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MISSION

Rainforest Action Network preserves forests, protects the climate and upholds human rights by challenging corporate power and systemic injustice through frontline partnerships and strategic campaigns.

VISION

Rainforest Action Network works toward a world where the rights and dignity of all communities are respected and where healthy forests, a stable climate and wild biodiversity are protected and celebrated.
Jaguar rests at an area recently scorched by wildfires. Encontro das Águas park in the Pantanal wetlands near Pocone, Mato Grosso state, Brazil.

PHOTO: Andre Renner / AP / shutterstock
We believe that climate change is an existential crisis.

Amplifying the voices and supporting the rights of our Indigenous partners is a key part of our strategy.

Fighting against systemic injustice is one of our core values.

PHOTO: Paul Hilton / RAN
Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, we are in the midst of an intense election season. The world is watching to see which path the United States will take this Fall. And as you read this letter, that result may still be unknown. Hopefully, the result will be clear and true.

But at Rainforest Action Network, fighting against systemic injustice is one of our core values. It’s right there in our mission statement:

“... preserve forests, protect the climate and uphold human rights by challenging corporate power and systemic injustice ...”

And if there is a need to raise our voice and add it to the chorus for justice, we are ready.

To be clear, at RAN we remain focused on our highly effective programs — shifting the financial and insurance industries away from fossil fuels and transforming supply chains to stop forest destruction. But we know that we also need to be firm and vocal allies in the greater, interconnected movement for social justice. That’s why amplifying the voices and supporting the rights of our Indigenous partners is a key part of our strategy. That’s why demanding an end to labor abuses on palm oil plantations is a non-negotiable part of our campaigns.

These past few years, however, have challenged us to the core. The global pandemic has only exacerbated some of the greatest challenges any of us have faced — threats to the voting process, sweeping rollbacks of pollution laws, politicized denial of climate science, unidentified military forces attacking journalists and beating and gassing non-violent protestors. These are the times when we all need to show resolve and unity.

And yet, with all of this happening, I don’t think it’s an overstatement to say that tackling racial injustice — including our own racial biases — may be the greatest challenge we have ever faced. Climate change is an existential crisis. Forests and the communities that depend on them are still under real and imminent threat. But we simply can’t make progress on any critical front if we don’t reconcile the racial inequity that is pervasive throughout our culture and, yes, throughout the environmental movement. While this introspection may be uncomfortable and challenging, it’s critical now more than ever — because we are witnessing a historic opportunity for positive, seismic change.

All of this is work that lies ahead of us, no matter the election results. And these changes cannot be executed if we cannot exercise our basic rights — the right to vote, the right to free speech, the right to dissent, the right to protest. Regardless of who is in the White House, we know there will still be a long road back from climate chaos, from health inequity on the frontlines of fossil fuel infrastructure, from the impacts of wildfires in the Amazon and Northern California, from economic deficit caused by extractive industries.

And as bad as the past four years have been, RAN has still registered some massive victories — convincing PepsiCo to transform their palm oil practices; moving JPMorgan Chase on their climate policies; getting Japanese megabanks to develop forest protection policies.

You can read all about those victories in the following pages — and we’re planning more in the years to come.

Thanks for making that work possible.

Ginger Cassady
Executive Director
After more than six years of campaigning on PepsiCo — undercover field investigations, hundreds of thousands of letters, countless actions, and your ongoing support — RAN has succeeded in moving one of the largest snack food companies in the world!

In February of 2020, PepsiCo announced a broad policy ensuring that the palm oil in its entire supply chain will not contain deforestation, peatland destruction, or human and labor rights abuses.

How did we win? People power!
Together with our supporters, we delivered tens of thousands of petition signatures, we dropped banners over their billboards, we disrupted their social media, we flooded PepsiCo phone lines, and exposed the company’s links to Conflict Palm Oil through undercover investigations and high profile media coverage.

When RAN launched the Snack Food 20 campaign in 2013, we first needed to raise awareness about the impacts of Conflict Palm Oil production. By 2014 RAN had moved a significant number of the Snack Food 20 companies — but PepsiCo sourced the largest volumes of palm oil and had taken the least action. We knew that if we wanted to shift the entire industry, we needed to move PepsiCo.

Over the years, we published compelling evidence to back up our demands, and kept the pressure on the snack food giant with the help of our supporter network. Meanwhile, the industry continued
to move as more and more companies made commitments to end deforestation, peatland clearance and human rights abuses associated with palm oil production.

After years of campaigning and negotiations, the new PepsiCo policy is a game-changer: Now any PepsiCo supplier linked to deforestation or exploitation will be held accountable. This will create leverage and accountability throughout the palm oil industry — even when PepsiCo is not directly purchasing from a problematic source.

Perhaps most significantly, PepsiCo’s business partners must follow its policies. This includes Indofood, the largest food processing company in Indonesia that makes PepsiCo’s snack food products for the entire region. Indofood and the Salim Group have significant palm oil operations across Indonesia, on which labor exploitation, legal violations, and peatland clearance have been documented repeatedly. PepsiCo’s approach will apply pressure on Indofood and the Salim Group to bring their supply chains in line with PepsiCo’s policies.

Additionally, PepsiCo has committed to improved human rights provisions and to play a more proactive role in the palm oil industry, including taking actions to address ongoing deforestation in Indonesia’s critical Leuser Ecosystem.

In total, these commitments will push other supply chain actors across the entire palm oil industry to prevent rainforest destruction, to intervene when destruction is found and to stop human rights abuses.

Now that PepsiCo has announced a leading policy and has committed to drive change in the industry, its policy and new actions place it as a front-runner in the Snack Food 20 group of companies. We will be there to ensure that its policy results in real change on the ground. But we need our entire network with us to hold PepsiCo, and others, accountable.
At Rainforest Action Network, Action is our middle name, but we know we would be nothing without our Network. Every corporate policy win, every ounce of pressure applied to those responsible for rainforest destruction, climate change, and the human rights abuses that often come with it, is only possible through you. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to our mission.

Your support, your voice, and your involvement in our work make our successes possible.

**Who is RAN?**

[443,753] online supporters

[172,111] individual and institutional donors

[49,327] new donors who joined RAN in the last year

**PHOTOS:** Paul Hilton / RAN; Christopher Herrera / RAN; Youki Mikami / RAN
**How did you show up?**

289,762 supporters took action through online petitions

RAN’s Network participated in more than 185 rallies, actions, protests, and activist trainings

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PHOTO: Ayse Gürsöz

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**Tara Houska**

Founder, Giniw Collective, former campaign director, Honor the Earth, co-founder, Not Your Mascots

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“RAN has a very clear commitment to frontline communities, a very clear mission to center those voices, and has consistently been doing it. RAN is invaluable when it comes to that — it’s a partnership that is empowering for both of us. They are consistently trying to bring in the people who are directly impacted and they have a very clear commitment to that.”
Over the past two decades, RAN has become the global leader in one of the most effective strategies to rein in and reverse fossil fuels and deforestation, two of the biggest drivers of climate change.

How? By cutting off their supply of capital and insurance.

Initiatives such as our annual Banking on Climate Change report, the Forests & Finance online database, our growing campaign to hold insurance companies accountable, and our newly launched Keep Forests Standing campaign dovetail across our organization to create a unified strategy with real world, demonstrable impacts that span across industrial sectors, unified narrative trends and social movements.

RAN has innovated and helped to define the private finance campaign space in these sectors. We expose and directly confront the major financiers and insurers of these industries, challenging their social and market license to continue supporting such disastrous projects. Over the years, we have seen the impacts of our work through the ever-increasing number of policies at banks and insurance companies finally addressing human rights and climate change issues — policies that the vast majority of these institutions had never considered before the efforts of our broad coalition of Indigenous rights and climate activists.

Together, we have successfully challenged the social and market license for the financing of these toxic and destructive industries. We have pulled back the curtain on those profiting behind the scenes from underwriting climate chaos. We have confronted major financiers directly, loudly and consistently and made them acknowledge their crucial role in our collective crisis.

At RAN, we bring the pressure — but first, we bring the facts.
Fossil fuels contribute 65% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Extreme fossil fuels are the biggest polluters, such as tar sands oil, oil from Arctic drilling and ultra-deep offshore drilling, coal mining and coal-fired power, and North American liquified natural gas export terminals. Tropical deforestation and degradation contribute up to 21% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This is largely due to the burning and bulldozing of forests and peatlands for palm oil plantations, pulp and paper production, or for the rubber, timber, soy, and beef industries.

We breakdown these facts in sharp detail and produce top-notch reports that point precisely to the banking giants who fund these projects. RAN was the first to ring the alarm on JPMorgan Chase as the #1 fossil fuel bank on the planet. RAN has identified banks in Europe, Japan, Malaysia, China, and Indonesia as the largest financiers of deforestation-risk commodity sectors in tropical forest regions like the Amazon, Africa and Southeast Asia many with zero policies or safeguards to prevent funding deforestation or projects involved with land rights violations.

It is not an overstatement to say that RAN’s deeply and impeccably researched reports have become the gold standard in this arena. These reports expose in detail the financial and consumer companies that underpin and bankroll the destruction of forests across the globe and worsen our climate crisis. Our data is now the go-to source on these issues and is cited on an almost daily basis by the biggest news outlets across the globe, government agencies, and trade publications in the very sectors we are targeting, as well as providing a key resource for partners in the growing civil society ecosystem working on these issues.

We do this work in collaboration with tireless colleagues at multiple organizations across the globe. And we will not relent. Because at RAN, our vision is for a just world, for a climate stable world, for a world that has moved past fossil fuels and deforestation.
At Rainforest Action Network, we don’t believe climate change is a controversial topic — we believe the science. We know that extracting, transporting, and burning fossil fuels remains the leading cause of our climate crisis. And we know that the financial industry has been bankrolling and profiting off climate change for decades. That’s why we have made it our business to end business-as-usual financing.

This past March, RAN released the latest version of the most comprehensive report on global banks’ fossil fuel financing, *Banking on Climate Change 2020*. Conceived and spearheaded by RAN, *Banking on Climate Change 2020* was developed in partnership with Indigenous Environmental Network, Oil Change International, BankTrack, Reclaim Finance, and the Sierra Club — and endorsed by over 250 organizations from 45 countries around the world.

For ten years, thanks to the support of our community, RAN has produced annual editions of this report that follows the money and connects the dots between the financial industry and our climate crisis. *The Financial Times, Forbes, The Wall Street Journal, The Guardian* as well as countless international, industry and government news sources have come to rely on RAN’s numbers as the data of record on fossil fuel banking — bringing the light of day and growing pressure on banks, pressuring them to reform their practices.

*Banking on Climate Change 2020* examined 2,100 companies across the coal, oil and gas sectors globally over the period 2016-2019. We revealed that 35 global banks have not only been sustaining but expanding the fossil fuel sector — pumping more than $2.7 trillion into these fuels in the four years since the Paris Climate Agreement. Financial support for the fossil fuel industry actually increased in each of the four years after the Paris Agreement was adopted in December 2015.
We found that fossil fuel financing continues to be dominated by the big Wall Street banks such as Wells Fargo, Citi, and Bank of America. JPMorgan Chase however continues to be the #1 fossil fuel funder by far, providing $269 billion — well over a quarter of a trillion dollars — in fossil financing since the Paris Agreement. Together, these four banks account for a staggering 30% of all fossil fuel financing from the 35 major global banks since the Paris Agreement was adopted.

The report also tracks these banks’ culpability on expanding the fossil fuel sector and any commitments to phase out these dangerous practices in the future. In addition, we highlight the banks’ unacceptably poor performance with regards to human rights — from their support for the Line 3 pipeline in North America and the terrible impacts that project is having on Indigenous communities, to effects of fracking in Argentina’s Vaca Muerta basin, to a proposed coal mine expansion in Poland.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C has shown that we need to rapidly reduce global carbon emissions if we are to avert the worst consequences of the climate crises. In other words, in order to reach the Paris climate goals of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, we need an immediate end to finance for all new fossil fuel projects, and a rapid phase out of existing fossil fuel finance.

The impact of these reports has been considerable. In the last couple of years in particular, we have seen bank after bank announce new policies to address this crisis — from bans on funding Arctic drilling, to policies restricting funding for coal projects, to more recently public targets to lower their overall impact on our climate and to align with the Paris Agreement.

All positive steps — yet still far from enough. That’s why RAN will continue to shine the light and bring the pressure. You can read the full report and view interactive data at: RAN.org/bankingonclimatechange2020.
On October 6, 2020, JPMorgan Chase — the largest bank on Wall Street and the number one funder of fossil fuels — publicly announced they were aligning with the climate goals of the Paris Agreement and working toward global net-zero emissions by 2050.

There were many different reactions to this news. However, there was one point of overwhelming consensus in the media: This was a testament to relentless activist pressure from organizations like Rainforest Action Network and supporters like you.

The fact is that nobody knew JPMorgan Chase was the worst fossil fuel funder until RAN reported on it in our Banking on Climate Change report. Because at RAN, we bring the facts — and then we bring the pressure. And we have been pressuring Chase to take decisive action on their climate culpability for years.

The Chase announcement was indeed a monumental first step. For example, despite constant protests and peaceful disruptions of his public appearances, JPMorgan Chase CEO Jaime Dimon has never once mentioned taking any action whatsoever to address climate change in his annual letter to Chase shareholders. And now they are making a public display of climate concern.

However, the cold reality is that there is nothing in the Chase announcement about actually ending support for coal, oil and gas.
The announcement did not delineate any specific goals to mitigate climate chaos, although they released oil and gas emission targets for 2030. We will keep the pressure on to ensure that these targets reflect what the science says is needed. As Osprey Orielle Lake of The Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network stated, “There is a clear step Chase can take to start meeting the urgency of the Paris Climate Agreement: immediately end all financing of fossil fuel pipelines and projects and invest rapidly in communities and regenerative energy for all.”

If Chase wants to be aligned with the Paris Climate Agreement, we can tell them how — and we have.

RAN has released Principles for Paris-Aligned Financial Institutions — a clear set of steps banks can take to make real progress toward fighting climate change, fossil fuels, and deforestation.

The principles, endorsed by 60 global organizations, are specific and actionable. They describe how banks, insurers and other financial institutions can align with the 1.5°C climate change goal: Cut emissions from their financing in half by 2030 and phase them out completely by 2050.

As for the short term, RAN has been very clear what Chase needs to do. If JPMorgan Chase is serious about aligning with Paris, it must immediately stop financing expansion of fossil fuels and deforestation. If the bank’s clients, like ExxonMobil and Keystone XL pipeline developer TC Energy, won’t stop building new wells and pipelines, JPMorgan Chase must drop those clients, immediately. That would be the decisive action necessary to match their stated goals.

**Photos:** Toben Dilworth / RAN; Erik McGregor; Jake Conroy / RAN
The world’s climate scientists say that we have less than 10 years to transition off fossil fuels — that means building any new fossil fuel project is incompatible with keeping warming below catastrophic levels. So if new fossil fuel projects are ensuring disaster, how do they keep getting insured by insurance companies?

In 2019, RAN launched a new campaign targeting the U.S. insurance industry for its central role in propping up the fossil fuel economy. This year, we have ramped up our pressure on a key player in the insurance industry — Liberty Mutual.

Every new pipeline, coal mine, and fracking well needs insurance — and Liberty Mutual is one of the world’s largest insurers of coal, oil, and gas. New coal mines, new pipelines, and expansion of disastrous oil and gas projects continue to go forward in some of the most sensitive ecosystems in the world, often without the consent of impacted communities.

Liberty Mutual’s current climate policies and practices are simply not in line with keeping global warming below catastrophic levels. Rainforest Action Network in partnership with The Indigenous Environmental Network, Public Citizen, Waterkeeper Alliance, Mazaska Talks, The Sunrise Project, and others are calling on Liberty to stop supporting global fossil fuel expansion.
Insurers can **single-handedly stop** the expansion and operation of most fossil fuel projects by simply **refusing to insure them**.

Insurance giants like Swiss Re, AXA, and Zurich have begun to phase out coal and limit oil and gas business. Liberty Mutual however has a coal policy with massive loopholes that allow it to insure new coal mines and power plants — and the company has zero restrictions on insuring oil and gas.

RAN and our partners have laid a clear path for Liberty Mutual to correct their path:

» Stop insuring new fossil fuel projects.
» Commit to phasing out insurance for coal, oil, and gas companies in line with a 1.5°C pathway.
» Divest all assets from coal companies and oil and gas companies that are not in line with a 1.5°C pathway.
» Respect human rights, especially the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

When your house is on fire, the last thing you want to do is pour fuel on it. And yet, that is the agenda of the fossil fuel industry. Research shows the global carbon budget cannot afford a single new piece of fossil fuel infrastructure, but fossil fuel companies are continuing to build new coal-fired power plants, tar sands pipelines, fracked gas wells, and other infrastructure.

Leading insurers like Liberty Mutual enable this buildout by underwriting and investing in fossil fuels, but they can play a key role in accelerating the low-carbon transition.

To live up to its word and bring about the transition to the low carbon economy it purports to support, Liberty Mutual must commit to stop insuring the expansion of fossil fuels and phase out coverage for coal, oil, and gas in line with 1.5°C.

You can read more about this campaign at: [LibertysClimateCrisis.com](http://LibertysClimateCrisis.com).

**PHOTOS:** Parilov / shutterstock; Anto A. / RAN; Kayana Szymczak
In 2016, Rainforest Action Network launched an ambitious new project — our Forests & Finance initiative. The project unveiled a new interactive online web platform that for the first time tracked the investors and financial institutions financing those companies implicated in the worst tropical deforestation in the Asia Pacific region.

This past September, thanks to critical support, the Forests & Finance project has expanded to cover not only Southeast Asia, but also Central Africa, West Africa, and Brazil. The new dataset also now examines the beef and soy industries covering more than 300 of the largest forest-risk commodity companies.

Like other RAN projects over the years, our Forests & Finance data has become an industry standard, the go-to source for reliable and detailed information on who is funding and profiting from deforestation. Our data links global financiers to agribusiness producers in all three major tropical forest regions of our Keep Forests Standing campaign — Indonesia, the Amazon and the Congo.

This project is a truly global collaboration from a coalition of campaign and research organisations coordinated by Rainforest Action Network, including TuK INDONESIA, Profundo, Amazon Watch, Repórter Brasil, BankTrack and Sahabat Alam Malaysia. Collectively, our organisations and allies are pushing the financial sector to develop and implement
policies and systems at banks and corporations to prevent the continued funding of forest destruction.

The Forests & Finance dataset covers companies and financial institutions from Myanmar to Papua New Guinea; from Singapore to Cameroon; from Nigeria to Brazil. And the 300+ financial groups selected for this study are involved in the supply chains of the beef, soy, pulp and paper, palm oil, rubber or timber sectors in Southeast Asia, Central & West Africa and Brazil — collectively referred to as tropical forest-risk sectors.

Our most recent research has discovered what we’ve feared — that despite an epic tropical forest fire season in 2019, 2020 is shaping up to be even more disastrous. We have found that global banks have funneled $154 billion in loans and underwriting into the production and trade of commodities driving deforestation and land degradation in the three major tropical forest regions since 2015, the year of the Paris Climate Agreement.

The Amazon’s Indigenous Peoples dealing with this annual catastrophic burning season have faced tragedy after tragedy — especially during a year that includes a global pandemic. Fires across the Brazilian Amazon are at a 10-year high, with a 77 percent increase on Indigenous territories since last year. These spikes are the product of criminal deforestation and arson — and they are fueled by forest-risk commodities and bankrolled by global financial giants.

This database unequivocally exposes those complicit in this disaster. Explore the data at: forestsandfinance.org.
We must keep forests intact and standing. We must uphold the rights of frontline and Indigenous communities as they face the most immediate harm. We must draw a line in the sand: not another forest cleared.

That’s why this year we launched our newest campaign: Keep Forests Standing.

The painful truth is that the world’s forests continue to be burned, bulldozed, and stolen for greater agricultural and industrial development. We are losing them to greed and quick corporate profits; the local and Indigenous communities on the frontlines of expansion are seeing their rights violently disregarded in the process. Forests are critical in our fight against climate change — there is no solution to this crisis that does not include keeping forests standing.

The Keep Forests Standing campaign is already engaging some of the most influential companies that are fueling these crises. We have seen and heard — and in some cases helped develop — multiple corporate commitments to protect forests. Yet brands continue to drive rainforest destruction and human rights abuses. Through their commodity sourcing or investments, these brands have been complicit in the destruction of millions of hectares of tropical rainforests and peatlands in Indonesia. And banks are financing this deforestation at the level of hundreds of billions of dollars per year. Together, the multinational brands and banks targeted are some of the biggest corporate drivers of rainforest destruction and human rights abuses.

The brands we’re going after are the multinational corporations Colgate-Palmolive, Ferrero, Kao, Mars, Mondelez, Nestle, Nissin Foods,
PepsiCo, Procter & Gamble, and Unilever. The banks targeted by our campaign are the financial powerhouses of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI), CIMB, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), DBS, ABN Amro, and JPMorgan Chase.

The target list also includes ten of the largest corporate groups that have benefited from the widespread logging and deforestation of Indonesia’s rainforests for timber, palm oil, and pulp and paper. Over five million hectares of Indonesia’s lands are managed by this powerful collection of forestry and agribusiness giants. Together, the group of ten companies processes over 30 million tonnes of refined palm oil products each year.

Indonesia’s rainforests, in particular, have a critical role to play against global climate change, the crisis of global biodiversity loss, and the fight for Indigenous land rights. The expansion of industrial agriculture is not only one of the most significant drivers of deforestation, but it is also significantly responsible for the violence consistently faced by Indigenous Peoples.

Strong and organized local and Indigenous communities are a key defense against deforestation. We must support Indigenous and local communities in their fight to gain legal rights to their land and ensure their ability to protect and manage it — sustaining their ways of life and safeguarding the vast majority of the world’s biodiversity from extinction.

Leading scientists have said, “Our planet’s future climate is inextricably tied to the future of its forests.” Through the Keep Forests Standing Campaign, we’re fighting to secure a stable climate, protect the world’s remaining biodiversity, support the thriving communities of millions of Indigenous Peoples, and ensure a livable future for us all.

PHOTOS: Paul Hilton / RAN; Nanang Suhana / RAN
RAN Japan

Japan is the third largest economy in the world and the third largest consumer market. RAN has maintained staff in Japan since 2005, connecting the dots between massive Japanese brands and forest destructive industries, such as conflict palm oil, and pulp and paper and timber. Since 2016, RAN has been pressuring Japan’s financial sector to address their global impact on human rights, climate change and deforestation. Now with four bilingual staff, RAN was recently named by Japan’s leading financial newspaper, Nikkei, as one of the top NGO influencers in Japan.

The three largest banks of Japan are called megabanks for a reason. Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), Mizuho Financial Group, and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group (SMBC Group) are among the largest banks in the world and wield enormous power and influence across the globe through their financing decisions. As a direct result of RAN’s relentless campaigns, the three Japanese megabanks all recently adopted new policies addressing their role in the palm oil and forestry industries, with Mizuho introducing a No Deforestation, No Peatland, No Exploitation policy (NDPE) and Free, Prior, and Information Consent (FPIC) standard for their clients this year, making it only the second bank to do so in Asia. And in coordination with our allies, we secured commitments by all three banks to phase out their financing of coal power projects and practice more careful due diligence in the oil and gas sectors. Just a few years ago, none of these banks had any public financing policies.
RAN Indonesia

As part of RAN’s longstanding commitment to protect and defend the globally important, biologically rich Leuser Ecosystem in Indonesia, we have established the Leuser Watch platform — a sophisticated watchdog tool to rapidly identify active deforestation and follow the supply chain up the ladder.

Thanks to generous support, RAN has trained a team of field investigators who scour satellite imagery for deforestation hotspots. Through sophisticated GPS monitoring, collecting photographic evidence and following illegal palm oil — from plantation to mills to refineries to shipments. We connect the dots to the household brands putting conflict palm oil into the homes of consumers across the globe.

Our team then rings the alarm — presenting this irrefutable evidence to local and international press and publishing it on the Leuser Watch platform at RAN.org/leuser-watch.

RAN’s most in depth and impactful Leuser Watch case this past year revealed active illegal palm oil production occurring inside a federally protected wildlife reserve on the coast of Sumatra known as the ‘orangutan capital of the world.’ We were able to directly implicate major international food brands, receiving global media coverage and resulting in major palm oil traders and buyers cutting ties with the offending mills and committing to strict, long term protections for the region.

PHOTOS: Masaya Noda / RAN; Yasunori Matsui / RAN; 350.org Japan
Every year, there are headlines about fires ravaging through our remaining rainforests across the globe. But we need to be clear:

These are not “wildfires.” Tropical forests do not burn by themselves. They are being burned.

These fires are consistently and intentionally ignited to open up new areas of land for agribusiness. In Brazil, these fires are driven by the beef and soy industries; in Indonesia, it’s palm oil and pulp and paper industries. Even though it’s usually illegal, companies repeatedly use fire as the cheapest way to clear new areas of land — forcing people from their homes, pushing wildlife to the brink of extinction, and creating catastrophic carbon emissions while destroying the very forests able to keep carbon out of our atmosphere.

In 2019, the Amazon fires reached an incredible volume. According to the BBC, more than 87,000 forest fires were recorded in Brazil in the first eight months of the year — spurred on by the vicious anti-Indigenous rights, anti-environment, and pro-business rhetoric of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. At the same time, lesser-known fires raged across Indonesia. As of September 2019 roughly 857,756 hectares of Indonesian rainforest burned, releasing 709 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In response, there was a global outcry and outpouring of support. Thanks to Rainforest Action Network supporters, we were able to provide $550,000 in grants to frontline and Indigenous-led organizations in the Amazon region in the past year alone.
Tragically, this year’s fire season is shaping up to be even more deadly. With COVID-19 disrupting the ability of patrols to monitor forests, illegal land grabs and deforestation rates are soaring. Greater numbers of fires are burning in Amazon and Indonesia than this time last year. In the Brazilian Amazon, satellite data revealed a 28% jump in fires from July 2019 to July 2020. The 2020 fire season has barely begun, and already looks disastrous for the world’s rainforests and our climate.

In 2020, the multiple threats posed by COVID-19 have combined to rapidly amplify the challenges facing these forest peoples, posing an existential threat to many already vulnerable communities. But, amidst the bleak picture of this multi-pronged assault are many hopeful stories of powerful resistance, international solidarity and remarkable resilience. We believe that the best way to prevent the next climate catastrophe is by amplifying the voices and solutions of Indigenous peoples. That’s why we are distributing this grant money directly to the Amazon region in coordination with our partners at CASA Socio-Environmental Fund, Amazon Watch, Amazon Frontlines and Ceibo Alliance.

This August, RAN coordinated a Week of Action to take on the Big Business of Burning with a coalition of over 30 organizations calling out some of the main banks and brands that have failed to take action to stop the burning of tropical rainforests. Through a combination of online and offline actions, we turned up the heat on four of the worst financiers: Blackrock, MUFG, BNI, and Santander; and five of the most egregious brands: Procter & Gamble, Mondelez, Mars, Nestle, and Unilever. From an online webinar “rally” to direct actions at headquarter offices, we are committed to exploring new, creative means of defending the world’s last major rainforests that promote public safety during the pandemic.

**PHOTOS:** Paul Hilton / RAN; Erik McGregor; Victor Moriyama / Greenpeace

Thanks to RAN supporters, we were able to provide **$550,000** in grants to frontline and Indigenous-led organizations in the Amazon.
Community-led solutions are key to preserving forests, protecting our climate and upholding human rights — this is a core principle at Rainforest Action Network. For more than 25 years, RAN has made direct grants to Indigenous and grassroots organizations that are working on the frontlines of the battle to save our planet. From plantation expansion into rainforests to mountaintop removal coal mining; from illegal animal poaching to illegal land grabs; from massive water-source contamination to massive carbon pollution from profit-driven land management — these communities know these threats because they live with their environmental impact and their cost in human rights violations and species extinction.

RAN’s Community Action Grants are distributed under two categories: Protect An Acre grants and Climate Action Fund grants. Protect an Acre grants support grassroots leadership and local organizations in forest regions to protect threatened forest lands and to protect the human rights of communities that have coexisted with and depended on these regions for generations. These grants are critical to help local efforts to regain control of and sustainably manage traditional territories. Climate Action Fund grants support frontline communities directly challenging the damage caused by the fossil fuel industry. These small grants go to local groups tackling the root causes of climate change — the extraction and combustion of dirty fossil fuels such as coal and oil.

RAN has provided over $550,000 in grants to frontline and Indigenous-led organizations in the Amazon region since the 2019 fires thanks to RAN supporters. In 2020, the multiple threats posed by COVID-19 have combined to rapidly amplify the challenges facing these forest peoples, posing an existential threat to many already vulnerable communities. We believe that the best way to prevent the next climate catastrophe is by amplifying the voices and solutions of Indigenous Peoples and so we will continue our support, distributing at least another $400,000 in additional grants over the next year in the region.
COVID-19 has put pressure on the world’s health systems but the impact of the disease is hardest felt by the poor, people of color, and Indigenous Peoples, who have faced generations of discrimination and economic inequality. Like nearly everything else in the world, our Community Action Grants program adapted out of necessity to the rapidly unfolding new reality created by this pandemic. Thanks to donations from RAN supporters, we provided more than $150,000 in grants towards critical Indigenous-led efforts to stop the spread of the pandemic on their territories (see below).

Navajo and Hopi Relief Fund

The impact of COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation has been exacerbated by long-standing economic and racial injustices and decades of extractive industries, without adequate protections, that have left generations exposed to dangerous pollutants. With fracking wells, coal mines, coal-powered power plants and 523 abandoned uranium mines claims, the Navajo Nation’s water supply and land are effectively poisoned, the elevated levels of uranium causing sickness, liver disease, and even death. Because of this, there is a disproportionate number of elderly, diabetic, asthmatic, and cancer-afflicted individuals throughout the Navajo Nation and Hopi Reservation. RAN funding went to provide food, water, cleaning supplies, PPE, and other essential items to Navajo and Hopi families that are most at risk of contracting COVID-19.

Amazon Emergency Fund

To support emergency COVID-19 responses by Indigenous communities and organizations to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the Amazon Basin, RAN supported funds managed by Fundo Socioambiental CASA in Brazil, Amazon Frontlines in Ecuador and the 9 national Indigenous organizations associated with COICA (Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin) across the entire region through the Amazon Emergency Fund. These initiatives provided rapid response grants for urgent and immediate prevention and care; food and medical supplies; emergency communications and evacuation; protection and security for Forest Guardians; and food sovereignty and community resilience.

Photos: Mitch Anderson / Amazon Frontlines; Siekopai President Justino Piaguaje

Supporting the Movement for Black Lives

Funds to the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) supported their Black-led local partner organizations advancing their vision of building a better future for Black communities in the U.S. to move our country — and the collective work of our movements — forward.

At RAN, we know racial inequity is the foundation of systemic injustice in this country. Black communities are also impacted by decades of environmental degradation from fossil fuel and petrochemical plants that emit harmful pollutants and leak hazardous waste, making the health impacts of the pandemic even worse. That’s why we act and speak in solidarity against the systemic violence specifically experienced by Black people in the United States. We join with those demanding action and demanding justice.
Since 1993, RAN’s Community Action Grants program has distributed more than 5 million dollars in grants to more than 400 frontline communities, Indigenous-led organizations, and allies, helping their efforts to secure protection for millions of acres of traditional territory in forests around the world and helping to keep millions of tons of carbon in the ground.*

* including grants made through RAN’s partnership with Global Greengrants Fund

Protect-an-Acre (PAA) Highlights

Amazon Frontlines in collaboration with Ceibo Alliance and Organización Regional de los Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente (ORPIO) $20,000 to support a concerted push towards securing land title for three key communities in Peru — an area over 500,000 acres of rainforest — through this process the Siekopai can realize a bi-national biological, social and cultural corridor for their people of over 1.4 million acres and knock down barriers to land titling for dozens of other Indigenous Nations across the country, as well as eliminate the Permanent Production Forest designation over their lands.

PHOTOS: Ayse Gürsöz; Mitch Anderson / Amazon Frontlines; Amazon Watch
Yayasan PUSAKA
$4,000 to support the Papuan Indigenous Peoples Action Week, including travel support for Indigenous Papuans to Jakarta for various dialogues and actions between communities and civil society organizations related to the lack of proper consultation in the permitting process for industrial plantations, which has resulted in deforestation, impacts on food production and livelihoods, and other human rights violations.

Amazon Women Defenders of the Rainforest
$5,000 to support the Amazon Women Defenders of the Rainforest leading a major mobilization to coincide with International Women’s Day, including bringing 100 women from Indigenous communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon to the capital city of Quito to meet with and hold accountable government representatives to investigate rights abuses and provide greater protection of Indigenous women’s rights with a particular focus on the extractive industries.

Hutan Kita Institute (HaKI), as part of the South Sumatra-Jambi Coalition Against Forest Destruction
$7,000 to support a coalition of 34 civil society organizations, as well as Indigenous communities, in 2 provinces in Sumatra, Indonesia, in an effort to stop the building of a coal transportation road that would cut through the highly biodiverse Harapan lowland tropical rainforest that is home to some 1,350 species, including 133 globally threatened species such as the Sumatran tiger and elephant.

Climate Action Fund (CAF) Highlights

Earth Guardians
$7,500 to support the Indigenous Youth Leadership Training, a virtual training that brought together 40+ North American Indigenous youth leaders, many from communities engaged in frontline fossil fuel campaigns, to learn from Indigenous mentors and experts in the fields of digital media/storytelling, food sovereignty, political sovereignty, outdoor survival skills, decolonized community care, and campaign development.

Indigenous Peoples Power Project (IP3)
$5,000 to support the Skoden Action Camp, gathering 44 Indigenous participants, as well as 30 Indigenous trainers and staff, representing more than 60 Tribes/Bands/Nations and 32 communities from across North America to come together for four days to learn skills, meet one another, and find out how best to collaborate and support collective struggles to protect their homelands and cultures, including efforts to stop pipeline construction and keep fossil fuels underground.

RISE St. James
$5,000 to support community organizing and a multi-platform media campaign to block construction of a Formosa petrochemical complex in historic St. James parish, LA, which would cause a drastic downgrade in quality of life for a Black community already overburdened by air pollution, while also emitting 13 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equivalent to three coal-fired power plants.

For a complete list of grant recipients, visit: » grants.RAN.org
Supporters
2019-2020

THE Panther CIRCLE - ($25,000 AND UP)

($100,000 AND UP)
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Climate and Land Use Alliance
Climate Emergency Fund
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Global Wildlife Conservation via the Leuser Ecosystem Action Fund
Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment
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Metabolic Studio
Morgan Family Foundation
Rick Steves’ Europe Fund held at the Community Foundation of Snohomish County
The JMG Foundation
The Scherman Foundation
Wallace Global Fund

($25,000 - $49,999)
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Hidden Leaf Foundation
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Sol de Janeiro
The Cornell Douglas Foundation
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World Centric

PHOTO: Nanang Sujana
Catalyzing A MOVEMENT - ($1,000 - $24,999)

($10,000 - $24,999)

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The MEP Foundation, Inc.
Thomas Middleditch
Thorman Boyle Foundation
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Wayne & Breanna de Geere
Wild Woods Foundation
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($2,500 - $4,999)

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A N N U A L  R E P O R T  2 0 2 0  |  R A I N F O R E S T  A C T I O N  N E T W O R K
($1,000 - $2,499)

Aaron J. Coleman
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Adam Koranyi
Alex Morris Memorial Fund of Horizons Foundation
Alexandra Hennerley
Allan Badiner
Allan Mayfield
Altoria Group Inc.
AmazonSmile Foundation
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The love I have for RAN is because of the insane amount of passion RAN has for the work. They take on campaigns that seek to achieve the almost unachievable. It’s the dogged hard work, the sweat and labor on the ground, and strategic determination that lead to incredible outcomes.

So yes, I’m a lifer!

Ginny Jordan
RAN’s Boulder Leadership Circle
The financial data provided above was produced in accordance with the accounting standard update for nonprofits (ASU 2016-14) issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board. This update requires changes in how nonprofit organizations account for and present expenses, using expanded criteria for expenses assigned to fundraising and management.

RAN’s complete independent financial audit is available at RAN.org. If you have further questions, you may contact Emily Selzer at emily@ran.org.
STAFF

Alex Helan
Alison Kirsch
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Brihannala Morgan
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David Lin
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Senior Campaigner on Responsible Finance
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Finance and Administrative Associate
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Digital Production Manager / Web Developer
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Development Operations Associate
Digital Campaign Strategist
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RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK
preserves forests, protects the climate and upholds human rights
by challenging corporate power and systemic injustice
through frontline partnerships and strategic campaigns.