



# 2024 A LOOK BACK

In 2024, millions of people all over the world watched Olympic athletes compete and break almost impossible records. The planet, too, has been breaking records, but the kind that cost lives and livelihoods, and harm communities, wildlife, and critical natural resources—from sea level rise in the Arctic and wildfires in North America to searing heat waves across swaths of Asia, Europe, North Africa, and South America.

While these environmental threats are daunting, especially for vulnerable communities, wildlife, and nature, WWF is leveraging the power of inclusive science-based conservation and a robust network of partners at every level to help people and nature survive and thrive far into the future.

In the following pages, we offer a glimpse of the many ways in which we are making a measurable difference, thanks to your generosity and engagement.

# CLIMATE

## Building Resilience in a Changing Climate

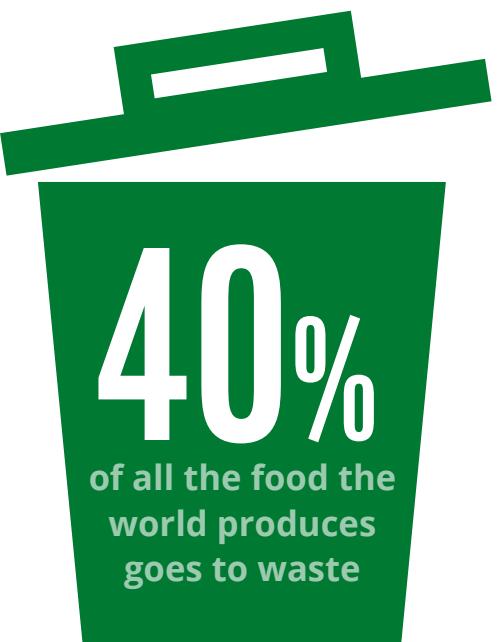
People everywhere are experiencing devastating impacts of the climate crisis to their livelihoods, food security, and health. The planet's wildlife and ecosystems are also struggling to adapt. WWF's Wildlife and Climate Resilience program has been addressing these challenges through two key initiatives that move beyond business as usual: **Climate Crowd** and the **Wildlife Adaptation Innovation Fund**. Working with a network of partners over the past year, these programs **gathered data** on how new climate realities impact people and nature, and supported projects on the ground that helped rural communities and **wildlife adapt**. In 2023-24, these initiatives advanced projects to increase water security, generate sustainable alternative livelihoods, protect rare plants, and test ways to safeguard birds and other wildlife. Lessons from these pilot projects are already providing useful guidance that move conservation beyond traditional approaches, and successful solutions can be replicated or scaled to help wildlife endure amidst conditions of rapid change.

## Managing Grasslands at Scale

Grasslands, unique ecosystems that appeared millions of years ago following extreme climate shifts, now cover nearly one third of the Earth. These essentially treeless landscapes across most continents store carbon, stabilize soil, filter clean water, and maintain healthy habitats for wildlife and people. Grasslands offer huge potential to mitigate the effects of climate change, not only through their deep root systems, but also through the relationships between plants, fungi, and animal species that help enrich the soil. Despite their importance to people, wildlife, and the climate, less than 10% of grasslands enjoy official protections. Last year, WWF partnered with ranchers, rural communities, farmers, and landowner-led organizations across the world to halt grassland conversion and improve pasture management practices. In recent months, WWF's Sustainable Ranching Initiative enrolled private ranches to reach a remarkable 1 million acres in its **Ranch Systems and Viability Planning network**, a year ahead of schedule. This network means ranchers in the region can now access hands-on guidance from technical experts and ongoing training opportunities.



Women preparing food in a community hub for Keeping it Real in Manchester, UK.



## Fighting Food Waste for the Climate

Today, up to 40% of all the food the world produces goes to waste. At the same time, we also waste the energy and water it takes to grow, harvest, transport, and package that food. Once food goes to a landfill and rots, it releases greenhouse gas emissions even more potent than carbon dioxide. Over the past year, WWF's **Food Loss and Waste** team worked with farmers, businesses, supply chains, and schools to improve our understanding of why food gets wasted and how it can be prevented. To address such a widespread issue, we collaborate with institutions and industries that can play a significant role in reducing food waste, such as **grocery retail, hospitality, and food**

service. In 2023, we expanded our hands-on, science-based **Food Waste Warriors program** to 15 new cities to educate students and help them lead food waste reduction approaches in their cafeterias and communities. Over the past two years, two of our participating schools have won National Presidential Environmental Awards for their incredible efforts, and WWF recently received an **EPA Recycling and Education Outreach grant** to implement the program in Atlanta, Baltimore, Memphis, and Nashville. Together, these innovative approaches are helping build a more circular food system that benefits people and the climate.

# PEOPLE

## Promoting Human-Wildlife Coexistence

A powerful model of international cooperation for conservation since its founding in 2011, the [Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area](#), or KAZA, connects a mosaic of lands across five partner countries—Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This transboundary region encompasses some of Earth's great ecological wonders alongside globally critical wildlife. As human populations in this region grow, so does the potential for habitat fragmentation and conflict, as large carnivores are forced to move through human-dominated areas to find prey and water. To promote coexistence, WWF has been partnering with local organizations to track carnivore movement using wildlife collars. The data from the collars helps identify areas where communities can more safely farm and graze livestock. Local community members also play a critical role in reducing conflict with large carnivores and some are employed as Community Guardians. Last year, Guardians in Zimbabwe—known as "Batabilili," or protectors—responded

to 112 incidents of human-wildlife conflict and helped reach over 1,000 community members through awareness-raising activities. In Zimbabwe and Botswana, newly built or reinforced livestock enclosures have been 100% effective in protecting livestock from predation. And in Namibia, predator attacks declined by more than 70% in 13 communal conservancies. These community-led measures have made a profound difference in reducing attacks on livestock along with retaliatory killings of large carnivores across KAZA.



## Shaping Leaders and the Future of Conservation

Investment in training and education is critical for biodiversity conservation. WWF prepares future leaders to tackle the world's complex conservation challenges by broadening access to the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed in environmental careers. This year marks WWF's Russell E. Train Education for Nature Program's (EFN) 30th year providing financial support to leaders and institutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to pursue graduate studies, attend short-term training courses, and offer local community trainings in WWF priority places.

To date, over 3,000 individuals and 600 institutions from 60 countries have joined EFN's alumni network. These alumni help accelerate the pace of progress worldwide as researchers, community leaders, and educators, while inspiring the next generation of conservationists. In the US, WWF's BRIDGE Internship program (Building Relationships, Inclusivity, Diversity, Growth, and Excellence) has recruited a diverse pool of talented undergraduate and graduate students to bring fresh thinking and experiences into conservation.

Now in its fourth year, our 10-week paid internship recruited a cohort of 41 students across 14 WWF departments. By engaging emerging professionals-to-be from a range of backgrounds, cultures, and disciplines, WWF can better address complex environmental issues and forge sustainable solutions that benefit people and nature.

# WILDLIFE



## Tracking Elephant Movement

All elephant species face unrelenting pressures from poachers and the illegal wildlife trade, retaliatory killings, and habitat loss as they compete for space with dense and often growing human populations. WWF and partners have made progress reversing these trends across elephant ranges in Africa and Asia. Over the past year, two elephants were fitted with GPS collars in the Brahmaputra Landscape in India, bringing the total number of collared elephants to four. Through their movement and habitat use, these individuals have provided vital information on key movement corridors, how elephants cross railway lines, their interactions with people, and their ventures into Bhutan as part of transboundary movement. In Namibia, WWF helped identify and prepare new elephant-friendly water sites. These efforts were an instant success—elephants living nearby, as well as other migratory wildlife, immediately made use of the water points and now use them regularly.

## Expanding Bison Range

Plains bison were once the widest-ranging land mammal in North America. Bison help shape the land and contribute to the overall health of grassland ecosystems by providing nesting grounds for birds, creating shallow depressions that collect and store rainwater aboveground, and so much more. WWF works with tribal partners and national parks to protect this vital species. Our goal is to establish five herds of at least 1,000 bison each by 2025, providing an opportunity for greater genetic diversity and healthy plains bison populations. In summer 2024, the [InterTribal Buffalo Council, Native Americans in Philanthropy](#), WWF, and The Nature Conservancy officially announced the [Tribal Buffalo Lifeways Collaboration](#). This historic alliance was created to stabilize, establish, and expand Tribal-led bison restoration, and foster cultural, spiritual, ecological, and economic revitalization within Native communities. This unprecedented partnership represents a landmark commitment to respecting and supporting the sovereign rights of Native Nations to restore and maintain their sacred relationship with bison.

## Securing a Future for Big Cats

Big cats, including jaguars, lions, tigers, and leopards, play a fundamental role in maintaining balanced ecosystems. As top predators and umbrella species, these wild felines both depend on and safeguard myriad other species in landscapes across the globe. Protecting big cats means keeping their expanses of habitat intact, especially in the face of climate change. To tackle these threats, WWF employs inclusive conservation practices, collaborating closely with communities on the ground, as well as organizations, governments, and other stakeholders across a range of sectors. Together, we ensure sustainable outcomes for people, big cats, and their habitats.

In summer 2024, the Royal Thai Government [announced that its wild tiger populations are growing](#), with a new estimate of 179–223 tigers. This increase marks a significant turn in the tide for tigers in Southeast Asia. Globally, over the past 10 years, the wild tiger population has rebounded from a historic low of around 3,200 tigers to some 5,574 tigers today thanks to remarkable partnerships of which WWF is honored to be part. Building on the success of such collaboration, key relationships are now in place in the Americas to protect another endangered big cat—the jaguar. Through these efforts, we aim to secure more space for jaguars to move along protected corridors.



# WITH GRATITUDE

We truly appreciate all that you do to advance WWF's conservation initiatives in places where it matters most.

Together, we are helping ensure a more sustainable future for our planet and the incredible species that rely on healthy ecosystems. *Thank you for championing WWF's work and for all that you do to advance conservation around the globe.*

