

THE PANTHER

A PUBLIC

NETWORK SUMMER 2020 | RAN.org



Rainforests, rejoice: RAN'S BIGGEST WIN TO DATE

In this classic underdog tale, read how our 55-person organization went head to head with a \$18.8 billion dollar corporation — and won.

PHOTO: Paul Hilton / RAN

Pepsico announced in February that it is adopting a comprehensive shift in approach to palm oil within its supply chain, committing to a broad set of actions aimed at ensuring the company is not sourcing from suppliers identified with deforestation, peatland destruction, or human and labor rights abuses, inclusive of third-party suppliers.

RAN's successful campaign against the second-largest food and beverage company, would not have been possible without the sustaining support and steady pressure provided by our Network.

As Senior Forests campaigner Chelsea Matthews, shared:

"People power pushed PepsiCo to realize it needed to take action, or risk further damage to its reputation. In the six years of the PepsiCo campaign, [RAN members] submitted hundreds of thousands of petition signatures and letters to the company,

staged actions disrupting PepsiCo offices, confronted PepsiCo decision-makers in public spaces countless times, jammed PepsiCo's brand on its social media channels, flooded PepsiCo phone lines, and exposed the company's links to Conflict Palm Oil through undercover investigations and high profile media coverage. "

RAN Indonesian allies, OPUK and IRLF, also were invaluable partners in this win. Both groups documented systemic labor violations within PepsiCo's supply chain and were integral to PepsiCo engagement efforts over the last two years.

The sustainability of snacks

Snackfood corporations utilize huge quantities of palm oil (PepsiCo uses 485,000 metric tons annually), a product found in roughly half of packaged foods in U.S. grocery stores. Palm

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

oil production commonly involves the destruction of some of the most fragile ecosystems on the planet — our rainforests — and is rife with human rights abuses. In the last year alone, RAN research uncovered large swaths of rainforest being cleared in the fragile Leuser Ecosystem in Indonesia, home to the critically endangered Sumatran tiger, rhino, orangutan, and a diverse range of rural communities, to make way for palm oil plantations. On these plantations, workers are expected to toil long hours and meet unrealistic quotas for little pay, no benefits, and with no safety equipment.

Focused Campaign: Industry-wide Change

Since launching the Snackfood 20 campaign in 2013 that targeted companies implicated in Conflict Palm Oil, RAN secured commitments to adopt responsible palm oil policies from Kellogg's, Mars, Mondelez, Hershey's, General Mills, Nestlé, Unilever, ConAgra Foods, Smucker's, Krispy Kreme, Dunkin' Brands, Kraft Heinz and Grupo Bimbo. Our biggest target proved a tougher challenge. For years, PepsiCo was slow to take action.

With PepsiCo's 2020 policy, we are achieving transformation of an entire sector. PepsiCo declared a commitment to an

industry-wide approach to independent verification of No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation (NPDE) policies, and explicitly commits to using its leverage to work with business partners where they fall short. The company also committed to ensuring feedback from a wide-range of external stakeholders, including RAN. The updated policy also highlights its requirement for suppliers to uphold human and labor rights by following the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and commits to a formal review of its agricultural supply chain grievance process.

RAN's theory of change at work

Deforestation and climate change. Human rights abuses and labor violations. Species extinction and global pandemics. The biggest challenges facing our world today demand ambitious, creative solutions. Throughout RAN's 35-year history, we've achieved wins by identifying, then targeting, the biggest corporations and industries driving the destruction of people and planet. Our goal isn't to change singular companies, but to move entire industrial sectors. And, as witnessed in this campaign, we get results.

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/pepsico-win](https://ran.org/pepsico-win)



THE PANTHER

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PHOTO: Pedro Helder Pinheiro / SHUTTERSTOCK

FROM THE CANOPY

Ginger Cassady, RAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020 *and Beyond*



Like everyone reading this letter, this was not how I expected 2020 to go.

Being named the new executive director at Rainforest Action Network — an organization I have worked with for the past decade — has been a true highlight of my career. Of course, a lot has changed since I stepped up as ED in March. And hopefully, more change is on the way.

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit earlier this Spring, RAN was in the midst of major program moments. We were just releasing our latest Banking on Climate Change report and we were announcing a landmark victory in our campaign against PepsiCo to protect workers and our climate and to keep forests standing.

But today we are faced with an even greater challenge — and an even greater opportunity.

Today, the nation is reeling as we grapple with centuries of racial injustice. Protests across the globe are increasing the pressure for systemic change. RAN stands in solidarity with those in the streets supporting the movement for Black lives. We join with those demanding action and demanding justice. As you know, fighting systemic injustice is at the heart of RAN's work. We understand the intersection of oppressive systems and we know that dismantling institutional racism is critical to building an effective, impactful climate movement and it is a moral imperative. And, as an organization with peaceful protest in our DNA, we know we must be loud and clear in our defense of the fundamental right to protest free from police violence.

I have a deep dedication to learning from others. I have been fortunate enough to work with some of the most committed and brilliant leaders working on environmental and social justice work for over 20 years. And I deeply believe in the common

sense truth that the most effective, most long-lasting and most ethical way to protect the environment is to stand with those on the frontlines of these fights.

That is the philosophy that informs my activism and the theory of change at RAN: Fighting for people and planet, fighting for environmental protection, fighting for a sustainable future is inextricable from the fight for global social justice and racial equity. It's the same fight. We will continue to hold banks like JPMorgan Chase accountable for financing climate change. We will still defend the communities and rainforests under attack across the globe for short term profits. We will still stand with Indigenous and frontline communities to do anything we can to bring their voices to the decision-making table.

I love this organization and I love this work, because I get to connect with people who not only care about our planet and our communities but who do something about it. People like you. And I have the privilege of seeing the impact of your commitment firsthand.

I also want to send strength and compassion from all of us at RAN to all of you in our community who have been touched by the Covid-19 pandemic. This is truly an unprecedented moment and we know that it requires solidarity with each other and with the most vulnerable.

I find great comfort in the knowledge that the will and commitment to continue our work at RAN remains strong — with us and with you.

For people and planet,

A handwritten signature of Ginger Cassady in black ink.

Ginger Cassady
Executive Director

CHASE BANK TAKES FIRST SMALL STEP ON FOSSIL FUELS

In late February, JPMorgan Chase announced a fossil fuel policy that strengthens its restrictions on financing for coal mining and coal power, and ruled out financing new oil and gas development in the Arctic. These policy improvements come amidst growing protests against JPMorgan Chase, calling out the banking giant for being by far the world's biggest banker of fossil fuels. The revised policy also comes two months after Goldman Sachs announced very similar policies, and less than a week after a report by two JPMorgan economists was leaked, warning of "catastrophic consequences" if emissions are not slashed over the next 30 years.

For Chase, this marks a milestone — but it is still only a starting point and our work is not done. We will continue to press Chase to immediately stop financing tar sands mines and pipelines, and stop financing any companies that are building new fossil fuel infrastructure. We will continue our efforts, our effective inside/outside strategy, until their policies include a plan to phase out all support for fossil fuels while fully respecting human rights, and Indigenous rights in particular, on a timetable aligned with the Paris Agreement.

But you have made this possible. This on-the-ground impact is a direct result of the belief and investment in our work by RAN supporters. In the last year, RAN trained a cadre of new activists in cities from coast-to-coast and these activists carried out actions at Chase branches large and small. We've bird-dogged Chase CEO Jamie Dimon on Capitol Hill, at shareholder meetings in New York City, and in events nationwide where Chase publicly refused to take responsibility for the impact of its fossil fuel investment policies.

While applying public pressure through our tens of thousands of supporters and partners and allies, RAN also spent countless hours in negotiations with JPMorgan Chase staff to help provide guidance on what a strong and necessary policy would look like. This steady pressure applied to Chase by RAN and our allies over the last two years of this campaign has directly led to this announcement.

As witnessed in our success with PepsiCo, RAN is willing to play the long game to hold corporate giants accountable and move them toward strong policies that will protect forests, protect our climate, and protect human rights. Your investment and involvement in our work gives us the ability to stay the course.

THANK YOU TO OUR MANY DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO RAN BETWEEN JULY 2019 - MAY 2020, INCLUDING:

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Our Best Defense AGAINST THE CLIMATE CRISIS

(And other reasons to love forests)

Keeping forests standing remains one of our best defenses against the global climate crisis. That's why in 2020, we launched our new Keep Forests Standing campaign to target the biggest corporations and brands fueling the destruction of tropical rainforests and the violation of human rights, worldwide. Our campaign targets ten brands and seven banks we've identified as the most egregious. We arrived at this list after considering their forest footprint, which weighs the impact banks, brands, and corporations have on forests through their financing and consumption of forest-risk commodities.

We seek to protect the last remaining tropical rainforests in Indonesia, the Amazon, and the Congo Basin, which represent the largest contiguous stretches of untouched rainforest and oldest living ecosystems on the planet. Indigenous and forest-dwelling communities — an estimated 1.6 billion people live near forests or depend on them for their livelihood — have fought to protect their forests for generations. It's time for all of us to stand with them.

The natural technology of forests

The “natural technology” of forests is crucial to our efforts to address the climate crisis. Forests absorb approximately half of global fossil fuel greenhouse gas emissions annually. Rainforests provide an additional benefit — by trapping carbon dioxide and producing condensation, they create low-hanging clouds that deflect harsh sun rays back to space. Alternatively, when they are cleared or burned, stored carbon is released into the atmosphere, mainly as carbon dioxide.

Identifying forest destroyers

The ten brands we name in our campaign are responsible for the destruction of millions of hectares of tropical rainforest and peatlands in Indonesia alone. Associated road construction further encourages illegal logging, poaching, and other destructive activities.

Industry initiatives led by the Consumer Goods Forum and banks committed to achieve “zero net deforestation by 2020,”

with additional policies developed prohibiting suppliers and investors from causing social and environmental impacts. Investigations by RAN and other NGOs show that these paper promises failed to be implemented where it counts: on the forest frontlines. Despite public commitments, companies and their investors continue to benefit from exploitative and destructive practices by concealing their ownership or control of third-party suppliers and “shadow companies.”

Looking to Indigenous leadership

Indigenous communities have successfully managed their traditional lands for generations. While Indigenous territories only constitute 22% of the world's land, they are home to 80% of its biodiversity. We owe them a great debt for protecting these natural treasures — yet they fight on the frontlines of deforestation at immense personal risk, often experiencing violence, intimidation, and other criminal activities. RAN stands in solidarity with Indigenous communities and the forests they risk their lives to protect. We work with Indigenous allies by identifying and working towards common goals, applying for joint funding, and providing small grants or sharing other resources.

Join us to #KeepForestsStanding

At RAN, we know the most effective strategy for necessary change is to follow the money and hold corporations, banks and brands accountable. That accountability is created through public pressure. Hard-hitting public campaigns paired with high-level corporate negotiations lead to lasting policy solutions.

As we take on our biggest challenge yet — to keep forests standing, worldwide — we will rely on our strongest strategic lever: you, our Network. Only your support and involvement will make this possible. The strength of our Network is needed now more than ever. Will you stand with us to keep forests standing?

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/publications/keepforestsstanding/](https://ran.org/publications/keepforestsstanding/)

FOLLOW UP FROM THE FRONTLINES



The Kofán people from Sinangoe have trained and equipped community land patrols to protect their forest from illegal invasion. In this photo, members of a land patrol set up camera traps in a remote area of their territory.

PHOTO: Mitch Anderson / AMAZON FRONTLINES

We at RAN were among the millions of people worldwide who watched in horror last fall as massive swaths of the Amazon burned out of control. Fanning the flames was Brazil's new far-right president, the openly racist and anti-environmental Jair Bolsonaro, who has explicitly advocated the displacement and genocide of the Amazon's Indigenous peoples and who publicly called for rainforest regions of the Amazon to be cleared for agribusiness and corporate interests. In the face of this despair, our spirits were buoyed when thousands of people from around the world opened their hearts, and their checkbooks, to offer real time solidarity to the people of the Amazon.

In response to public concern, RAN's Community Action Grants (CAG) Program has been able to provide \$350,000 in small grants to the Amazon over the past year and will distribute an additional \$500,000 in the next year to support existing organizations and Indigenous networks in the Amazon that are mobilizing resources in response to the fires and to defend Indigenous rights and territories. We acted fast, deferring to our partners at Brazil-based CASA Socio-Environmental Fund and Amazon Watch, who hold the relationships and historical understanding critical to assessing where emergency funds were most needed and most impactful. Frontline Indigenous communities in Brazil and Bolivia provided insight into priority needs, and we followed their lead. RAN directed support to allies and Indigenous communities forming fire brigades; to those confronting and stopping illegal activities on their territories (despite the security risks); to those organizing

peaceful mass mobilizations in the region, and to those holding emergency assemblies to strategize and plan courses of action.

In addition to releasing rapid response funds, RAN deployed funding to further develop Indigenous leadership and organizational capacity of close allies at Amazon Frontlines and the Ceibo Alliance, who are already doing the critical work to prevent the next climate catastrophe. RAN also granted funds supporting Indigenous participation at the Minga Indígena, an alternative Indigenous forum at the 2019 Madrid UN climate negotiations. The powerful Indigenous-led mobilizations inside and outside the climate negotiations effectively shined a spotlight on the spiraling human rights and environmental crisis gripping the Amazon and demanded immediate action.

As the latest UN reports on the climate emergency have confirmed, Indigenous and frontline communities are the best stewards of the world's rainforests and the best organizers against climate change. Local and Indigenous communities have been defending their forests, protecting the biodiversity on their lands, and slowing the effects of climate change for years. Their fight is our fight, and it is imperative we continue to support them now.

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/caf](https://ran.org/caf)

ACTIVISM IN THE TIME OF COVID-19



Now is the time for creative resistance. No one predicted the mass shuttering of 2020 due to COVID-19, but it's up to us to reflect, respond, and ultimately, evolve.

In May 2020, we launched a monthly webinar series to share best practices on activism in the era of social distancing. We're working with our partners and allies to inspire our friends and supporters by sharing exciting developments from nonviolent direct actions across the world.

If you would like to join our monthly activism webinars or receive more information on direct action at RAN, please email organizinghelp@ran.org. This is our moment. Our friends, communities, forests, climate, and planet depend on it.



Your safety is our priority

The safety and wellbeing of you, your families, and your communities always takes precedence.

Yet this pandemic is exposing the gaping inequalities affecting Indigenous communities and people of color, who are bearing the brunt of this crisis. They cannot wait, just as our forests and our climate cannot wait.

From online petitions and virtual marches, to dropping banners and car caravans, people around the world are finding new, creative ways to pressure the corporations poisoning our planet — all while staying safe.

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/covid19](https://ran.org/covid19)

COP 25 2019 / FRONTLINE INDIGENOUS SUPPORT

At Rainforest Action Network, we believe that solidarity with Indigenous peoples around the world is a global ecological imperative. Research shows that lands managed by Indigenous peoples have the most biodiversity, and the latest UN reports on the climate emergency confirmed Indigenous and frontline communities are the best stewards of the world's rainforests and the best organizers against climate change.

At the same time, Indigenous peoples are at the frontlines of fighting deforestation and extractive industries — two of the biggest drivers of our current climate crisis. That's why our priority at this year's annual UN climate conference, COP25 in Madrid, was to support Indigenous leadership. Together we worked to center Indigenous Rights in the narrative on climate solutions; because without Indigenous and frontline voices not only included, but *leading* the conversation on climate, we all fail to meet the scale of the crisis ahead.

In addition to multimedia support, we provided the travel support necessary for Indigenous women from the Women Defenders of the Amazon Against Extraction to participate in the Minga Indígena, an international gathering held in Madrid during the UN climate negotiations in 2019. The Minga Indígena provided an alternative forum to promote learning, discussion, and reflection among Indigenous leaders and share updates about how their communities and territories are developing their own solutions to climate change. RAN also partnered with Indigenous-led mobilizations inside and outside the climate negotiations to shine a spotlight on the need for people-powered and Indigenous-led solutions.

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/bankingonclimatechange](https://ran.org/bankingonclimatechange)



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< Around the World >

September 17, 2020

A Global Look at the Connection between Forests and Climate

Each year, Rainforest Action Network hosts an annual gala, REVEL, to celebrate our achievements and raise critical funds to support our work defending forests, protecting the climate, and upholding human rights. Since we can't gather in person, this year REVEL is going virtual and worldwide!

Join us on September 17th for *REVEL Around the World: A Global Look at the Connections Between Forests and Climate*. We're excited to bring together our partners

and friends to share stories from forest defenders from the Amazon to Indonesia, as well as RAN spokespeople from across the globe. The 60-minute event is sure to inspire.

We hope to see you there!

LEARN MORE AT » [RAN.org/revel](https://ran.org/revel)