



# 2023 Annual Report

The Amazon Conservation Team

## *Founders' Letter*

As we reflect on another very productive year in nearly three decades of working hand-in-hand with indigenous and other local communities to protect the Amazon, we are filled with gratitude for your unwavering support. Together, we are preserving not only a biome, but also ways of life that are deeply intertwined with the earth, the rainforests, the waters, and ancestors.

We want to draw your attention to a group of individuals whose invaluable contributions to conservation often go unrecognized: indigenous women.

Indigenous women have always been keepers of traditional knowledge passed down through the generations. Their unique connection to the territory as life-givers and caretakers endows them with a profound understanding of the delicate balance that sustains life in the Amazon, an awareness that guides their actions as they confront deforestation, climate change, and colonization.

Numerous studies have shown that when women are at the lead, projects achieve greater success in biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, and community resilience. Further, research indicates that women often bring greater inclusivity, solidarity, empathy, and equity to initiatives, building stronger community engagement as a result.

But it is not just their knowledge—it is their resilience and tenacity in the face of adversity. Time and again, we have witnessed these women demonstrate remarkable leadership, mobilizing their communities to defend their forests, nurture their lifeways, and rebuild after crisis with courage and unity.

Theirs is a labor of love, rooted in a deep sense of responsibility to future generations and a commitment to preserving the Amazon for all beings. And it is interwoven throughout all of our work at ACT—touching on leadership, community health, and cultural health. Some of our joint achievements with indigenous women in 2023 include:

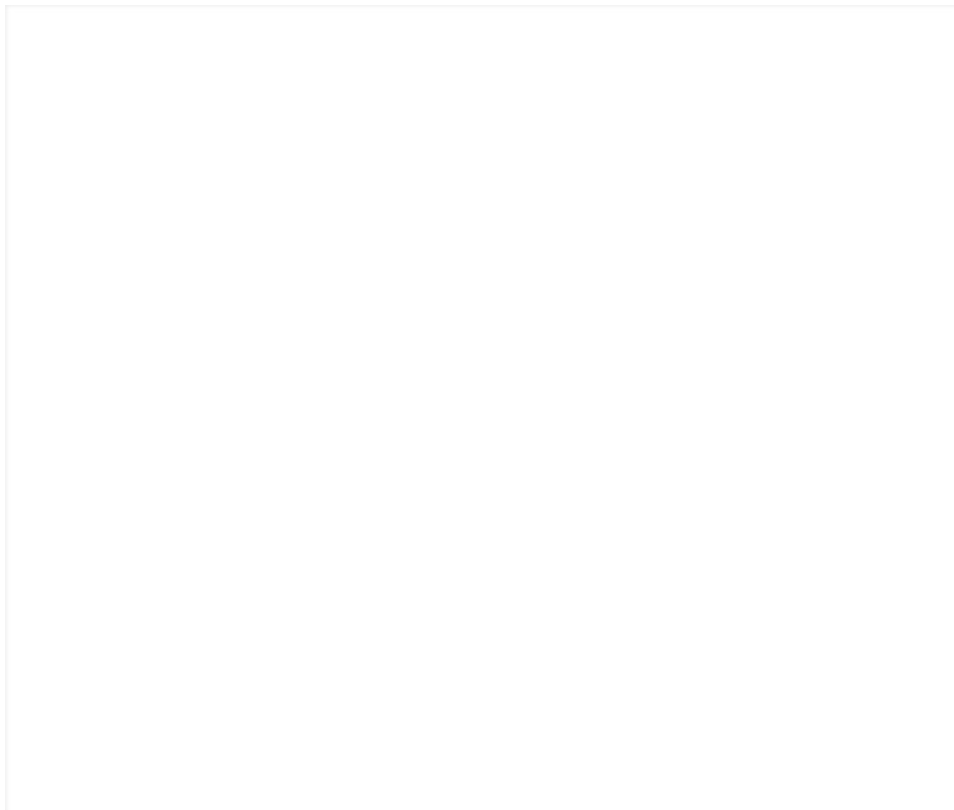
- Increasing the capacity of the Union of Indigenous Women of the Brazilian Amazon (UMIAB), a group dedicated to defending the rights of indigenous women and children across the Brazilian Amazon, to design and lead goal-oriented projects
- Tripling the revenue of over 70 beekeeping families and increasing production of both propolis and honey by 250% in Suriname
- Developing a pilot plan for comprehensive maternal perinatal care as part of our intercultural public healthcare initiative in

Colombia, benefitting ten indigenous groups across 58 villages

- Releasing the book "On the Paths of Indigenous Women Knowledge-Keepers", containing the teaching materials and methods of Kofán, Siona, Inga, Koreguaje and Kamentsá indigenous groups to educate their people across the Andes-Amazon transition region of Colombia

As we celebrate the achievements of 2023, let us honor the vital role that indigenous women play in shaping the future of our planet—their resilience, their wisdom, and their tireless dedication to conservation. And let us pledge to stand in solidarity with them as we continue our shared mission to protect planet, people, and spirit in Amazonia and beyond.

With deepest gratitude,



## *About ACT*

### *Mission*

The Amazon Conservation Team partners with indigenous and other local communities to protect tropical forests and strengthen traditional culture.

### *Vision*

We see a future where healthy tropical forests and thriving local communities exist in harmonious relationship with each other, contributing to the wellbeing of the planet.

## *Where We Work*

We are a field-based organization. Before we work anywhere, we first must be invited; in effect, we do not choose our partners, they choose us. Because the protection of water is of supreme importance to our partners, our **work areas** are frequently defined by the presence of headwaters and watersheds.

## *Offices*

- Washington, DC, United States (headquarters)
- Bogotá, Colombia
- Brasília, Brazil
- Macapá, Brazil
- Florencia, Colombia
- Paramaribo, Suriname

## *Regional Programs*

Our scope in Colombia / NW Amazon

Our scope in the Guianas / NE Amazon

Our scope in Brazil

## Our scope with Ancestral Tides

### *Our Strategies*

Through our holistic three-pronged strategic approach, we advance conservation initiatives that honor the interdependent relationship between forests and their people. The following pages highlight 2023 ACT initiatives that correspond to these overarching strategies.

#### *Land*

##### **Conserving rainforests and ancestral territories**

We ensure the restoration, stewardship, and protection of priority ecosystems and resources (both ecologically and culturally significant) by indigenous and local peoples, to ensure the long-term health and biodiversity of their lands.

#### *Livelihoods*

##### **Improving the physical well-being of communities**

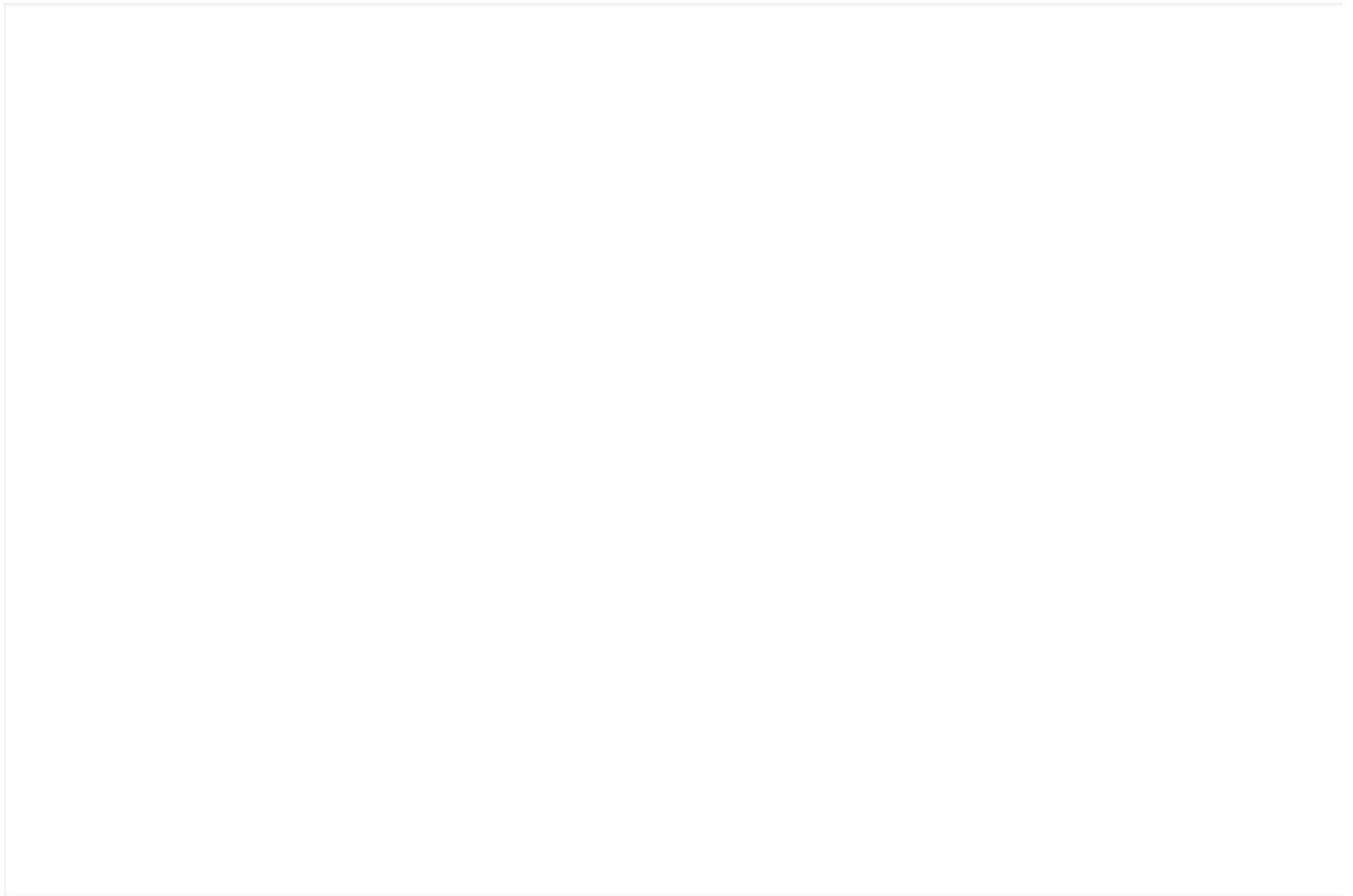
We advance collective access to critical services, necessities, and infrastructure, and promote sustainable local economies and income-generation systems, to support the permanence of indigenous and local peoples in their territories.

#### *Governance*

##### **Supporting the self-determination and living cultures of our partners**

We promote the ability of our partner communities to govern themselves and their territory, exercise their rights, and revitalize

their living cultural heritage, practices, and knowledge.



### *ACT's Cumulative Impact*

Across geographies and cultures, we work with many partner communities on diverse, bio-cultural initiatives to protect ancestral rainforests, support cultural revitalization, and expand indigenous self-determination. Together we co-create methods that center each community's unique priorities, challenges, and worldviews. This dynamic approach produces holistic impacts that often resist distillation into quantitative metrics. However, the following figures quantify a small sampling of achievements facilitated, directly supported, or executed by ACT.

**5** ACTIVE TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS MEDICINE CLINICS IN  
SURINAME

**7** ACTIVE RANGER STATIONS IN SURINAME OPERATED BY  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY MONITORS

**12** ACTIVE HEALTH POSTS ACROSS AMAZONIA

**3,000** ACRES PURCHASED AND RETURNED TO INDIGENOUS  
OWNERSHIP

**200,000** ACRES UNDER NEW PROTECTED AREA CATEGORIES

**1.7 MILLION** ACRES ZONED TO PROTECT ISOLATED PEOPLES  
IN NATIONAL PARKS AND INDIGENOUS RESERVES

**2.7 MILLION** ACRES OF INDIGENOUS RESERVES ESTABLISHED  
- BENEFITTING 69,000 PEOPLE FROM 18 ETHNIC GROUPS,  
INCLUDING:



**33** NEW INDIGENOUS RESERVES

**23** EXPANSIONS OF EXISTING INDIGENOUS RESERVES

**9,9 MILLION** ACRES UNDER IMPROVED SUSTAINABLE  
MANAGEMENT



### *Featured Stories*

## 1

## Expanding the Recognition of Indigenous Territories

For centuries, the territories of indigenous peoples in South America have been encroached upon and devastated. Each loss of land means the erosion of cultural identity, knowledge, and unique ways of life. At the Amazon Conservation Team, we collaborate closely with indigenous communities to restore their traditional territories. Restoring indigenous leadership over ancestral rainforests is not only vital for the cultural and physical well-being of these communities but also the most effective way to combat deforestation, sequester carbon, and safeguard biodiversity in Amazonia.

In 2023, with our technical and legal expertise, six existing indigenous reserves were expanded, and five new indigenous reserves were created in Colombia. The formal recognition of these ancestral territories helps achieve territorial justice for almost 4,500 individuals from nine ethnic groups. In total, more than 88,000 acres of ancestral territory were returned to indigenous hands in 2023, adding to the 2.6 million acres of indigenous reserve land we have already helped indigenous peoples formally establish.

**2****Restoring Fragmented Ecosystems Through Agroforestry**

Colombia's Caquetá department, a region heavily impacted by deforestation, witnesses the loss of hundreds of acres of forest annually due to timber extraction, cattle ranching, and monoculture production. ACT is dedicated to reversing this trend by transforming livestock pastures and monoculture farms into vibrant, biodiverse agroforestry systems. These initiatives not only create new sources of income but also enhance forest cover and ecological connectivity, allowing native wildlife and plant species to thrive.

Last year, ACT, in collaboration with local communities in the departments of Caquetá and La Guajira, restored 4,500 acres of fragmented ecosystems. With ACT's technical guidance, 349 families embraced sustainable management practices, including planting nearly 60,000 native trees, paving the way for a more sustainable and prosperous future.

**3****Centering Indigenous Practices in Healthcare**

Historically, Colombia's universal healthcare system has been unable to serve the unique needs of indigenous populations. Moreover, the imposition of strictly Western healthcare not only has a lower chance of acceptance, but also threatens further erasure of indigenous healthcare modalities.

ACT is supporting the Murui, Coreguaje, Pastos, Siona, and Emberá indigenous peoples—representing more than 17,000 people—as they develop their own autonomous healthcare systems (known as SISPI) integrated into the national public indigenous health entity. We help strengthen the collaboration between these groups and the government as they undertake this massive task, which requires dialogues and agreements between indigenous authorities, regional health departments, and local hospitals and universities. The stated commitment of the Colombian government to include SISPI in the national development plan is an important recognition of traditional medicine and practices.

In 2023, 63 community members from eight communities were trained as intercultural health promoters with ACT's support. And we have accompanied 87 communities through the first development phase of the SISPI initiative, in partnership with traditional authorities.

## 4

## Bringing Clean Energy to the Amazon

How do we ensure that indigenous peoples in the remote Amazon have access to clean energy? Many indigenous communities residing in these isolated areas are disconnected from national electric grids and have historically depended on diesel-powered generators. These generators, while functional, have significant drawbacks, including the need for expensive and unsustainable fuel.

Recognizing the need for a more sustainable solution, we took proactive steps across 2022 and 2023, facilitating the installation of 356 solar lamp kits across 34 communities situated in the middle and lower Caquetá River regions of Colombia and the Loreto department of Peru. This initiative has had a profound impact, benefiting over 1,500 individuals from more than 350 families. The adoption of solar energy has not only provided a cleaner and more reliable source of light, but also reduced their average energy costs by nearly two-thirds, marking a significant improvement in their quality of life.

## 5

## Uniting Ancestral Knowledge and Western Science to Protect Sea Turtles

By joining ancestral indigenous knowledge and Western scientific traditions, our new coastal initiative, Ancestral Tides, is pioneering biocultural sea turtle conservation across a network of indigenous communities from Colombia to Mexico.

In 2023, this initiative saw the launch of three indigenous-led monitoring projects and the construction of three sea turtle hatcheries, marking significant strides in our goals. Ancestral Tides' dedicated network of indigenous *tortugueros* also conducted over 500 beach patrols, tirelessly working to protect endangered sea turtle species. Their efforts have led to the identification of more than 900 nests across five beaches, a testament to the power of community-driven conservation. Remarkably, over 660 of these nests were carefully relocated to nurseries, ensuring successful hatching away from the threat of predation. This initiative is not just about saving sea turtles; it is about honoring and integrating the invaluable knowledge of indigenous communities for a brighter, more sustainable future.

## Mapping and Storytelling to Protect Ancestral Forests and Cultural

### 6

### Knowledge

The mapping and storytelling initiative of our ACT-Guianas program expanded to Guyana and French Guiana in 2023, helping to strengthen four communities' cultural links with their territories. Over a series of workshops, ACT introduced mapping and storytelling methodologies to Aluku, Macushi, and Wayana communities, conducted initial participatory mapping activities, and trained 37 community members in the use of audiovisual and mapping equipment and software. Over 500 places were mapped, and more than 100 stories recorded.

This initiative plays a crucial role in revitalizing indigenous cultural heritage and place-based knowledge, which are critical to cultural survival and the protection of local rainforests. By capturing and preserving these stories and maps, we honor the wisdom and traditions of indigenous communities, ensuring they are passed down through generations. Mapping and storytelling work was also advanced with Trio communities of southern Suriname, who have more than 150 stories and 50 places recorded for community use. This work enriches the cultural tapestry of these communities and fortifies their connection to their land.

## **Protecting Rainforests and Promoting Self-Determination through Community Life Plans**

In Suriname, we are working closely with Trio indigenous villages in the Curuni River watershed to facilitate their creation of community Life Plans, a collaborative process first developed in our Colombia program. These plans, written by the communities themselves, outline a path toward a future where their forests are better protected, their communities are thriving, and the well-being of their peoples is guaranteed. Addressing vital areas such as environmental management, land use planning, healthcare, education, governance, self-determination, and the preservation of cultural knowledge and traditions, these Life Plans are a beacon of hope and progress. Where feasible, the plans also seek integration of community objectives with regional governmental planning and development.

In 2023, the village of Kwamalasamutu achieved a significant milestone by completing their community Life Plan, celebrated in a high-profile national event with Trio leaders, ACT, and the President of Suriname. Meanwhile, the development of Life Plans is well underway in the additional Trio villages of Sipaliwini, Alalaparu, Curuni, and Amatopo. This collaborative effort is not just a plan but a powerful testament to the resilience, unity, and forward-thinking spirit of the Trio communities.



Across our programs in Suriname, Colombia and Brazil, ACT supports partner communities with stingless beekeeping initiatives, known as meliponiculture. These initiatives promote honey and propolis as medicine and food, and commercial harvesting when suitable. Stingless bee projects also encourage the application and revitalization of cultural memory about native bees and the protection of the standing forests required for these native bees to be productive. In Suriname alone, 77 dedicated beekeepers across three villages are managing around 400 hives of various species with our continuous technical training and support. This collaborative effort has yielded remarkable results; over the past year, the production of propolis, a medicinal plant resin, and honey has increased by 250%, while profits per beekeeping family have tripled.

**9****Structures for Strengthening Communities**

ACT's dedication to the well-being of our indigenous partner communities in Brazil remains unwavering. In 2023, we made significant strides in Urunai, a remote community in northern Brazil, by completing key stages of an ancestral knowledge center. This multifaceted structure will serve as a traditional health clinic and a venue for meetings, workshops, and cultural exchanges, providing a haven for individuals from neighboring villages. This center will directly benefit 210 people from Urunai and the village of Kuxare, fostering a sense of unity and cultural revitalization. Additionally, in the Xingu River region, ACT's support was pivotal in constructing six traditional houses in the Ulupuene village after devastating fires in 2023. Our commitment to rebuilding and strengthening these communities underscores our mission to protect and uplift indigenous communities, ensuring their resilience and continuity for generations to come.

**10****Bolstering Indigenous Governance, Participation, and Empowerment**

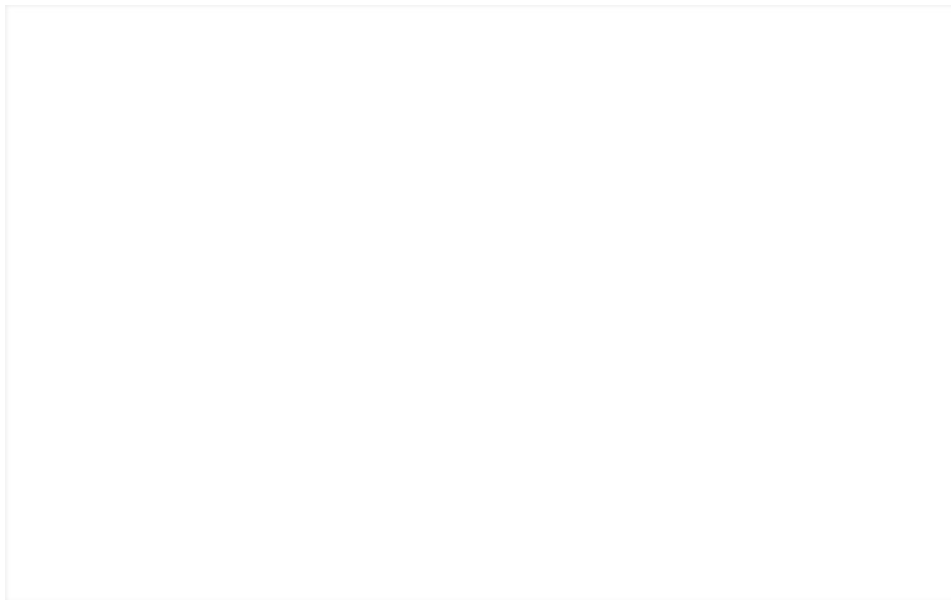
Civic participation is critical for indigenous communities as their struggle for their rights and the protection of their environment. In Brazil, in 2023, ACT supported indigenous associations in their internal governance, collaborations with public entities, and participation in major fora to raise the voice of indigenous peoples.

With a delegation of leaders from all villages of the Paran  do Bo  Bo  Indigenous Territories, deep in the Amazon, ACT sponsored a workshop of the regional indigenous organization APIAM on territorial monitoring, in collaboration with the Brazilian governmental indigenous protection agency FUNAI and the national public prosecutor's office. Additionally, in the Xingu River region of central Brazil, ACT provided support for the assembly of the Ulupuene Indigenous Association. ACT also funded the participation of nine indigenous leaders from four territories and the Xingu indigenous association ATIX in the Free Land Camp —the largest indigenous mobilization in Brazil that has occurred since 2004, numbering some 9,000 participants from more than 200 groups.

## 11 Recovery of Traditional Territory

In Brazil, ACT has supported the *Áwa* indigenous people in their fight to achieve the recovery of their traditional lands--the 70,000-acre Taego *Áwa* Indigenous Territory—from which they were violently captured and displaced in 1973. In 2016, the Ministry of Justice recognized their possession of their ancestral territory, but the government failed to fulfill its obligations to peacefully resettle ranchers and land grabbers who had illegally occupied these lands. In 2023, the *Áwa* reached a major milestone through a court judgment that requires government agencies to relocate settlers, an essential step in the restoration of the *Áwa*'s rightful ownership and the eventual restoration of this forest.

The broader context of this struggle highlights the pervasive problem of land theft and environmental destruction driven by colonization and industrial expansion. For Amazonian peoples, their land is vital for their physical well-being, cultural identity, and ancestral knowledge. ACT's focus on territorial justice addresses these challenges by ensuring indigenous communities not only regain access to their lands but also secure stewardship and decision-making rights. This approach supports high rates of forest cover, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration, underscoring the importance of territorial justice for both the survival of indigenous peoples and the health of our planet.



## *Financial Overview*

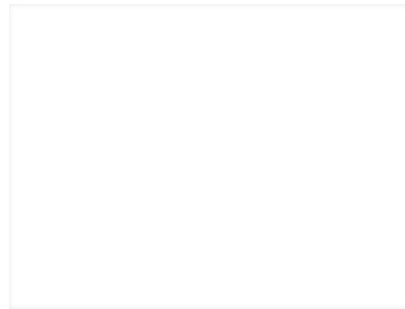
In 2023, ACT continued to achieve significant programmatic results and expanded geographies while focusing on our long-term strategies and addressing the critical need to conserve the Amazon and strengthen the communities that support its protection.

From the financial perspective, the total revenue for 2023 was ~\$13 million, representing a significant increase from the previous year. This growth was driven primarily by securing new multiyear grants from foundations. Externally, the investment market slowly rebounded, and our returns recovered when compared to 2022.

We carefully managed our expenses, which totaled ~\$12 million, a 13% increase over 2022 levels. We invested 80% in conservation initiatives and 20% in strengthening core operations across the organization, reflecting our dedication to sustaining a lean and efficient operation, despite the challenging economic conditions and inflationary trends, while remaining steadfast in delivering on our 2025 strategic plan.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters as each dollar contributed has made a difference in our conservation efforts. This continued support has been vital in making a lasting impact on our partner communities and the environment.

We are proud of the progress made and committed to intensifying our efforts during this time of increased urgency for our mission.



<b><i>Support</i></b>	<b><i>2023</i></b> <i>In USD</i>	<b><i>2022</i></b> <i>In USD</i>
Foundations	8,309,943	1,953,866
Individuals	1,690,742	1,762,474
In-country grants	961,020	673,123
In-kind contributions	834,977	108,500
Corporations	19,507	53,993
<i>Total grants and contributions</i>	<i>11,816,189</i>	<i>4,515,956</i>
Interest and investment	(1,251,873)	(3,297,757)
Other	30,965	14,003
Foreign currency valuation loss	79,870	(158,206)
<i>Total other revenue</i>	<i>1,362,708</i>	<i>(3,441,960)</i>
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>13,178,897</b>	<b>1,073,996</b>

<b><i>Organizational Efficiency</i></b>	<b><i>2023</i></b> <i>In USD</i>	<b><i>2022</i></b> <i>In USD</i>
Program services	10,086,639	8,744,191
General and administration	1,420,874	1,531,320
Fundraising	618,313	431,678
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>12,125,826</b>	<b>10,707,189</b>

<b><i>Revenue and Expenses Trends</i></b>	<b><i>2019</i></b>	<b><i>2020</i></b>
<b>Revenue[*]</b>	12,886,544	7,819,728
<b>Expenses</b>	6,903,536	6,763,738

[\*]Significant annual fluctuations in revenue are attributable to receipt of multiyear grants, the full value of which is recorded as revenue in the year awarded.

<b><i>2021</i></b>	<b><i>2022</i></b>	<b><i>2023</i></b>
27,342,714	1,073,996	13,178,897
8,991,567	10,707,189	12,125,826

[\*]Significant annual fluctuations in revenue are attributable to receipt of multiyear grants, the full value of which is recorded as revenue in the year awarded.

**Note:** The figures that appear in the financial summary are derived from the consolidated financial statements.

### *Financial Statements*



<b><i>Consolidated Statement of Financial Position</i></b> <i>(For the Year Ended December 31)</i>	<b>2023</b> <i>In USD</i>	<b>2022</b> <i>In USD</i>
Cash and equivalents	1,637,432	1,620,882
Grants and pledges receivable	5,388,896	1,792,423
Field operating advances	574	28,290
Due from related party	-	1,940
Prepaid expenses	141,406	79,570
Investments	14,075,770	16,664,723
Property and equipment, net	3,593,360	2,943,468
Security deposit and others	35,428	30,558
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>24,818,866</b>	<b>23,161,854</b>
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	312,308	282,980
Deferred revenue	640,878	76,220
<i>Total Liabilities</i>	<i>953,186</i>	<i>359,200</i>
Without donor restrictions	17,059,173	21,241,736
With donor restrictions	6,806,507	1,560,918
<i>Net Assets</i>	<i>23,865,680</i>	<i>22,802,654</i>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>24,818,866</b>	<b>23,161,854</b>

**Note:**

Figures are derived from consolidated financial statements. Funds are presented according to the accrual method of accounting.

ACT's audited financial statements, which reflect an unqualified opinion, can be obtained online at [amazonteam.org](https://amazonteam.org) or by calling (703) 522-4684.



Click [here](#) to visit our Charity Navigator profile

Click [here](#) to visit our GuideStar profile

<b><i>Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets</i></b> <i>(For the Year Ended December 31)</i>	<b>2023</b> <i>In USD</i>	<b>2022</b> <i>In USD</i>
Contributions	1,050,833	1,771,872
Grants	8,930,379	2,635,584
In-kind contributions	834,977	108,500
Interest investment return, net	1,251,873	(3,297,757)
Other	30,965	14,003
Foreign currency valuation loss	(79,870)	(158,206)
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>13,178,897</b>	<b>1,073,996</b>
Land management	5,106,916	3,352,084
Sustainable alternative livelihoods	1,562,633	1,798,862
Governance and culture	3,417,090	3,593,245
<i>Program Services</i>	<i>10,086,639</i>	<i>8,744,191</i>
General and administration	1,420,874	1,531,320
Fundraising	618,313	431,678
<i>Supporting Services</i>	<i>2,039,187</i>	<i>1,962,998</i>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>12,125,826</b>	<b>10,707,189</b>
Change in Net Assets before Translation Adjustment	1,053,071	(9,633,193)
Translation Adjustment	9,955	(3,081)

<i><b>Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets</b></i> <i>(For the Year Ended December 31)</i>	<i><b>2023</b></i> <i>In USD</i>	<i><b>2022</b></i> <i>In USD</i>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Change in Net Assets</i>	1,063,026	(9,636,274)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	22,802,654	32,438,928
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>23,865,680</b>	<b>22,802,654</b>

*Our Board*

*ACT-US Board of Directors*

***Laurie Benenson***

Writer and Producer

*Chair*

***Stephen Altschul***

Computational Biologist

*Secretary*

***Daniela Armijos***

***Jeff Bridges***

***William M. Cameron***

***Marcelo Carvalho de Andrade***

***Denise Castronovo***

***Ken Cook***

***Liliana Madrigal***

***Juan Mayr Maldonado***

***Elizabeth Murrell***

**Dr. Mark J. Plotkin**

***Nora Pouillon***

***David Stoup***

*Treasurer*

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***Pascal Tjong A Hung***

***Bernard Aronson***

Emeritus

***Robert W. Boykin***

Emeritus

***Margaret Clark***

Emeritus

***Ward Paine***

Emeritus

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*Jane Goodall*

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*Walter Isaacson*

*Julian Lennon*

*May Pang*

*Miranda Smith*

*Paul Stamets*

*Heather Thomas-Brittenham*

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*ACT-Brasil Board of Directors*

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***Joep Moonen***

***Dr. Mark J. Plotkin***

***Aniel Ramjanam***

***Milton Sandvliet***

Treasurer

***Jornell Vinkwolk***

*Our Team*

## *Brazil*

*In Brazil, Program Director **Luiz Lopes da Silva** leads a team of 18.*

## *Costa Rica Ancestral Tides*

*In our Ancestral Tides regional initiative, which links efforts in Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama and Colombia to protect sea turtles and coastal ecosystems while positively impacting the livelihoods and wellbeing of local communities, Program Director **Max Villalobos** leads a team of 14.*

## *Guianas*

*In the northeast Amazon, Regional Director **Minu Parahoe** leads a team of 32 in efforts in the three countries of the Guianas, primarily in Suriname.*

## *Northwest Amazon*

*In the northwest Amazon, home to our largest program, Regional Director **Carolina Gil** leads a team of 136 in efforts focused on Colombia with an additional initiative in Peru.*

## *United States*

### **Dr. Mark J. Plotkin**

*Co-Founder & President*

### **Liliana Madrigal**

*Co-Founder & Executive Vice President*

### **Karla Lara-Otero**

*Chief Financial Officer*

### **Crisbellt Alvarado-Rezola**

*Director, Finance & Operations*

### **Carolina Del Rio**

*Office & Executive Coordinator*

### **Brian Hettler**

*Director, Mapping*

***Bruce Hoffman***

*Senior Manager, Scientific Research*

***Tom McGuire***

*Chief Development Officer*

***Zach Nelson***

*Coordinator, Development & Reporting*

***Francelys Peché***

*Manager, Travel & Logistics*

***Antonio Peluso***

*Manager, Communications*

***Thais Santos***

*Staff Accountant*

***David Stone***

*Senior Manager, Narrative & Media Content*

## *In Memoriam*

### *Richard Kahn*

Richard Kahn was a quiet visionary—a brilliant lawyer and activist with a profound sense of social and environmental justice as well as a believer in the therapeutic benefits of psychedelics in healing.

At the end of 1995, Richard, a family foundation trustee, called to ask why ACT's precursor was not presenting a proposal to continue work that Mark Plotkin had begun in Colombia, focused on strengthening the more traditional uses of ayahuasca with shamans deep in the Amazon.

The founders told Richard that they were grateful for the offer but did not have the necessary infrastructure. In his eloquent deep voice, he replied, "Well, you find a way. The work is important." With this injection of belief and support, in 1996, ACT was formally founded with a mission that holds today, still advised by indigenous healers and elders.

Across those early years, Richard steadfastly encouraged ACT to continue bringing a new conservation paradigm of partnership with indigenous people to the philanthropic world. Securing funding for this novel approach was initially challenging, and Richard would skillfully edit our proposals to better convince foundations to support our work.

Richard's counsel and inspiration was of enormous value to us through and beyond the next quarter-century. We will miss Richard dearly. His legacy lives on.

### *Danilo Villafañe*

Danilo Villafañe, a forceful advocate for indigenous rights and culture as well as an ACT partner, was an Arhuaco leader renowned for his efforts to protect sacred indigenous lands in Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta from deforestation and colonization. He also served for a time as the governor of the Arhuaco.

Danilo came from a lineage of activism: his father, Adalberto Villafañe, was assassinated in 1996 while working to recover

Arhuaco lands from coca cultivators.

Per ACT President Mark Plotkin: "Danilo had an almost unique ability to befriend people from all walks of life and all parts of the economic and political spectrum. He was relentlessly cheerful and dedicated, often in the face of daunting challenges and real danger ... he died as he lived: a fearless hero, trying to help others."

### *Legacy Giving*

Ensure that your personal dedication to climate justice, indigenous rights, and conservation of the natural world is felt for many years to come! You can help protect the future of the Amazon rainforest and the indigenous peoples who call it home by making a legacy gift to the Amazon Conservation Team.

## Legacy Gifts by Will

FreeWill.com offers a free and secure online resource to make a personal will in about 20 minutes. You can easily make a plan for your future and family, while including a legacy gift that helps protect the Amazon forest together with the indigenous guardians who call it home. Through your will, you can donate part of your estate to the Amazon Conservation Team. Charitable gifts made by will to IRS-approved charity organizations, like the Amazon Conservation Team, are fully tax-deductible for federal tax purposes, with no limit to the deduction your estate can claim. Go to [freewill.com/amazonconservationteam](https://freewill.com/amazonconservationteam) to get started.

If you would like to include a charitable gift to the Amazon Conservation Team in your will without the support of FreeWill.com, your personal attorney should be your primary advisor in preparing or amending your will and any charitable legacy gifts you wish to include.

## Other Ways to Make Legacy Gifts

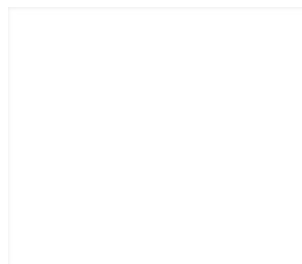
If you have a retirement plan, life insurance policy, or any other non-probate assets not included in your will, consider designating the Amazon Conservation Team as a beneficiary of one or more of these. Please use the following information on any beneficiary designation forms:

***Amazon Conservation Team***

***101 Park Washington Ct***

***Falls Church, VA 22046***

***Federal Tax ID Number: 54-1915987***





## Our Offices

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