strategy for 2030 will provide greater impetus in the struggle to protect the world’s few remaining large rainforest areas.

In Norway, we will continue as the leading organisation in this field. Internationally, we aim to increase our role and presence as a leading NGO actor in the field of rainforest protection. Private- and public-sector decisionmakers shall recognise Rainforest Foundation Norway as an experienced, trustworthy and knowledgeable organisation that provides valuable contributions to sustainable resource management in rainforest countries, and that is therefore qualified to receive significant international funding.

In a global network of alliance partners, together with rainforest residents, their organisations and supporters, RFN will work to get industry actors, government agencies and international organisations to improve their policies and practices. In this way we will jointly protect the world’s remaining large rainforest areas.
Protection of the rainforest: status and challenges towards 2030

Threats:

Tropical rainforests cover only six per cent of the globe’s land surface, but play a vital role in all life on Earth. Destruction of the rainforest is the main factor in the rapid eradication of species – up to a thousand times faster than would have been the case without human impact. Every year, a rainforest area as large as Denmark is lost, and even larger areas of forest are fragmented and damaged.

The rainforest is disappearing locally, bit by bit, initially affecting communities that lose their livelihoods. Some 260 million people, including 70 million indigenous people, live in the rainforest. In addition, almost one billion poverty-stricken people in rainforest countries are at least partly dependent on the forest for food and income. Destruction of the rainforest undermines efforts to combat hunger and poverty – locally and globally.

The main reason for such deforestation is industrial-scale agricultural production. The production of palm oil, soy, meat and pulp for international markets causes at least half of the deforestation in the world.

Logging, mineral extraction and production of oil, gas and hydropower are additional major threats to the rainforest and indigenous peoples. Roads and infrastructure open up new forest areas for destruction.

Little attention has been paid to forest degradation – the gradual reduction of canopy cover and biodiversity – but it has become a threat on the same scale as direct deforestation.

Climate change will exacerbate the vulnerability of the world’s rainforests. Unless greenhouse gas emissions are significantly reduced, drought and fires could undermine the rainforest’s ability to maintain itself over the next decades. Moreover, rainforests serve as a giant storage repository of carbon; if deforestation continues at the current rate, it will be almost impossible to avoid highly dramatic climate change.

Indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities are among the world’s most vulnerable populations. They have lagged behind the general improvement in living conditions at the global level. When rainforest is destroyed, these groups are hit particularly hard. The formal rights of indigenous peoples have been strengthened and their important role in forest protection has gained recognition – but attacks on environmental and human rights activists are intensifying in many rainforest countries.

The national authorities in rainforest countries hold the key to rainforest protection, but the forces behind forest destruction are global. Corporations from all corners of the world extract primary resources from the rainforest – and international demand for goods from the rainforest or from newly deforested areas drives this rapid destruction.

Corruption and environmental crime – locally, nationally and internationally – are important factors behind rainforest destruction. Logging and extraction industries are characterised by weak control and the presence of organised crime, which drives deforestation, affects communities and intensifies poverty. Good governance and transparency must be key elements in all work for forest protection.

Indigenous peoples and other communities in the world’s rainforests are fighting an intense and crucial battle against the actors who prey on the rainforest. However, only through coordinated international efforts can the overall pressure on the rainforest be reduced and the remaining large areas of continuous rainforest be protected for the future.

Opportunities:

In the last decade, significant progress has been made on the international political level to protect the rainforest. The UN and other international organisations have recognised the importance of rainforests for future development, not least through the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Indigenous peoples’ rights now feature much higher on the agenda when forest
policies are developed. In the international climate negotiations, climate and forest policies (REDD+) have played an important role. When REDD policies are to be implemented nationally, this provides RFN’s partners and other civil society organisations with significant opportunities for advocacy work.

There are major variations in how far the rainforest countries have come in reducing deforestation. As of the beginning of our new strategy period, only Brazil has significantly reduced its deforestation rates, but many other countries have committed to doing so. In all three main rainforest regions of the world, there is a need for integrated management of forest areas with varying types of land use.

Through countless generations, indigenous peoples and other traditional communities have harvested rainforest resources in ways that have preserved the rainforest’s biological diversity and other ecosystem services. These communities have amassed a vast store of knowledge about the rainforest, its life processes and its many uses. There is a clear connection between forest protection and recognition of indigenous peoples’ collective rights to forest management.

Rainforest Foundation Norway works closely with partner organisations and communities in developing local management plans. Together with our partners, we will promote the knowledge accumulated through indigenous peoples’ management of the rainforest in national and international forums where rainforest policy is being developed, and serve as advocates for rights-based rainforest protection.

**Experience:**

With the 2030 strategy, RFN expands its international role. Almost three decades of work in the rainforest, and the strategic efforts of recent years on the international arena, have prepared us for such a commitment.

Rainforest Foundation Norway has achieved results far beyond what our budget and size would indicate. Together with our partners, we have contributed to protecting vast rainforest areas in the Amazon, Congo, Southeast Asia and Oceania, and to greater recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples. We have managed to put a halt to direct threats from plantation, logging and extraction companies, and successfully promoted the safeguarding of indigenous peoples’ rights in international climate agreements. In the Amazon, we have spearheaded initiatives for the integrated management of large contiguous forest areas.

When Norway decided to pledge NOK 3 billion (≈ +300 million Euro) annually to climate and forest measures, RFN had the original idea, and delivered important policy contributions. That initiative has served to accelerate international work on climate and forest protection.

By focusing on the UN, the Norwegian authorities and the world’s largest public investment fund, Norway’s Government Pension Fund Global (GPFG), RFN has influenced funding flows that are far more important for the rainforest than our own modest budget. The GPFG’s 2012 decision not to contribute to deforestation is of major importance in itself, and may have a positive influence on other investors and funds as well.

Our targeted communication and campaign work has shown the Norwegian people how palm-oil production involves dramatic destruction of rainforests in Indonesia and Malaysia, and how personal consumption is linked to this destruction. The campaign created great involvement among consumers, companies and policymakers. This effort, which started in 2012, should be credited for cutting the use of palm oil in Norwegian food production by 70 per cent only a year later.

Behind such impacts lie solid knowledge and the ability to make use of strategic opportunities. Above all, these results have been possible thanks to long-term partnerships forged with forest communities, indigenous and environmental organisations. This collaboration has provided results that Rainforest Foundation Norway and our partners could hardly have achieved on their own.
Overall objectives and priorities

Rainforest Foundation Norway’s 2030 goal:

The world’s large, contiguous rainforest areas are managed in ways that uphold biodiversity, forest ecosystem services and the human rights of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples and communities.
The world’s large, contiguous rainforest areas are managed in ways that uphold biodiversity, forest ecosystem services and the human rights of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples and communities. – That is the overall objective of Rainforest Foundation Norway’s work towards the year 2030.

Achieving this will require halting the deforestation and forest degradation that threaten the world’s rainforests – an aim in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It will call for concerted efforts from government, industry and civil society in rainforest countries and internationally. Rainforest Foundation Norway’s strategy outlines how our efforts can contribute as effectively as possible.

The three major rainforest regions covered by this strategy – the Amazon, Congo Basin and Southeast Asia/Oceania – consist of intact primary forest areas that have been minimally influenced by human activity, as well as secondary forests affected to varying degrees by outside influence and multiple forms of land management. Primary forests must be protected from all industrial-scale utilisation, and rainforest areas managed collectively by indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities must be expanded and protected better. Commercial and other secondary forest activities must be designed to prevent deforestation, destruction of forest ecosystem services, and violations of indigenous and community rights. Further, restoration of deforested and degraded areas will be necessary, to bring conditions in line with the original ecosystem.

We will work to achieve the goal of protecting large contiguous rainforest areas primarily through long-term partnerships and strategic alliances with indigenous peoples’ organisations and other civil society actors in rainforest countries. For greater impact, we will forge new strategic alliances with organisations in rainforest countries and internationally.

The members of RFN’s network of partner organisations have in-depth knowledge of rainforests and the conditions of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities in all three major rainforest areas. They are also well endowed with strategic competence on the political arenas where the future of the rainforest is decided.

In the strategy period 2018–2030, we will concentrate our efforts as follows: **geographically**, on the major rainforest areas in the Amazon, the Congo Basin, and Southeast Asia/Oceania; **politically**, on carefully selected processes crucial to rainforest management; and **thematically**, on a few priority areas where we can further develop the expertise important to our partners in rainforest countries.

Further, in cooperation with civil society organisations in rainforest countries, we will focus on three broad thematic priority areas. These priority areas are aimed at three main groups of actors: commercial actors, policymakers, and communities and local organisations. The interaction among these actors is central to creating change.

Areas of work

1. **Support the development of sustainable communities**: strengthening the capacity of forest-dependent communities to define and realise their development needs within the framework of rights-based sustainable rainforest management.

2. **Promote political and legal framework conditions which ensure protection of the rainforest and the human rights of forest-peoples**: influencing public policies, land-use planning, laws and regulations affecting rainforest management and the human rights of indigenous peoples and forest-based communities.

3. **Halt direct threats to the rainforest and to the rights of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities**: eliminating direct causes of deforestation, forest degradation and violations of the human rights of forest peoples, related to private- or public-sector commercial activities.

Targeted, effective communication will be essential for achieving the goals of the 2030 strategy, and will be a strategic tool in all three areas of work.
Rainforest Foundation Norway's theory of change

Rainforest Foundation Norway works to promote changes in society that can ensure rights-based protection of the rainforest, based on the real involvement and participation of local communities in decision-making processes and their own development choices.

Protection of large contiguous rainforest areas and the vital ecosystem services they provide requires changes within all of the three areas of work that we have identified for this strategy period. Strong and proficient civil society actors in rainforest countries are key agents for change – but the drivers behind rainforest destruction are global. Therefore, an alliance of strong civil society actors, in rainforest countries and internationally, is necessary to stop deforestation and ensure sustainable management of the world’s remaining rainforest areas. That is the starting point for Rainforest Foundation Norway’s theory of change.

### Outputs

- Strengthen local change agents
- Build networks and alliances for cooperation
- Synergy across areas of work

### Outcomes

- Local sustainable management
- Policy and legal frameworks protect rainforest and rights
- Deforestation and human rights violations by commercial actors halted

### Impact

- Rights-based sustainable management of the rainforest

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**Rainforest Foundation Norway's Theory of Change**

- **Support to and collaboration with civil society**
  - Cross-cutting principles:
    - Human rights
    - Gender sensitivity
    - Transparency and anti-corruption
  - Adjusting approach: evaluation and learning

- **Increased civil society participation in natural resource management**

- **Participatory democratic processes - a precondition for rights-based management**

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**Rainforest Foundation Norway**

- Adjusting approach: evaluation and learning
RAIN FOREST FOUNDATION NORWAY’S THEORY OF CHANGE SUMMARISED*  

**WHY?**

In order to protect large, contiguous rainforest areas and their vital ecosystem services, deforestation must be halted, and initiatives for rights-based, sustainable management scaled up.

The rainforest is crucial for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and for mitigating human-induced climate change.

**HOW?**

Changes are needed in three areas, which constitute RFN’s areas of work for the coming strategy period:

**Support the development of sustainable communities:** Rights-based, sustainable rainforest management must be strengthened as a management model in the rainforest. Further, local communities must be ensured rights to land and resources as well as better opportunities for sustainable use of the forest, based on their own development choices and real participation in decision-making.

**Promote political and legal framework conditions which ensure protection of the rainforest and the human rights of forest-dependent peoples:** International and national decisions to stop tropical deforestation for the benefit of our climate and future development (UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate) must be reflected in national policies in rainforest countries. International funding must be increased.

**Halt direct threats to the rainforest and to the rights of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities:** Commercial actors must introduce zero-deforestation policies and establish deforestation-free supply chains.

Changes in these three areas must occur in parallel, and with maximal synergies.

**WHY RAIN FOREST FOUNDATION NORWAY AND PARTNERS?**

Our network of indigenous and civil society organisations covers all the major rainforest countries. Together, we can contribute to rainforest protection at local, national and international levels.

With our partners, we have sufficient experience to play an important role in generating positive synergies between sectors and actors.

**RFN has developed distinct expertise:**

We combine the experience from long-term partnerships and activities in rainforest communities with skills in strategic advocacy directed at authorities and global actors in the private sector.

**WHAT DO WE AND OUR PARTNERS DO?**

We support the work of local communities for rights and sustainable management of the rainforests they live in, and systematise the documentation of management practices, for use on a larger scale.

We conduct campaigns and use strategic communication to show the consequences of rainforest destruction and propose solutions that can promote development without destroying rainforests.

Together with our partners, we bring the results of rights-based sustainable management and the key role of indigenous peoples in forest protection into the boardrooms of major international companies and to the conference rooms where governments negotiate forest policy.

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* This is a simplified presentation to show RFN’s general theory of change. In regional 5-year strategies, this theory is applied within the specific contexts of RFN and partners’ work, so that concrete priorities and decisions are clarified.
4.1. Civil society: strengthen local actors and international alliances

A free and active civil society needs democratic space and resources to participate in policy development, and the expertise to produce relevant solutions and perspectives. This is essential for achieving rights-based, sustainable rainforest management. Civil society organisations are the main drivers in the work to get authorities and commercial actors to stop deforestation and establish the framework conditions for durable sustainable management. They are crucial actors locally, where the actual battle for the rainforest is fought. Strong civil society actors are also important for democratic development and the strengthening of democratic processes in rainforest countries more generally.

RFN’s support for and cooperation with civil society is based on reciprocity and shared objectives. There is considerable variety among the organisations in our partner net-work. Some need assistance in developing organisational and technical expertise, whereas others have resources and expertise at least equivalent to those of RFN. While the content of the cooperation will vary, a key priority is to build organisational capacity with national and local partner organisations. Through financial support, close dialogue and specific capacity-building initiatives, we help partners to develop administratively and professionally strong organisations.

This network of partner organisations fosters the exchange of knowledge and experience, and the development of common strategies. However, the actual framework conditions for the management of rainforests and the protection of forest peoples’ rights are often determined far from the local communities themselves: in government offices, in international negotiations, in the boardrooms of multinational companies, and with consumers around the world.

Cooperation with Rainforest Foundation Norway in a joint network with other partners gives local organisations greater opportunity to influence key players in the public and private sectors. Working together in climate negotiations, in UN human rights agencies, with communication initiatives and with campaigns aimed at companies, we strengthen each other mutually. This increases the chances of being heard and of being able to bring local experiences and perspectives into forums where the framework conditions for rainforest protection are developed.

In many of the countries where RFN works, civil society organisations encounter pressure and restrictions from the authorities, interfering with their opportunities to conduct independent work. Threats and violence impose restrictions on activists’ work. Where partner organisations so desire, we will help to draw attention to violations of rights and support our partners’ efforts to work freely and independently.

Rainforest Foundation Norway has developed its own partner policy that follows this strategy.

4.2. Rainforest Foundation Norway as a catalyst: Getting different actors to pull together

Cooperation with civil society actors thus forms the first element of RFN’s theory of change. The next step is to use this expertise and clout to effect change within the three areas of work.

The areas of work can be seen as processes where change may lead to a positive or negative impact on the rainforest. Our strategy is aimed at strengthening the forces that contribute positively within each area, using our special expertise to promote synergies between them. Specific projects need to be developed within the relevant geographical context, and will be described in greater detail in the programme strategies. Progress within each of these areas will yield results, but protecting forests and safeguarding rights in large, contiguous territories requires change in all three areas of work.

Synergies

Our theory of change emphasises putting to use the linkages between the three areas of work. Experience from RFN and partner organisations has shown that the best results are achieved when we can draw on advances in one of these three areas to create movement in the others. Communities that produce sustainable solutions can lead to changes in political priorities. Zero deforestation commitments by individual companies can be used to influence governments, which in turn may modify entire business sectors. In order to ensure the protection of large, contiguous rainforest areas, local communities, governments as well as commercial actors must be mobilised.

The areas of work are described in general terms below: why they are important, what RFN will do in each of these areas, and how this contributes to achieving the overall goal. They are operationalised for the period 2018–22 in four programme strategies – for the Amazon, Congo Basin, Asia/Oceania, and international initiatives.

Area of work 1. Supporting the development of sustainable communities

Local knowledge about the rainforest and experience in rights-based, sustainable management can provide key solutions for sustainable management on a larger scale.

RFN works together with local communities to develop management plans and practices that allow for better living conditions without causing deforestation. The rights, cultures and distinctive characters of these communities must be safeguarded. We support the efforts of indigenous peoples and other traditional rainforest communities to gain recognition of their collective rights to land and natural resources, and work to strengthen their capacity to manage these sustainably. We focus on finding models or common features that allow good practices to be disseminated or generated to government-level management principles. This approach may include access to and distribution of external financial resources from, for example,
To achieve the objectives of the strategy, the efforts of RFN and partners at various geographic levels must work together.

Area of work 2. Promoting political and legal framework conditions

RFN and partners strive to get governments to incorporate concern for the rainforest and indigenous peoples into policies and regulations. This is essential for ensuring the protection and sustainable management of the planet’s last remaining large, contiguous areas of rainforest.

Central factors here are area planning, legislation and regulations affecting rainforest management and the human rights of indigenous peoples and forest communities. Key considerations include regulation of

REDD+, or payment for ecosystem services.

By 2030, the consequences of climate change may severely affect rainforest communities. Measures to reduce vulnerability to climate change will be incorporated into local management strategies where relevant.

Rainforest areas managed collectively by indigenous peoples or forest-based communities have proven to be effective barriers against deforestation. Establishing more such areas will play a key role in achieving our overall objective of protecting large, contiguous areas.
industries and government efforts for human rights, food safety and poverty reduction.

Depending on the context, it may be most important to influence national, regional, local or international authorities. For instance, detecting and combatting corruption, which is an important factor behind logging and human rights violations in rainforest areas, may have the highest impact in a given country. In another context, it may be more important to work for recognition of the territorial rights of indigenous peoples.

Area of work 3. Halting threats
A first step toward sustainable management is to stop the severe and ongoing logging and burning of the rainforest. The main drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are industrial agriculture, plantations, and logging. Commercial operations, both private and public, are responsible when destruction takes place on an industrial scale. In order to stop deforestation, it is essential to influence such actors and their funding sources.

RFN and partners will work directly with companies, banks, investors and development agencies to get them to pledge not to contribute to rainforest destruction. From our efforts targeting certain major global actors, including palm-oil companies, we know that, although such work is demanding, major players can be influenced to change their policies. Encouraging consumers to demand deforestation-free products is an important element in such efforts. We cooperate with communities and organisations in rainforest countries to detect and document rainforest destruction and to hold companies accountable. Experience has shown that such measures have great potential for preventing violations of human rights and conflicts over territories and resources, and can help to set standards that improve practices in industries or geographical areas.

4.3 Coordinated efforts at different geographical levels

Our work is based on the experience that coordinated efforts at several geographic levels increase the impact.

Deforestation and forest degradation occur at the local level. That makes it crucial to support local forces who want to protect the forest, and strengthen their opportunities to be heard.

However, working locally is not enough. Indigenous peoples’ territories and areas managed locally are part of larger landscapes, involving various types of land use. The most important political decisions for forest management are taken at the national or regional level, or through regional cooperation among countries.

International agreements and financial flows affect national policies, so influencing international negotiations and development programmes can be an effective tool for protecting rainforests. Moreover, as international trade in goods that cause rainforest destruction poses a major threat, industry actors can play a key role in ending commercially driven deforestation and forest degradation. To achieve the objectives of the strategy, the efforts of RFN and partners at these various geographic levels must work together. Local experiences must inform national and international decisions. International goals for sustainable development can be used to influence national policies, thus providing better framework conditions for sustainable management, also at the local level.

Political advocacy in rainforest countries will be driven primarily by our partner organisations. Where appropriate, RFN may assume a direct and more visible role.

Particularly in countries that receive support from Norway’s climate and forest initiative, RFN may have opportunities for influence that can complement what our partners can achieve on their own. This applies also to businesses where Norway’s Government Pension Fund Global has significant ownership interests. In addition, there may be situations where civil society is under pressure and has difficult working conditions, where our partners wish RFN to raise the issues publicly.
Respect for human rights, gender sensitivity and anti-corruption are values central to the work of Rainforest Foundation Norway. To ensure high-quality efforts in these areas, and reduce the risk of unintended negative consequences, we have developed policies and guidelines in these fields, intended as cross-cutting principles to be respected in all our project and programme activities.

RFN is deeply engaged in promoting the rights of indigenous and forest-dependent communities to their territories, resources, culture and way of living. Further, we have a special focus on the right of civil society to work and express itself freely and independently, without fear of violence or reprisals. In all this, we seek to ensure that our entire approach is rights-based.

The gender perspective is pivotal in our work for rights-based, sustainable resource management. We seek to ensure that the perspectives and interests of both women and men are promoted in the development and implementation of all initiatives supported by RFN. Our efforts should not contribute to gender bias in the distribution of goods and resources.

Corruption is an undeniable factor underlying rainforest destruction and violation of the rights of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities. Anti-corruption and transparency measures related to the management of forest protection funds are essential. We also recognise that corruption is an ever-present risk in our cooperation with partner organisations. RFN has a zero-tolerance policy for corruption in our own operations and activities; and transparent financial management is fundamental to all our partner collaboration. RFN’s Human Rights Policy, Gender Policy and our guidelines for preventing corruption in our own programmes, operations and activities can be found at www.rainforest.no/en/about-rainforest-foundation-norway/steering-documents
Programme activities: Priorities for 2018–2030

In addition to the general priorities for the whole strategy period outlined below, Rainforest Foundation Norway has developed four programme strategies for the period 2018–2022, establishing goals and priorities for the Amazon, Congo Basin, Southeast Asia/Oceania, and international work on forest protection and rights.

6.1. Geographical priority – regions and countries:

In order to strengthen our efforts and use resources effectively, we have selected six countries as our core countries. In these six countries, our objective is to be present through projects and strategic alliances throughout the strategy period. These core countries are Brazil, Peru, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

For other countries in the Amazon, Congo Basin and Southeast Asia/Oceania, possibilities for presence will be assessed based on three criteria:
1. to what extent the country has significant rainforest areas,
2. the feasibility of achieving results, based on an assessment of the political situation and possible alliance partners,
3. available funding.

Such an assessment will be made at least every five years. The choice of countries may be changed more often if the situation in a country indicates that we should withdraw, or if new opportunities for achieving significant results appear in other rainforest countries. Because of the necessity to concentrate our resources, Paraguay, Malaysia and Ecuador are to be phased out, while Myanmar will be maintained as a partner country in addition to the six core countries.

6.2. Target groups

1. Those who will experience improvements as a result of RFN’s efforts:
   • indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities included in RFN’s projects for sustainable management of forests and the protection of human rights
   • indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities in general whose rights and resources are protected as a result of RFN and partners’ advocacy towards commercial actors and authorities
   • civil society organisations that have strengthened their capacity to halt rainforest destruction and to promote forest protection and the rights and interests of indigenous peoples and forest-related communities.

2. Those who will be targeted in order to generate the necessary transformations:
   • governments in rainforest countries who establish framework conditions for rainforest protection and the situation of indigenous peoples
   • Norwegian and other selected Western governments who finance rainforest initiatives or develop policies of relevance for the rainforest
   • commercial actors who run or finance activities that lead to deforestation
   • international development actors, within and outside the UN system.

6.3. Human rights in forest protection work

Rainforest Foundation Norway’s approach is rights-based. In our programme activities, efforts focus on working to promote those human rights that produce the greatest overall positive impacts on the quality of life of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent groups, and for long-term sustainable management of the rainforest. Key rights in our programme work, as set out in central documents like the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention 169, include the right to self-determination and political participation; the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), traditional knowledge, distinct culture and secure livelihoods; collective, inalienable rights to territories and natural resources, and the sustainable management of these territories and resources. In addition, our internal guidelines are intended to ensure that our work remains in line with best practices for human rights-based development work.

The rainforest and its ecological resources constitute the very basis for the physical and cultural survival of many vulnerable groups. To protect the universal human rights of indigenous peoples, the international human rights system recognises the importance of safeguarding their
RFN's core countries for the strategy period are Brazil, Peru, Colombia, DR Congo, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.
special ties to the areas where they live, and the resources they use. Securing the collective land rights of forest peoples has also proven an effective way of protecting the rainforest itself.

Deforestation is lower in areas where the collective rights of indigenous peoples and other forest-based communities are recognised, than in areas managed in other ways. Secure land rights reinforce the ability and incentives of forest communities to protect the forest from external pressure. They also provide more secure conditions for long-term, sustainable management. On their own, rights to territories and natural resources are not sufficient to ensure sustainable management or the socio-economic needs of the population. However, through close cooperation with forest communities, RFN can help to strengthen processes that improve their quality of life within the framework of sustainable natural resource management.

In some cases, there may be conflict between the goal of forest protection and the territorial rights of forest communities. For example, communities that receive formal rights to their territories may wish to overuse the forest. Our view is that collective rights to manage natural resources do not imply the right to deplete these resources. Solutions to such dilemmas must be found at the local level, in dialogue with all rights-holders and other parties involved. Here RFN can play a positive role, supporting initiatives that provide communities with sustainable alternatives to deforestation and forest degradation.

Rainforest Foundation Norway will not support communities who favour rainforest destruction, even if they have formal rights to the area. Neither will we support forest-protection projects that violate the human rights of forest peoples. However, we may be able to assist in finding solutions that ensure both forest protection and human rights. In such cases, we will follow best practices for a conflict-sensitive approach, seeking to ensure that the intervention does not deepen the conflict between groups or within forest-dependent communities.

6.4. Thematic priorities where Rainforest Foundation Norway has particular expertise

Our three areas of work will direct our priorities in all regions, adapted to local circumstances. Within the areas of work, RFN will specialise in some selected topics on which RFN has considerable expertise and experience. We intend to develop this expertise further, in order to be
maximally useful as a partner and ally for our local partners.

Rights-based sustainable rainforest management

• develop and implement community-based management plans, and establish models for sustainable use of the rainforest, to be applied by indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities which have collective rights to rainforest areas
• protect indigenous land and territories (e.g. through border monitoring)
• integrated forest management in the form of management plans for large contiguous rainforest areas with various forms of land use and ownership.

The human rights of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities

• RFN has broad expertise related to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other human rights instruments of special relevance to indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities. We will pay particular attention to the right to participation, including the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, collective rights to land and natural resources, and the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination regarding development choices.
• In line with our human rights policy, RFN staff members are expected to have expertise in human rights-based approaches to working with indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

The significance of the rainforest for biodiversity, climate and development, and the causes of deforestation and forest degradation

• significance of the rainforest: globally, nationally and locally
• impacts of deforestation on the environment and on humans

• sufficient overview and expertise in environmental and societal issues to be able to communicate or mobilise the relevant rainforest knowledge necessary in local project and national and international advocacy work
• main drivers behind deforestation and forest degradation, the financing of such activities, and important measures for controlling these drivers.

Central political and legal frameworks of importance for rainforest protection

• main international instruments for rainforest protection, such as REDD+ and other relevant systems for payment for ecosystem services
• Norway’s policy for rainforest protection
• relevant national policies and legislation in rainforest countries.

Strengthening civil society

• development and management of organisations, including specific expertise on the roles and tasks of organisations for indigenous peoples
• strengthening of organisational capacity within RFN’s core areas of expertise as mentioned above, and within our three cross-cutting principles: gender sensitivity, human rights and anti-corruption.

Our activities within the three prioritised areas of work will take various forms in the Amazon, in the Congo Basin, and in Southeast Asia/Oceania, as appropriate. Efforts at the international level are closely linked to the work within the rainforest regions, and are aimed at strengthening the impact of local and national priorities. A common framework for formulating goals and outcomes for the five-year sub-strategies will ensure that these local and national efforts contribute to achieving common goals. This will provide cross-regional learning and opportunities for assessing the overall impact of RFN’s efforts. The 2030 strategy will thus be monitored through the results achieved within the sub-strategies.

It is also relevant to monitor global developments within certain selected areas central to RFN’s three areas of work. These indicators will not measure RFN’s specific efforts: they will serve to inform us about the overall development of rainforest protection and related human rights issues.

1. State of the rainforest: deforestation and forest degradation.
   - global rainforest deforestation rates, and the status of rainforest areas.

2. The situation of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities
   - brief summaries of UN and selected international NGO monitoring of the human rights situation and living conditions for indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities in rainforest areas.

3. Threats from the commercial sector / holding commercial actors accountable
   - changes in rainforest areas (size/percentage) covered by licenses/concessions for commercial logging, resource extraction or infrastructure
   - number of companies and investors in business sectors linked to rainforest destruction committing to zero-de-
RFN and partners rely on building networks and alliances with other actors within each of the three areas of work described in this strategy.
forestation supply chains and the UN Guidelines for Business and Human Rights.

6.6. Partner policy and RFN’s added value

Rainforest Foundation Norway’s network of indigenous peoples’ organisations and its expertise concerning the situation of the indigenous peoples in rainforest countries is unique in Norway, and rare also in the international context. This core competence shall be maintained.

Under the 2030 strategy, RFN will strengthen cooperation with new actors, to advocate policies that can ensure sustainable management of large contiguous forest areas, and will step up efforts targeting actors who contribute to rainforest destruction.

The expertise developed in RFN through dialogue with and advocacy towards business actors and governments, at the national as well as international levels, shall strengthen civil society actors in rainforest countries.

The need for a diversified partner portfolio is reflected in RFN’s partner policy (https://www.rainforest.no/en/about-rainforest-foundation-norway/steering-documents), which describes how we intend to work with partners and what our added value to the partners should be, beyond that of being a donor.

There is a considerable span in RFN’s partner portfolio, ranging from small local organisations to professional national civil society actors and networks. We provide professional support and cooperation within our core areas of expertise, as well as competence-building in documenta
tion and campaign work when needed. Here, we emphasise exploiting the possibilities offered by communication technologies and new communication platforms.

As appropriate, RFN may serve as a bridge-builder to other actors who can support local communities in sectors that lie beyond our core competencies but may be important for improving living conditions through sustainable rainforest management.

Financial support from RFN /Norad is important, and is often crucial for local actors with weak donor networks. We will help to build expertise in financial management and strengthen organisations so that they can access necessary funding from national or international sources. Some of our partners are organisationally weak, although they may have strong competencies and represent important groups. Here we will contribute to capacity building in areas such as administrative practices, transparency and leadership to strengthen these organisations. With all our project partners, the emphasis is on close dialogue and regular follow-up.

6.7. Strategic alliances

RFN and partners rely on building networks and alliances with other actors within each of the three areas of work described in this strategy. Such a cooperative approach is essential for creating synergies and achieving our goals.

Our approach lies at the intersection between rainforest protection and human rights. It differs from traditional conservation approaches, where there has been little focus on the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities until the last decade. That being said, we recognise that large international conservation organisations may be relevant partners, if they follow a rights-based approach, as outlined in, inter alia, the IUCN-led Conservation Initiative on Human Rights.

Several of these organisations use a landscape approach in their work for forest conservation, and we will seek to ensure that our perspectives and those of our local partners inform this approach. Various UN organisations and programmes have activities in line with our projects, thematically and geographically. We will look for opportunities for strategic cooperation where this can provide greater influence in rainforest countries.

In international climate and forestry work and in the work for the rights of indigenous peoples, Rainforest Foundation Norway has a broad contact network of civil society actors, ranging from the largest international environmental organisations and prominent think-tanks, to local activist groups. We will strengthen the forging of strategic alliances within such networks, to achieve greater international influence.

Working towards companies, business sectors and financial institutions that threaten the rainforest requires other types of alliances. We have valuable experience from collaborating with small, flexible expert organisations and advisers with special expertise in relevant fields; such alliances need to be further developed. Close dialogue and cooperation with individual companies that lead the way in standards and policies to avoid deforestation can be crucial for spurring wide-ranging changes in business sectors that threaten the rainforest.

To achieve greater access to key business actors, RFN will have to strengthen its international profile and communication with strategic target groups.

In all areas of work, it is essential to establish cooperation with selected relevant expertise and research communities, to ensure that our efforts build on the best possible knowledge base.
Strategic communication is a key factor for achieving our goals. Targeted communication work is necessary to give Rainforest Foundation Norway and partners the greatest possible influence, to create visibility and awareness of the importance of the rainforest, and to increase support for our work.

Targeted communication is vital – in cooperation with our partners, for their voices to be heard, and for influencing decisionmakers. Communication activities are the central nerve of our contact with the supporters we depend on to protect the rainforest.

Our communication work creates RFN’s public image, and shapes how supporters, opponents and interested individuals see the organisation. Through communication activities, we can attract more individuals, businesses and donors to support RFN financially.

We have managed to put the rainforest on the agenda in Norway. Consumer campaigns against products and investments that lead to rainforest destruction have brought considerable attention and results. However, as an organisation, Rainforest Foundation Norway is not yet as well known as the high visibility of the rainforest issue would indicate. During this strategy period, we will focus on making RFN and our solutions better known, while continuing to highlight the importance of the rainforest and the rights of forest people.

Consumer-oriented campaigns in Norway will remain an important tool as long as there are deforestation-related products of significance on the Norwegian market.

The 2030 strategy is aimed at bolstering RFN’s international role. Our communication work shall contribute to making RFN’s views and solutions for rainforest protection known among strategically important target groups at the international level: national governments in rainforest countries, international institutions, rainforest protection donors, private companies and investors, as well as selected international opinion leaders and significant media outlets. Well-grounded, professional international communication work is a necessary condition for success here.

New technologies and means of communication, more rapid information exchange and the globalisation of communications networks emplace new demands on an organisation that aims to define the premises for the rainforest issue in Norway, and maintain a visible presence internationally. Developments in the world of communications offer unparalleled opportunities for creating heightened awareness about the importance of the world’s rainforests. Multiple communication channels and easy-to-use technologies for presenting and visualising content provide new scope for communicating with important audiences and creating greater awareness and involvement.

To promote our arguments, display results and establish contact with target audiences, effective communication approaches must be integrated into all our projects and programmes.

We will develop our international communications through the gradual strengthening of staff resources, and through systematic work with communication across departments and regions.

RFN shall at all times have concise, attractively presented, up-to-date information about the organisation, our work, approach and results available in Norwegian and English, in forms suitable for use by donors, international companies, governments and the media.

Main message and themes
Rainforest Foundation Norway’s main message is twofold:

• The world’s rainforests are irreplaceable, making it imperative to implement effective protection measures.
• Rainforest Foundation Norway and partners protect the rainforest and secure the human rights of forest peoples.
RFN’s three areas of work constitute the thematic framework for the organisation’s communications activity. Prominence will be given to disseminating new knowledge about the global significance of the rainforest – for rainfall and food security, and for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

RFN is to be a clear communicator of the threats facing the rainforest, and the crucial role of the rainforest in climate, biodiversity and poverty alleviation.

Indigenous peoples and environmental activists in rainforest countries will be used actively as sources, with emphasis on their role as important and knowledgeable actors in the fight for rainforest and rights.

We will disseminate information on the status of the rainforest and indigenous peoples in the areas where we work, and present well-founded, politically strategic proposals for action to decisionmakers.

Through attractively produced information and examples, we will show how individuals can help save rainforests, and that such support is crucial.

Priority will be given to maintaining widespread attention to the rainforest issue throughout the whole strategy period. RFN shall stand out as the primary Norwegian expert on the rainforest, indigenous peoples, and how the rainforest can be saved. Specific initiatives and priorities in international and Norwegian communication work are defined in our communication strategy for 2018–2022.
Rainforest Foundation Norway’s strategy requires increased public and private funding. We will step up our efforts to access international funding from private and government donors, and ensure that we meet the criteria set by international financing mechanisms for climate and forest initiatives.

Background: Now, at the beginning of the new strategy period, RFN has four main types of funding: Norwegian public funds (NOK 112 million / € 11.6 million, about 60 per cent in 2016), funds collected from individuals and the business sector in Norway (NOK 30 million / € 3.1 million, about 17 per cent), the 2015 TV campaign (NOK 28 million / € 2.9 million, about 15 per cent) and international funding from private foundations (NOK 15 million / € 1.5 million, or about 8 per cent).

From the beginning of the previous strategy period in 2007 until its end in 2017, our revenues increased from NOK 68 to 180 million. During this period, we succeeded in raising the contributions from individuals and the business sector in Norway from NOK 7 million to 30 million in 2017. Together with the funds raised through the national TV campaign (NOK 150 million over five years), this provides a good starting point for continued expansion of our work for protecting the rainforest and the rights of forest-dependent people. Towards 2030, an important goal will be to continue to increase our revenues from the Norwegian private and business markets.

RFN will seek increased funding through Norwegian official development assistance (ODA). We intend to use our expertise and experience to strengthen the results of Norwegian aid related to natural resource management and poverty alleviation.

Norwegian and international aid patterns are changing. Major humanitarian crises, terrorism and the refugee situation require greater political attention and commitment. This can put pressure on resources for long-term development and environmental work. In our dialogue with the authorities and in public debates, it will be important to highlight the broader significance of long-term environmental and
developmental aid, and to showcase the results of our efforts.

### 8.2 International funding

RFN aims to achieve a significant increase in the international share of its funding. Efforts to reach international donors, both private foundations and public actors, will be intensified. Our goal is for international funding to be significantly larger than the support from Norwegian public sources by the end of the strategy period.

**Priorities:**

1. **Further efforts towards private foundations and funds:** Initial survey and contacts have been made, and in recent years we have received support from several foreign foundations and funds. We will continue targeted efforts towards those sources whose focus is closest to our field of work.

2. **RFN intends to be well-positioned for accessing international funds for forest protection and support to indigenous peoples.** This will mean qualifying for receiving international forest and climate funding available through the Green Climate Fund and other selected international funds.

We will also position ourselves for consideration as a relevant recipient in connection with nationally allocated funds for forest protection in our partner countries – but only in agreement with key partner organisations and when we believe this will increase the chances for achieving our overall goals in the country. This is likely to involve establishing a permanent presence (in the form of a branch office, perhaps with registered national status) in one or more of our priority countries in the strategy period.

3. **Establish contact and apply for funding from the development aid agencies of other countries.** Firstly, we will consider SIDA, Danida, the EU, as well as German and Dutch aid agencies. A goal during the strategy period is for RFN to receive substantial ODA funds from countries other than Norway, whether alone or in cooperation with like-minded organisations.

### 8.3. Funds from private donors and commercial actors

In the new strategy period, high priority will be accorded to continued efforts to increase funding from individual donors and the business sector. This is essential for achieving our ambitious goals relating to internationalisation, policy and communication. The Norwegian market will still be dominant, but cooperation with international actors – especially as regards the business sector – may offer opportunities.

For a long time now, RFN has ensured revenue flows adequate to meet Norad co-financing requirements. In the strategy period towards 2030, our ambition is for revenues raised from fundraising to contribute to project financing beyond the minimum requirement – partly to replace the funding from the 2015 national telethon campaign, estimated to be exhausted by 2020.

Achieving growth in fundraised revenues will require efforts from the organisation as a whole:

- We must be clear in communicating how we can save the rainforest and what results we achieve
- We must be able to present good projects that can be used in our fundraising
- We must communicate in ways which trigger the desire to give
- A high level of visibility and recognition is important for mobilising support.

**GOAL:**

In 2017, at the start of the new strategy period, Rainforest Foundation Norway receives NOK 30 million in contributions from individuals and the business sector. The goal is to double these annual revenues by 2030.

### RAINFOREST GUARDIANS

- Increase the number of individual rainforest guardians and their donations
- Increase the number of rainforest guardian agreements with companies

**GOAL**

Increase from NOK 10 to 30 million annually

### COOPERATION WITH BUSINESSES

- At least three agreements of more than NOK 1 million annually
- Increased efforts for more small-scale agreements (<NOK 1 million annually)
- Agreements with unions and organisations

**GOAL**

Increase from NOK 15 to 20 million annually

### OTHER INITIATIVES

- Occasional gifts, events, etc.
- Lotteries
- New activities
- Schools

**GOAL**

Increase from NOK 5 to 10 million annually
Succeeding with our ambitious strategy for 2030 will require high-quality work at all organisational levels. Rainforest Foundation Norway must aim at developing and recruiting skills that match these quality requirements in management and leadership, organisational development, project and policy development, and communication and marketing work. For an organisation aiming to be a leader in the global struggle to save the world’s rainforests, dedication and commitment will necessarily be a strong motivational factor for staff members. Such dedication must be supported by a comprehensive and professional approach to organisational and human resource development (HRD).

**Goals and ambitions for personnel policies in RFN**

A good work environment is essential for fostering creative collaboration, constructive problem-solving and critical thinking. RFN aims to provide an environment in which staff may contribute actively in all these areas, while also promoting tolerance across differences of opinion, gender, culture and religion. RFN is to be an inclusive workplace that takes into consideration life phases, production capacity and age. By providing meaningful tasks to dedicated personnel, we intend to continue to be an employer for whom it is a privilege to work.

We will undertake regular employee surveys to ensure systematic monitoring of the work environment. Our goal is a work environment that is rated among the best among similar organisations. Our personnel policy is outlined in the RFN staff manual, and our security routines and ethical guidelines are updated regularly.

**9.2. Organisation and organisational development**

The strategy requires RFN to become an even more active and a significantly more visible international actor. This is an important premise for further development, and we must adapt organisationally to this strategic direction during the first part of the strategy period.

A more active and visible role internationally will place considerable demands on policy and communication activities – not least, good management of and close interaction with advocacy and project work in partner countries. Strengthened expertise in organisational and skills development, as well as quality assurance, will therefore be necessary.

**9.3. Field office**

Changes in funding opportunities, recent shifts in political processes and the importance accorded by the 2030 strategy to building strategic alliances with other actors all indicate that RFN must have a stronger international presence. This will probably involve establishing a permanent office in one or more of our priority countries during the strategy period. Such presence must continue to build upon our basic model aimed at strengthening and working through and with legitimate civil society organisations in rainforest countries.

DR Congo is the obvious initial candidate for such a permanent RFN presence – because of the interna-
Our employees are our main asset. We intend to provide RFN staff with opportunities for utilising and further developing their expertise and resources.
Rainforest Foundation Norway supports indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world’s rainforests in their efforts to protect their environment and secure their customary rights. RFN was established in 1989 and works with local environmental, indigenous and human rights organisations in the main rainforest countries in the Amazon region, Central Africa, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. RFN is an independent organisation, and part of the international Rainforest Foundation network, with sister organisations in the United Kingdom and the USA.