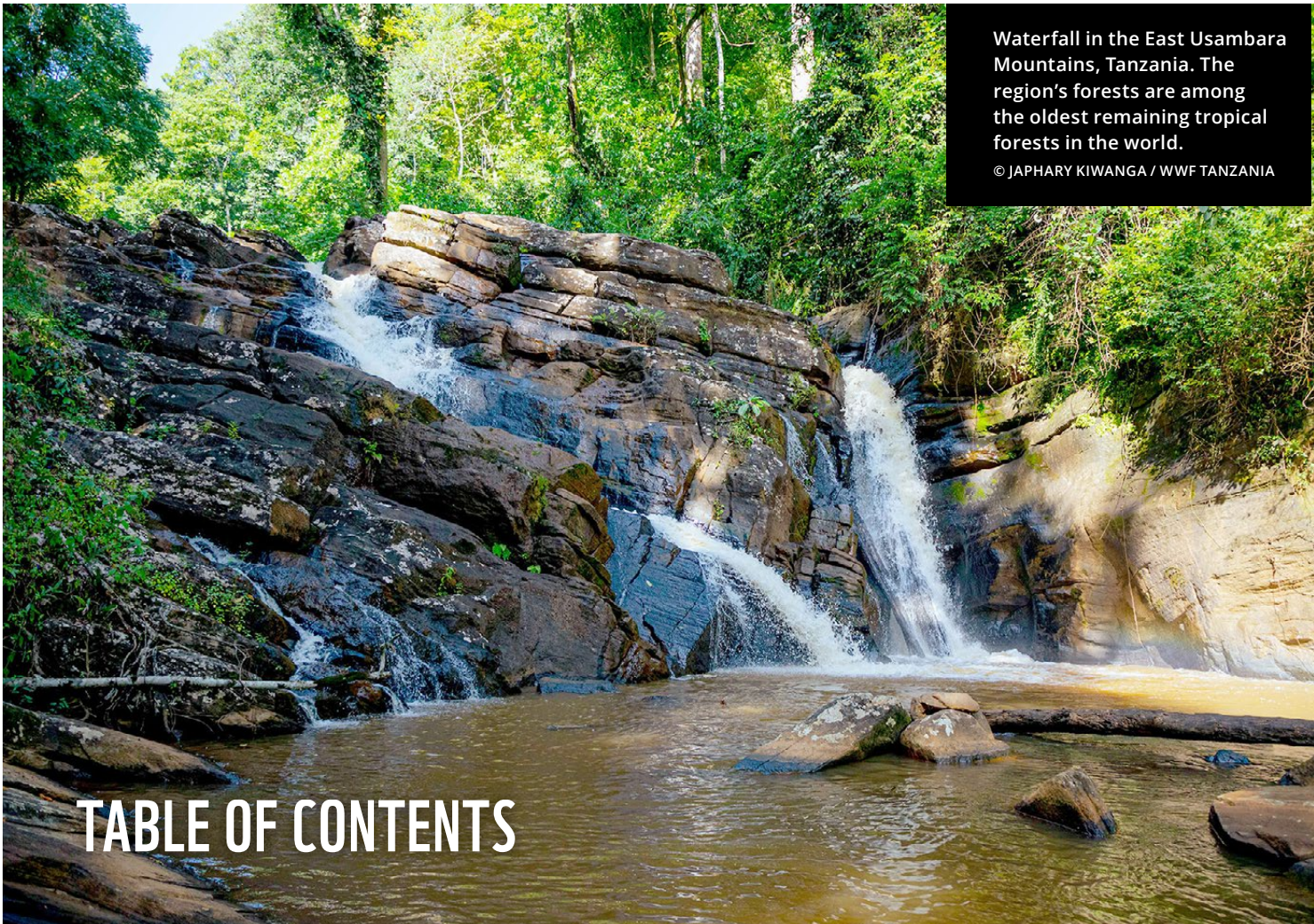




RESILIENCE FOR PEOPLE AND BIODIVERSITY

PROGRAMME REPORT 2025
TO MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND





Waterfall in the East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania. The region's forests are among the oldest remaining tropical forests in the world.
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Cover photo: A newborn mountain gorilla in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda. The programme supports its habitat through the protection and restoration of buffer zones. © JASPER DOEST / WWF



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Finland's development
cooperation

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAH	Africa Adaptation Hub (WWF's regional programme)	GVTC	Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
APAC	Africa Protected Areas Congress	HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach	PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
APAD	African Protected Areas Directors	HWC	Human Wildlife Conflict	PTDI	Municipal territorial development plan (Bolivia)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	P4G	Partnership for Growth
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	IKI	International Climate Initiative (Germany)	REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
CIVICUS	World Alliance for Citizen Participation	IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade	SOKNOT	Southern Kenya Northern Tanzania Landscape
COP	Conference of the Parties	LDC	Least Developed Country	TAL	Terai Arc Landscape (Nepal)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	LIS	Livestock Insurance Scheme	TOC	Theory of change
C2C	Conflict to Coexistence approach	MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	TRAFFIC	The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
DGBP	Danida Green Business Partnerships	MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland	UMADIS	Municipal Units for the Attention of Persons with Disabilities (Bolivia)
EAWCH	East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub (WWF's regional programme)	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
ESSF	Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework	MSME	Micro, Small and Medium size Enterprise	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
EU	European Union	NAP	National Adaptation Plan	UNFCCC RCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Regional Collaboration Center
EUDR	EU deforestation regulation	NBS	Nature-based Solutions	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
EUR	Euro	NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	USD	United States Dollar
FORRED	Forest Restoration for Resilience and Development-project, name of this MFA funded project in Laos	NFDIN	National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (Nepal)	WIOMSA	Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation		
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council	NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation		
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework (Kunming-Montreal)	ODA	Official Development Assistance		
		OECD	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures		



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Hyacinth macaw
flying over Bolivia.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the global context for development cooperation has changed significantly. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has reshaped security priorities, while economic pressures and shifting geopolitical dynamics have reduced political attention to climate change and biodiversity loss at both global and national levels, even though both climate change and biodiversity loss are rapidly proceeding and causing us more harm. At the same time, several partner countries experienced considerable political

transitions, particularly in 2025, affecting governance environments, civic space and policy continuity.

In this increasingly complex context, the Resilience for People and Biodiversity programme has demonstrated strong performance. Over the four-year period (2022–2025), the programme met or exceeded most of its targets across biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and inclusive governance. More than 71,000 people benefited from improved natural resource

Climate adaptation emerged as a particularly strong area of performance.

management, nearly 2 million hectares were brought under protection, and over 3.3 million hectares were supported through sustainable forest management. Climate resilience was strengthened through the adoption of 40 nature-based solutions and adaptation initiatives, while 472 civil society organisations and 16,700 duty-bearers were capacitated to advance inclusive and sustainable governance.

The results show clear contributions to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience. In several programme landscapes, habitat protection and improved management have supported positive population trends of key species such as rhinos, elephants and tigers. At the same time, deforestation trends indicate that while progress has been achieved in many programme areas, external drivers – such as agricultural expansion, forest fires and policy incentives – continue to pose significant challenges, highlighting the limits of programme-level interventions in isolation.

The programme has also generated tangible socio-economic benefits and strengthened inclusion. Targeted support to smallholders, community-based enterprises and nature-based livelihoods improved income opportunities and resilience, while systematic efforts on gender equality and disability inclusion contributed to more equitable participation in natural resource governance. Policy-level achievements demonstrate how local-level work can lead to structural change.

Climate adaptation emerged as a particularly strong area of performance. The programme successfully integrated nature-based solutions into community practices, local planning and policy processes, while leveraging additional financing and strengthening

institutional capacities. These efforts contributed to addressing key global adaptation gaps related to implementation, mainstreaming and financing.

At the same time, the programme period highlighted growing risks. Climate change impacts, political instability, shrinking civic space and increasing pressure on natural resources – often driven by global markets and geopolitical interests – continue to challenge conservation outcomes. Illegal wildlife trade and human–wildlife conflict remain persistent threats, requiring sustained and increasingly systemic responses.

Despite these challenges, the programme confirms that its Theory of Change remains valid: integrated approaches combining conservation, livelihoods, climate action and governance can deliver meaningful results for both people and nature. However, the changing global context underlines that these results are fragile. Sustaining and scaling them will require continued long-term investments, strengthened partnerships and more consistent political commitment.

Looking forward, the programme highlights the urgent need to maintain and reinforce focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, climate change and biodiversity loss must be brought back to the centre of political agendas, including within development cooperation. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland's evaluation on natural resources management shows, Finland has a strong comparative advantage in this area, especially in nature-based solutions, sustainable natural resource management and inclusive governance approaches. Building on the programme's results, continued support to these areas will be critical not only for environmental outcomes but also for long-term resilience, stability and security.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022-2025

OUTCOME 1. BIODIVERSITY IN LANDSCAPES SECURED

A total of **71,094** people benefitted from conservation, sustainable management and use of renewable natural resources in the programme areas.

32,744 were women, **27,806** representing indigenous groups or ethnic minorities, **525** were people with disabilities and **8,902** were youth.

A total of **9,995** smallholder farmers were supported to improve income, food security and climate resilience. **854** were youth.

A total of **1,865,181** hectares of forests and freshwater areas were designated under protection for conservation.

- **1,608,441** hectares of forests were put under new protection or conservation status.

- **273,137** hectares of forests were supported to be controlled by Indigenous People and/or local communities.

A total of **3,378,711** hectares of forests and freshwater ecosystems were put under sustainable management.

A total of **18,517** hectares were supported under restoration.

OUTCOME 2. CLIMATE RESILIENCE ENHANCED

40 nature-based solutions and climate change adaptation plans, policies and initiatives were adopted to improve the climate resilience of ecosystems, species and people.

A total of **38,689** people benefitted from climate activities under the programme. Some of them have also benefitted from other activities.

OUTCOME 3. INCLUSIVE AND JUST NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE IMPROVED

472 local civil society organisations and community groups were supported or capacitated to influence natural resource related decision-making and strengthen Indigenous and community rights and tenure

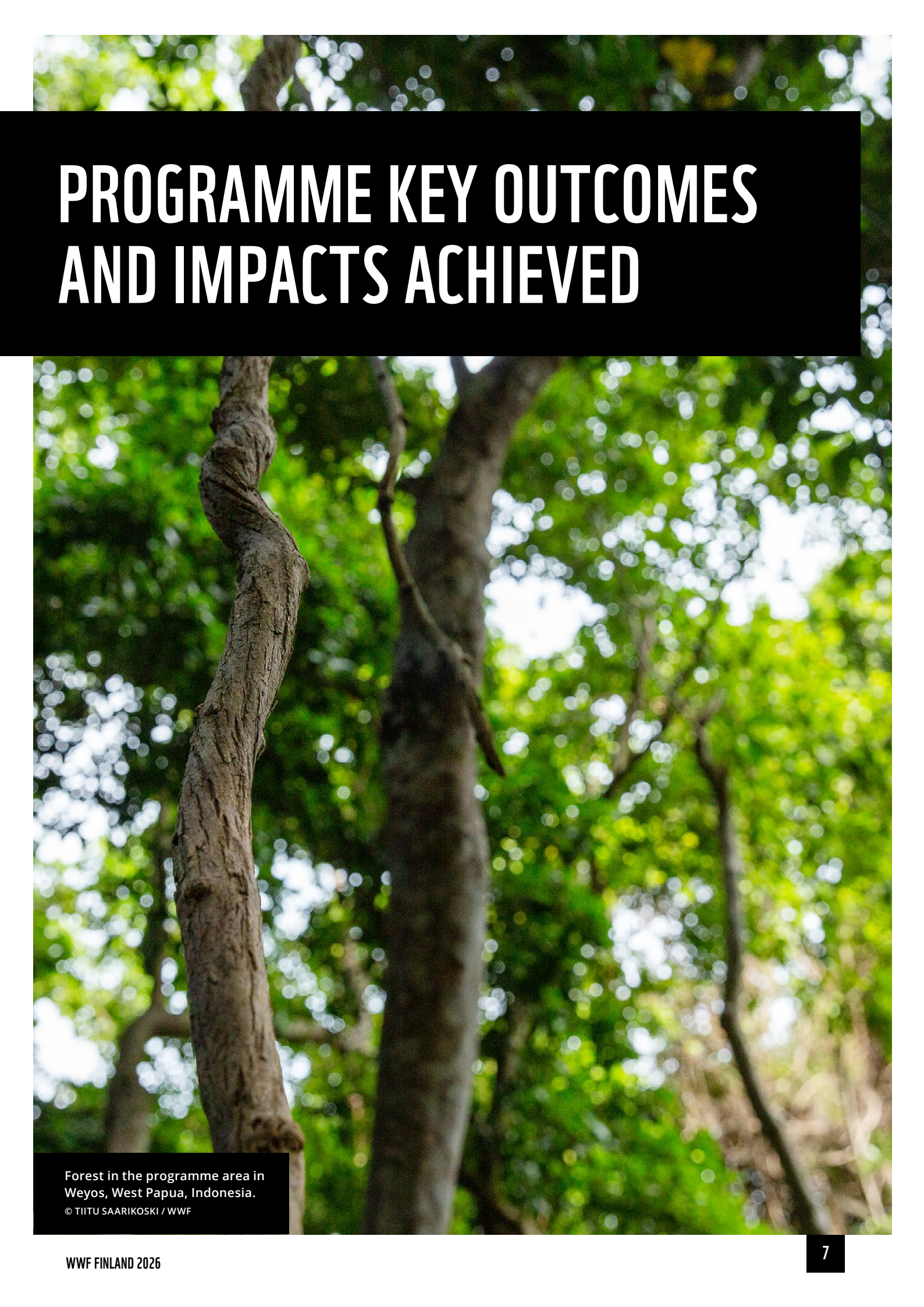
85 sustainable and inclusive natural resources policies, decision-making processes and investments were influenced (from the community level to international meetings).

16,741 public officials and other duty-bearers were capacitated and supported in natural resources governance and climate adaptation.



PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES IN 2022-2025

		FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
NUMBER OF PEOPLE, DIRECT BENEFICIARIES	RIGHT HOLDERS	37 946	45 553	83 499
	DUTY BEARERS	3 740	14 266	18 006
	GRAND TOTAL	41 686	59 819	101 505
NUMBER OF PEOPLE, INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES	RIGHT HOLDERS	200 932	191 564	392 496
	DUTY BEARERS	6 666	16 518	23 184
	GRAND TOTAL	207 598	208 082	415 680
TOTAL BENEFICIARIES		249 284	267 901	517 185



PROGRAMME KEY OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS ACHIEVED

Forest in the programme area in
Weyos, West Papua, Indonesia.

© TIITU SAARIKOSKI / WWF

IMPACT: HEALTHY, BIODIVERSE AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT LANDSCAPES WITH SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROVIDE SAFE HABITATS FOR SPECIES AND WELL-BEING FOR PEOPLE

Throughout the programme period the Theory of Change still holds true, with the assumptions confirmed valid and outcomes feeding towards the programme impact statement.

Population trends of priority species

Partners reporting to this indicator are Nepal and East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub. The assumption was that the censuses would be conducted regularly, but this didn't fully materialise. In Nepal, the latest rhino census is from 2021 and the latest tiger census from 2022. Nepal's rhino population increased from 645 in 2015 to 752 in 2021, and tiger population nearly tripled from 121 in 2009 to 355 tigers in 2022. The new tiger census was initiated in December 2025, and rhino census, which was planned for 2025, was postponed to 2026. The surveys are led by the Government of Nepal with technical and financial support from partners, including WWF. The target for both species in Nepal is to maintain the population rather than increase it. The programme has contributed to the improved habitat quality and strengthened ecological connectivity, and it has responded to the increase in human-wildlife conflicts by supporting various interventions to prevent conflicts, mitigate their effects and strengthen communities' resilience.

Globally, the wild tiger population has increased to 5,547 in 2023 from 3,200 in 2010, according to the Global Tiger Forum. Tiger populations are stable or increasing in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Russia and China, but the species is still endangered, having lost an estimated 95% of its historical range. The greater one-horned rhino lives in India and Nepal, and its status is vulnerable and population is increasing, currently standing at around 4,000 individuals.

Kenya's holistic national rhino strategy has enabled population increases through coordinated action linking security, welfare, technology and community stewardship. The black rhino population in Kenya has increased from 966 in 2022 to 1,059 in 2024,

representing 4% annual growth. Official figures for 2025 have not yet been released. In 2022, Kenya achieved zero rhino poaching across 15 rhino reserves, and since then, only eight rhinos have been poached across the country, with two rhinos poached in Tanzania during the same period. Elephant populations in Kenya and Tanzania are increasing. In Kenya, the elephant population has increased from 36,280 in 2021 to around 42,000 in 2025. Tanzania's elephant population has shown a significant rebound, growing to over 60,000 individuals as of 2023–2024, up from a low of 40,000 in 2014. In Uganda in Queen Elizabeth National Park, where the hub has been working to support WWF Uganda, the population has increased to an estimated 4,711 in 2024, the previous estimate from 2014 being around 3,000 elephants.

Mountain gorilla populations remain stable or increasing despite high levels of conflict across a large proportion of their habitat. In the Greater Virunga Landscape, transboundary cooperation is reducing duplicate work and enabling shared intelligence across three countries (Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda). The economic value of gorilla tourism is well recognised by all three states and local communities. While elephant, rhino and mountain gorilla populations are increasing in East Africa, illegal wildlife trade remains a major threat to wildlife populations across the region. Demand for bushmeat and pet trade are increasing. Illegal wildlife trade is a transnational crime, and tackling it requires transnational cooperation and transnational solutions.

Increased populations of priority species are a strong sign that conservation actions and approaches are effective. Unfortunately, biodiversity loss continued globally during the programme period, owing to limited conservation efforts and the continued expansion of unsustainable activities that drive it.

Trends in net annual natural forest change

A comparison in the primary forest loss data between the baseline period (2017–2020) and the programme reporting period for this indicator (2021–2024) shows a mixed but differentiated trend across partner countries. In most programme areas, primary forest loss either declined or remained broadly stable compared to the baseline. Clear reductions of forest loss were observed in several areas in Indonesia, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda, while the situation remained relatively stable in West Papua and Nepal, where the overall level of primary forest loss also remained low.

Increased populations of priority species are a strong sign that conservation actions and approaches are effective.

A group previously excluded from natural resource rights now has a legal basis for participation and economic benefit at a national scale.

In contrast, primary forest loss increased in the programme areas in Laos and, most significantly, in Bolivia (in Beni department). The exceptionally high figures recorded in Bolivia are largely explained by extensive and severe forest fires during the reporting period. The vast forest fires in Bolivia do not necessarily result in permanent forest loss in the long-term, although forest degradation might follow and make the forests more vulnerable to future forest fires. In addition, the trend has been reinforced by policy decisions and land-use dynamics that have favoured the expansion of agricultural land and pasture, contributing to continued forest clearing in primary forest areas.

When all programme areas are included, the total recorded primary forest loss increased from approximately 256,197 ha in the baseline period (2017–2020) to approximately 738,914 ha in 2021–2024. However, this overall increase is driven overwhelmingly by the exceptional situation in Bolivia, which should be interpreted as a major outlier in the dataset. When Bolivia is excluded, the combined primary forest loss across programme areas decreased from approximately 212,497 ha in the baseline period to approximately 168,914 ha in 2021–2024.

This suggests that, despite serious setbacks in specific contexts, especially Bolivia, the broader programme portfolio has seen either stabilisation or reduction in primary forest loss in most intervention areas. However, it should be noted that year 2025 is not included in endline data. For instance, forest loss in Indonesia surged by 66% in 2025, hitting its highest rate in eight years because of weak environmental protections and an ambitious food and energy self-sufficiency drive. On the other hand, 2025 saw a 36% drop in tropical primary rainforest loss, which is a big decline from the record high of 2024. This success was driven largely by reductions in Brazil. The assumption that data would be available for this indicator remained valid throughout the programme period.

Cases of positive changes in the socio-economic status in programme communities

Achieving the socio-economic impact of the programme rested on two assumptions: that a healthy environment contributes to the well-being of people, and government authorities support tenure process and recognise Indigenous Peoples and local communities as custodians of the forests and land. These assumptions have been met to the extent that the programme can be considered to have achieved

some positive changes in the socio-economic status of programme communities, as illustrated by the following cases.

In Nepal, eight years of systematic disability inclusion work – supported by WWF Finland – has produced measurable socio-economic gains for persons with disabilities in natural resource governance. A 2025 independent assessment by the Nepal Chapter of Abilis Foundation confirmed improved livelihoods, increased empowerment, and more positive community attitudes, identifying four good practices across the DENIAL framework dimensions of Dignity, Efficacy, Non-discrimination, Inclusion, Autonomy, and Livelihood. The most significant structural outcome is the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Nepal’s revised national community forestry guidelines for the first time. This formal recognition in forest resource governance and benefit-sharing represents a concrete socio-economic status advancement: a group previously excluded from natural resource rights now has a legal basis for participation and economic benefit at a national scale.

In Bolivia, in the remote Amazonian communities where the programme has been operating, having a disability has been a taboo and considered a punishment from God. Therefore, people with disabilities are often hidden and there is a strong stigma. The programme began working with expert partners to improve disability inclusion, and during the four years, there has been big development. The integration of Municipal Units for the Attention of Persons with Disabilities (UMADIS) into the Iténez Protected Area Fire Management Plan represents a tangible shift in the institutional status of people with disabilities. Where previously this group was largely absent from formal planning processes, they are now recognised as a priority group within municipal emergency governance structures. This institutional visibility is a prerequisite for improved access to public resources and services – a key dimension of socio-economic well-being in rural Amazonian communities. The training of caregivers for people with disabilities – a role almost exclusively borne by women – has begun to make this work visible as a community resource rather than a private burden. By linking caregivers to formal municipal coordination mechanisms (including the municipal emergency coordination system and WhatsApp communication networks), the programme has created a pathway for this group to gain recognition and support from local institutions.

In Uganda, the programme significantly expanded its reach, supporting smallholders at 2.5 times the original target through cooperative structures. Six

formally established timber growers' and traders' cooperatives across five districts gave communities collective access to sustainable forestry enterprises and timber and honey product value chains, directly improving household incomes. Sawmill equipment installed in five cooperatives reduced timber waste and increased processing efficiency, strengthening economic returns. Women's socio-economic status improved through systematic inclusion in nature-based enterprises, livelihoods support, and training in production management and value addition. Women with disabilities received targeted agricultural and value addition training, addressing the intersectional barriers that most often compound economic marginalisation in rural communities.

Adaptation to climate change is context-specific and multidimensional, and no single indicator can fully capture all its aspects.

In Tambrau Regency, West Papua, the programme generated two interlinked socio-economic impact pathways for indigenous coastal communities, namely the formal recognition of customary territorial rights and the development of community-led ecotourism as a viable income source. On tenure, the programme supported the Tambrau Regency Committee for the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples, together with a partner organisation, in formally recognising the customary territory of the Yessa clan, which covers approximately 58,000 hectares. Separately, community-based conservation practices for another clan in Syukwo village, covering more than 12,000 hectares, were formalised through village regulations establishing "sasi" resource management zones, a traditional conservation mechanism now recognised by legal village governance. On the income side, the Nanggouw village ecotourism group generated economic return from their nature-based enterprise, and their Toweuw Ecotourism Group scored 5th place in a national village tourism award, which subsequently led to the Ministry of Tourism allocating a dedicated funding to further strengthen the capacity and development of the Nanggouw ecotourism destination. The assumption that government authorities support the tenure process and recognise Indigenous People and local communities as custodians of the forests and land has been valid to the extent that the intervention logic of the programme impact still holds.

While these positive signs of impact on communities' socio-economic status can be seen, specific socio-economic well-being surveys in Madagascar showcased that while being able to maintain many dimensions of the community well-being, e.g. social cohesion, resource access and reduced conflict severity, people's economic well-being was decreased mainly due to the global price collapse of the vanilla, the main cash crop the communities depend on for their livelihoods. This

demonstrates how challenging maintaining sustainable improvements for communities who depend on natural resources is when wider external shocks strike. This reveals that although the assumption that a healthy environment contributes to people's well-being can still be deemed valid, the impact of a healthy environment to people's well-being may be hampered by external shocks.

Cases of climate change adaptation and adaptation co-benefits are presented, including case-specific quantitative data

Adaptation to climate change is context-specific and multidimensional, and no single indicator can fully capture all its aspects. The results of the programme's climate component at impact level are based on the programme's demonstrated outcomes across community, institutional and policy levels.

Over the four-year programme period, clear signs of impact have emerged across multiple levels, which can be presented as a model for scalable adaptation measures with co-benefits. Overall, the programme exceeded its climate outcome targets. At the community level, climate-smart practices were integrated into farming systems, for example, and local adaptation plans were translated into household-level measures, delivering co-benefits for food security, water availability, flood and erosion risk reduction, and ecosystem restoration. At the institutional level, climate-related decision-making processes were influenced and duty-bearers were capacitated, resulting in adaptation aspects being embedded into government plans and policies and adopted. The impacts of the adopted policies and plans, as well as ecosystem-based adaptation options that have been implemented, will become better visible in coming years, when the implementation of these plans advances and restored ecosystems become further established over time, delivering benefits such as improved governance and sustainability of livelihoods, and ecosystem services. At the systemic level, a significant amount, approximately 13 million EUR, of additional financing was leveraged for nature-based adaptation in Africa, demonstrating influence beyond the programme's direct reach.

Together, these results reflect a multi-level contribution to climate resilience, with measurable outcomes particularly covering livelihoods, governance and policy. These programme results also address the main gaps identified by the UNEP Adaptation Gap Report 2025: the lack of adequate adaptation actions, mainstreaming of adaptation in plans and processes, as well as financing.

The assumption for this impact to be achieved was that the best available science and local knowledge would be available for the design of the adaptation projects and communities would be willing to implement them. The assumption has been met during the programme period, resulting in the positive signals emerging from the programme.

OUTCOME 1. INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LANDSCAPES IMPROVED TO ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY, SPECIES HABITATS AND MOVEMENT, AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES TO BENEFIT PEOPLE AND NATURE

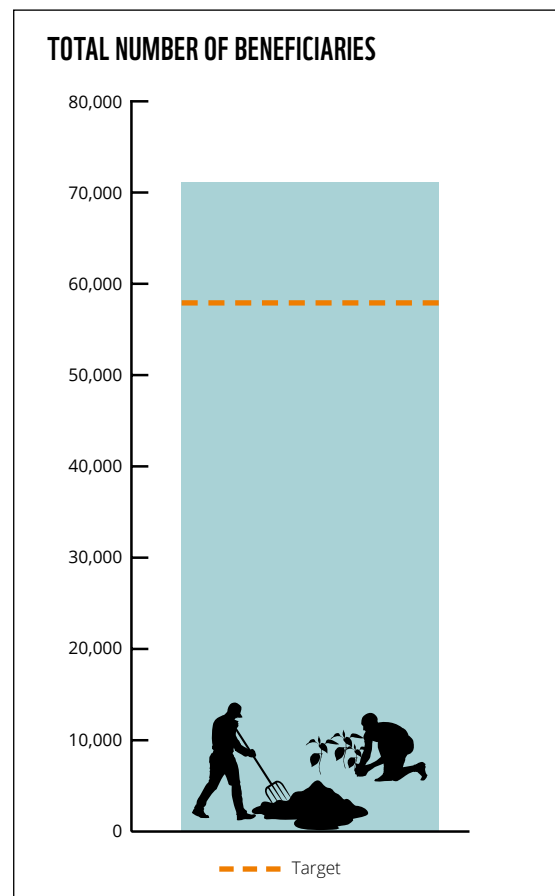
People benefitting from conservation, sustainable management and use of renewable natural resources and climate adaptation activities

By the end of 2025, the programme had reached 71,094 people, representing 123% of the overall target. This demonstrates strong performance across programme areas. While the overall programme performance was satisfactory, there was variance between countries with some over-performing and others falling behind their targets. Some of this variance can be explained by target setting, which was conservative in some cases and ambitious in others. External factors also slowed down progress, such as delays in getting the project started, implementation delays and extraordinary administrative challenges in a few cases (see 3.3. Financial management for more information). In Finland, programme reach remained below target due to reduced outreach capacity, including fewer voluntary contributors to awareness-raising school tours.

WWF systematically integrated disability inclusion into conservation work.

Of the total number of people reached, 32,774 were women, indicating both a good level of achievement and the need for continued efforts to ensure more equal participation. 27,806 beneficiaries were from Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minority groups, reflecting the programme's strong focus on working with communities that are most directly dependent on natural resources.

Over the four-year programme period, WWF systematically integrated disability inclusion into conservation work, directly benefiting over 500 rights-holders with disabilities and partnering with 14 disability organisations across multiple countries.



The programme reduced barriers to participation for persons with disabilities in the programme communities through assistive devices, awareness-raising, skills training, and the establishment of dedicated groups for persons with disabilities, which led to improved livelihoods, greater self-confidence, and stronger agency in countries including Nepal, Laos, Tanzania, Uganda, and Bolivia. The programme also strengthened representation in decision-making, with initiatives in Madagascar, Papua, and Bolivia embedding disability-inclusive approaches into natural resource management, climate adaptation, and disaster risk structures, including two disability-inclusive pilot villages established through local government in Papua. The programme also advocated for disability-inclusive policies such as the national community forestry guidelines in Nepal.

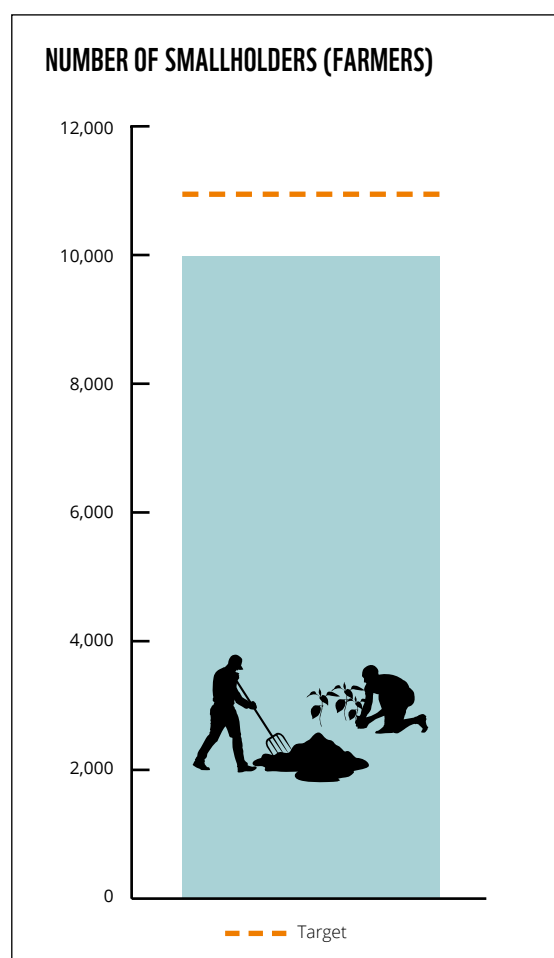
Overall, the programme successfully expanded its reach while maintaining a focus on inclusive participation. The assumption that communities and targeted rights-holders are willing to work together with WWF remained valid. The results demonstrate that combining conservation, sustainable natural resource management and climate adaptation activities continued to provide tangible benefits to

communities, while contributing to the programme's long-term impact.

Supporting smallholders through measures aiming to increase their sustainable agricultural production and/or access to markets

Over the full programme period, a total of 9,995 smallholders were supported to improve their income, food security and resilience, of which 4,296 were women and 127 persons with disabilities. This represents 91% of the target.

Integrating sustainable agricultural practices with natural resource management supported the conservation of forests and other ecosystems.



Support focused on promoting climate-smart agriculture, agroforestry, and sustainable value chains, alongside strengthening producer groups and community-based enterprises. These interventions enabled farmers to diversify production, improve productivity, and sometimes engage more effectively in local markets. Integrating sustainable agricultural practices with natural resource management supported the conservation of forests and other ecosystems.

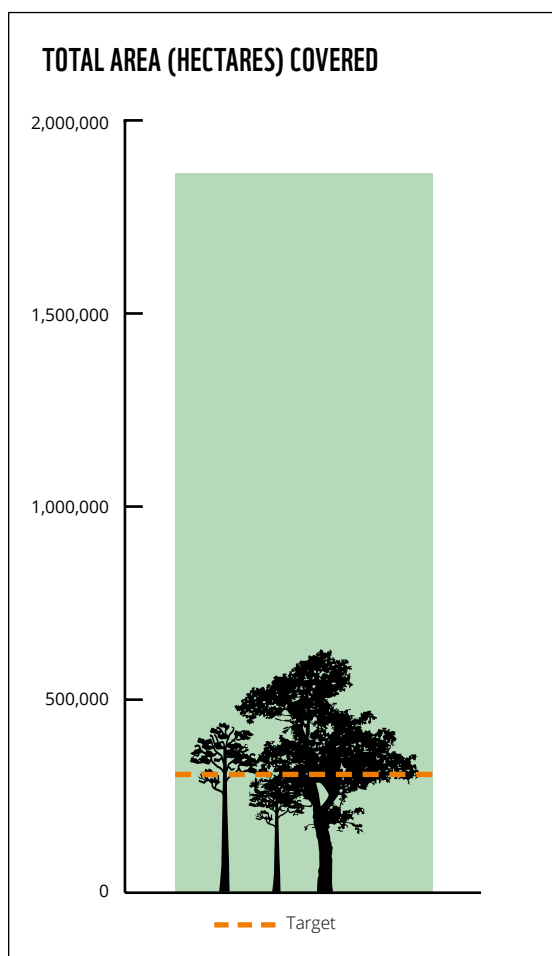
However, the results also show that improving market access and value chain development requires sustained investment and functional local institutions, both of which are often lacking. Support for livelihoods requires long-term engagement, where communities are supported in the establishment and running of livelihoods activities. In some contexts, progress was affected by external factors such as implementation delays or limited market opportunities. The operational context remains challenging, and progress is incremental.

The programme assumption for the activities was that governments would have enabling environments for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to operate, private businesses would be willing to invest in sustainable production, and nature-based livelihood models would be economically viable. In many countries, weak market access, limited infrastructure and a constrained private sector have made supporting MSME development challenging. However, several nature-based livelihood models, such as agroforestry, honey production, coffee farming, vanilla cultivation and ecotourism, demonstrated good potential when supported through community engagement, technical assistance and market-oriented approaches. Overall, the programme demonstrates that strengthening smallholder livelihoods through sustainable agricultural production and improved market access remains essential for achieving both conservation and development outcomes. By aligning livelihood support with ecosystem management, the programme has contributed to more resilient communities and more sustainable use of natural resources.

Advancing protection, restoration and sustainable management of natural resources

During the four-year programme period, a total of 1,865,181 hectares of forests and freshwater areas were designated for protection or conservation. Of these, 2,868 hectares were newly designated in 2025. In total, 273,137 hectares were located in areas managed by local communities or Indigenous Peoples.

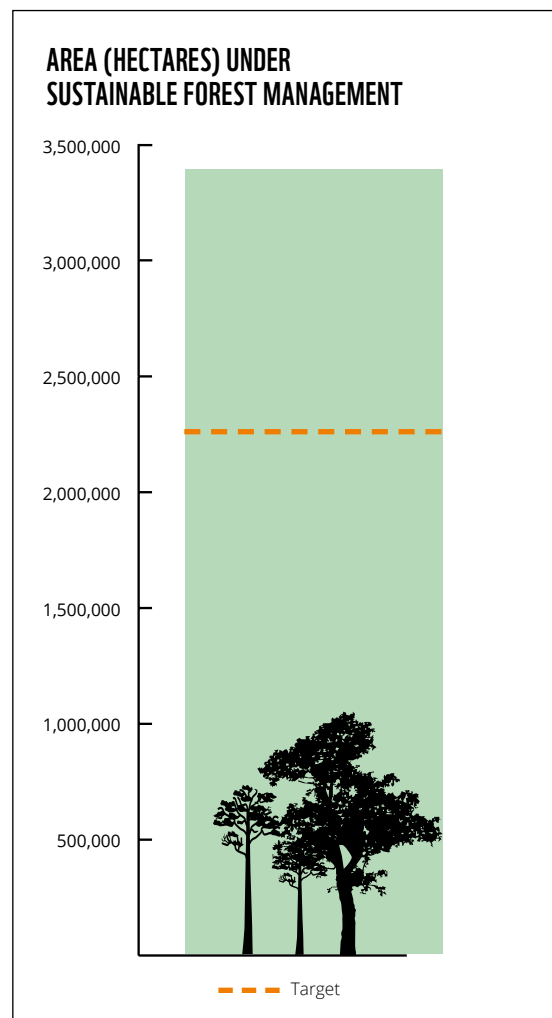
Most of these new protected areas are in Borneo, where an area covering nearly half a million hectares was designated as a wildlife migration corridor across four districts in West Kalimantan, particularly benefitting orangutans and gibbons. In addition, in Papua, 128,585 hectares of customary land managed by Indigenous clans were officially recognised. In Madagascar, a protected area of 55,537 hectares was managed by WWF and local communities.



The programme exceeded its original four-year target for environmental protection sixfold by the midpoint of the programme period. This was largely due to the fact that the target set for Borneo was relatively modest and significantly more areas were designated for protection than initially anticipated. In total, 616% of the four-year protection target was achieved.

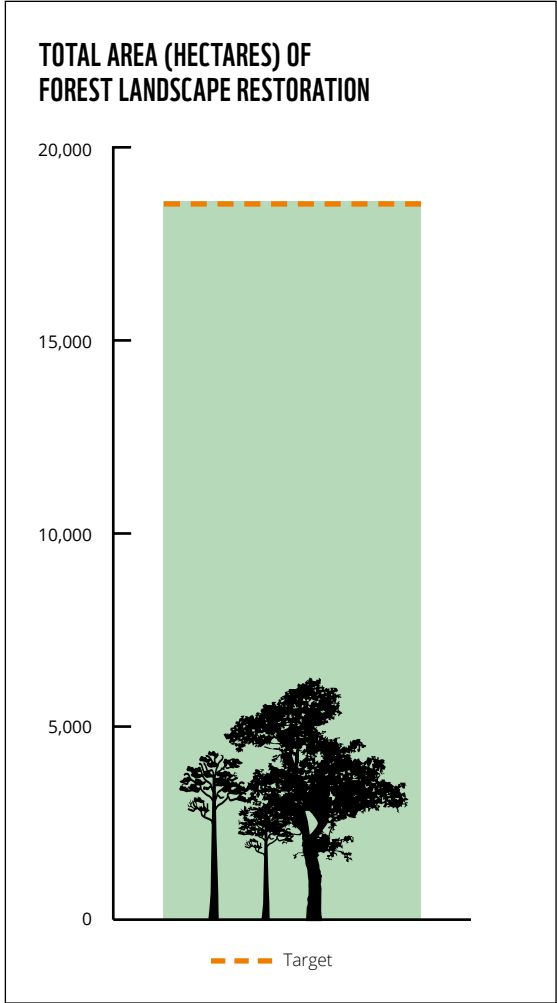
During the four years, altogether 3,378,711 hectares of forests and freshwater areas were supported for improved management, meaning that 151% of the four-year target for improved management was achieved. Of these, 1,059,559 hectares were added in the final year of the programme. Most of the areas were in Bolivia, where an area of 2,404,910 hectares received official government approval for its first-ever Ramsar site management plan to protect and manage large wetland ecosystems. Also within this area is the Iténez protected area, which was supported with a fire management plan to protect it from increasing fire incidents. In Borneo, Uganda and Madagascar, large areas (almost 1,000,000 hectares together) were also brought under improved management or earlier support was continued or strengthened,

while smaller areas were similarly supported in Laos, Nepal and Papua. Most of the larger areas are government-managed forests, except in Madagascar, which is a community managed area, and the smaller ones are community and village forests. A common activity that has been supported has been the development or updating of forest and land use management plans for these areas.



The programme also supported the restoration of ecosystems in the programme landscapes. Over the four-year period, an area of 18,517 hectares was placed under restoration. In 2025, the last year of the programme, an additional 1,088 hectares were put under restoration. 100% of the original target for four years was achieved. Most of the restored areas were in Uganda, Laos, Madagascar and Nepal. The majority of the restoration areas are located on village land and around larger forest areas. Restoration consists of active restoration, where tree seedlings are planted, mostly by community members who also raise seedlings in the supported tree nurseries. Passive restoration was also

achieved through natural regeneration. Restoration was also carried out for climate change adaptation purposes. Examples include tree planting in riverbeds, on degraded slopes and hills and around water sources to improve soil stability, vegetation cover and microclimate. In Tanzania, agroforestry restoration using spice trees, such as cloves and cinnamon, was the main approach for climate adaptation and livelihood income generation.



Effective conservation requires that local communities see tangible benefits from their participation

The total area of restoration is relatively modest, but more relevant is the strategic location of the restoration areas. Most of these are in the corridors, buffer zones or boundaries of larger forest areas, and the main goal of the restoration is to improve the ecological connectivity or integrity of the fragmented forest landscapes. Therefore, the impact is wider than just the specific restoration area. Based on the mid-term review recommendations, more attention has been paid to monitoring the survival rate and growth of the restoration areas.

A good example of long-term restoration support is from Nepal, where WWF Finland has supported

landscape restoration for over 15 years with support from the Finnish government. In 2025, WWF Nepal achieved significant progress in forest restoration, sustainable forest management and climate finance. A major milestone was the Government of Nepal receiving its first results-based REDD+ payment of USD 9.4 million, as a result of achievements in carbon removal through improved and sustainable forest management in the Terai Arc Landscape, an area of the Resilience programme. The landscape also gained global recognition in 2024 as a UN “World Restoration Flagship”, reflecting the impact of long-term restoration efforts.

The programme also allocated technical and financial support to the management of areas and national parks that had been officially protected earlier. Examples of support are e.g. updating management plans, conducting biodiversity monitoring, implementing patrolling to reduce illegal encroachment and activities, and training for the staff and authorities of the conservation areas. These activities are not shown in numbers of new hectares but are crucial work under this programme. A good example of this is Madagascar, where WWF together with local communities and authorities is responsible of the management of the COMATSA protected area in the north of the country.

The programme assumption related to Outcome 1 “other drivers of natural habitat destruction and biodiversity loss are addressed” was only partially met across programme countries. In Laos, a significant cassava cultivation boom during the programme period drove the clearing of forest areas for agricultural production – a trend that was partly sanctioned and supported at the national policy level, limiting the programme’s ability to address this driver of habitat loss. Similarly, in Bolivia, a land policy framework that incentivises the conversion of forests into agricultural and grazing land contributed to large-scale wildfires and widespread deforestation throughout the programme period. While the programme made meaningful contributions to conservation within its scope, these broader structural and policy-driven pressures on natural habitats remained largely outside its influence and continued to pose significant challenges to biodiversity outcomes.

OUTPUT 1.1. INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SUPPORTED AND NATURE BASED LIVELIHOODS MODELS AND VALUE CHAINS DEVELOPED

Number of MSMEs supported aiming to improve access to value chains and / or markets

Effective conservation requires that local communities see tangible benefits from their participation. The



Community savings and loans group in the Diana seascape, Madagascar, collecting monthly savings instalments from members.

© HENNA TANSKANEN / WWF

programme supported local and Indigenous communities to establish, expand and sustainably manage community forests, wildlife areas and conservation zones, ensuring they were empowered to fully benefit from conservation efforts.

The programme was successful in strengthening inclusive community-based natural resources management alongside supporting nature-based livelihoods and value chains. These efforts contributed to reducing pressure on ecosystems while improving income opportunities and resilience for local communities. Across the programme period, a total of 78 micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) were supported, representing 132% of the overall target. Twelve of these enterprises are led by women. None of the programme countries stand out in terms of

over- or under-performance on this indicator. The livelihoods supported include, for example, vanilla cultivation, coffee farming, timber as well as broom-making, beekeeping, tree nurseries and tourism services. Overall, this reflects strong progress in livelihoods work and the promotion of sustainable, locally driven economic activities linked to natural resource management.

There were no significant changes in the operational environments of the supported MSMEs, as global upheavals had limited impact on last-mile communities with which the programme primarily works. Many of the communities are situated close to protected areas that are difficult to reach and have limited infrastructure and economic opportunities. These structural constraints limit livelihood options and market

access for smallholders, with typically only a handful of off-takers present. Value addition proved most successful in areas with a concentration of producers focused on a single commodity, for example, vanilla in Madagascar. At the same time, dependence on a single commodity renders the communities vulnerable to international price fluctuations.

OUTPUT 1.2. SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE LAND USE PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ADVANCED AND PROTECTION AND RESTORATION SUPPORTED IN FOREST AND FRESHWATER LANDSCAPES

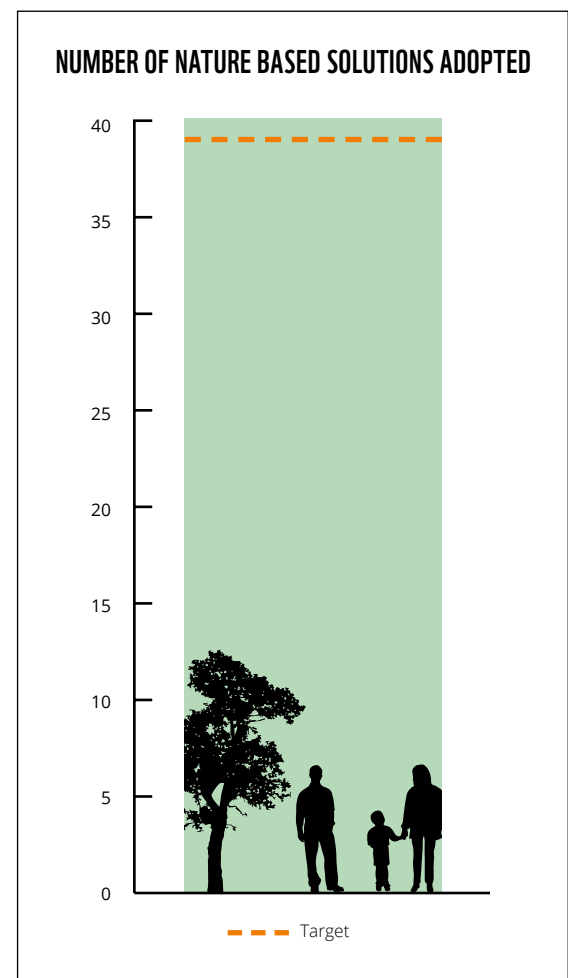
During four years, the programme supported the development of 109 new land use, watershed, wetland and forest or forest fire management plans to protect or sustainably manage natural resources, such as forests and rivers. These included the first-ever government-approved management plan for the Rio Blanco Ramsar site in Bolivia, placing over 2 million hectares under sustainable water management. Various village land use and forest management plans were developed and updated in Laos, Nepal, Madagascar and Papua, and in Borneo, an orangutan corridor management plan was developed together with government partners. Many government-led land use planning processes are multi-year and include sub-plans to prepare for the master plans. On the other hand, many of the plans are at community level and the processes are faster. The original four-year programme target was achieved and even exceeded at 143%.

In addition, the programme supported the monitoring of biodiversity to provide crucial information for WWF, government partners, communities and other stakeholders to secure ecologically important areas and improve species protection. During four years, altogether 57 new analyses, surveys, monitoring processes and trainings were conducted, achieving 100% of the original target. Most of these were conducted by the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub. For instance, in Papua, training was conducted in collaboration with research agencies and NGOs on the use of acoustic monitoring and camera traps to strengthen biodiversity monitoring and ecological data collection on species such as the bird of paradise and leatherback turtles. In Madagascar, a study was conducted on the world's smallest chameleon, *Brookesia nana*. In Laos, a species survey using camera traps was conducted in Xe Pian National Park, after 20 years indicating a wide range of species still present in the park. Within the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub, national park rangers, including women rangers, received several training sessions on wildlife monitoring and human–wildlife conflict management, and zero poaching assessments were also carried out.

OUTCOME 2. IMPROVED RESILIENCE OF ECOSYSTEMS, SPECIES AND PEOPLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LANDSCAPES AND ENHANCED CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Nature-based solutions and adaptation projects, policies and / or initiatives adopted

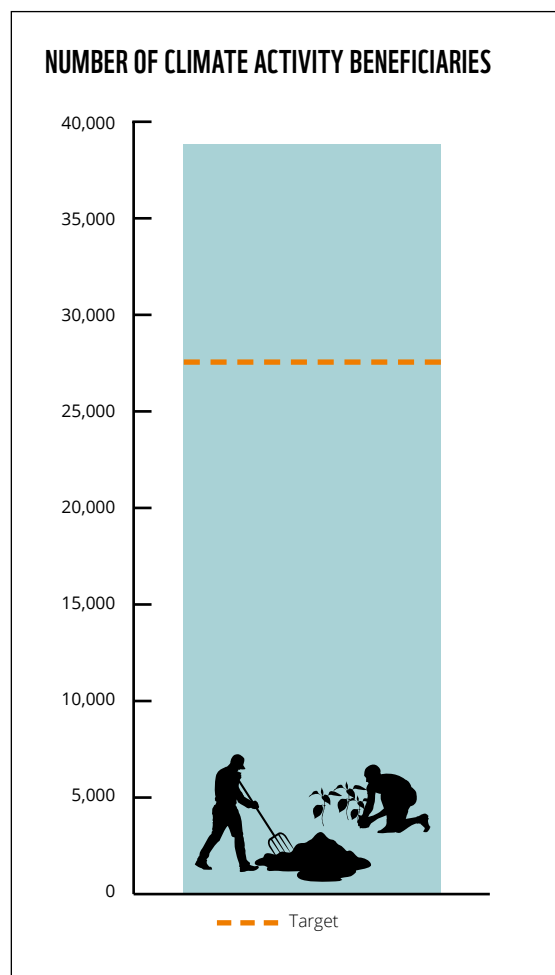
The achievement of Outcome 2 assumed that stakeholders would be willing to co-create and adopt nature-based solutions for climate change, and that there would be sufficient financing to implement adaptation interventions to enhance resilience towards climate change. These assumptions held true and enabled the programme to reach 103% of the target for the whole programme period.



During the programme period, altogether 40 nature-based solutions (NbS) and adaptation projects, policies and initiatives were adopted.

The programme was successful in embedding climate sustainability and resilience into conservation measures and utilising assessments, piloting, and building capacity to move towards wider implementation and uptake by the end of the programme. During the programme period, altogether 40 nature-based solutions (NbS) and adaptation projects, policies and initiatives were adopted.

The uptake of climate adaptation measures increased steadily among the communities as the programme progressed. Altogether 38,689 rights holders benefitted from interventions aiming to improve climate resilience, which equals 141% of the target.



WWF's Africa Adaptation Hub established itself as a regional thought leader on adaptation.

For example, in Nepal, the programme was able to restore over 450 ha of high flood risk agricultural and forest lands and river floodplains through nature-based solutions, benefitting more than 5,000 households. These interventions reduced erosion and flood risks while strengthening the adaptive capacity of communities. In Bolivia, inclusive fire plans including volunteer brigades and disability-sensitive emergency coordination were established, improving preparedness for wildfires to safeguard people and wildlife in the municipalities. Climate change adaptation, hydroclimatic risk, and water management were incorporated into the longer-term 2026–2030 development plans of three municipal governments. These plans drew on climate and hydrological studies conducted under the programme, and they are used as the basis for future government budgeting. In Madagascar, a three-region governance steering structure for nature-based solutions was established and operationalised between SAVA, SOFIA and DIANA. The platform brings together stakeholders from government to civil society organisations to strengthen integrated governance and climate resilience.

WWF's Africa Adaptation Hub established itself as a regional thought leader on adaptation, serving as a centre for knowledge and learning, implementation support and policy advocacy as well as partnerships and resource mobilisation. AAH was able to establish strategic partnerships with organisations, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Regional Collaboration Centre for Africa (UNFCCC RCC), and created multiple opportunities to influence climate-related decision-making at COPs 27–30 to increase attention to and financing for climate adaptation and NbS initiatives. Altogether EUR 13 million was leveraged by the Africa Adaptation Hub from other public sector donors (such as NORAD and Global Affairs of Canada) for NbS in adaptation interventions in Africa.

OUTPUT 2.1 RIGHTS HOLDERS' AND DUTY BEARERS' CAPACITY IN PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND ADVOCACY OF CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION INITIATIVES STRENGTHENED IN AN INCLUSIVE MANNER TO IMPROVE ECOSYSTEMS AND PEOPLE'S RESILIENCE.

Adaptation plans and nature-based solutions initiatives developed and supported with specific aim on climate resilience

A total of 62 adaptation plans and nature-based solutions initiatives were developed or supported with a specific focus on climate resilience, equalling 148% of the programme's target. The assumption that

The strong performance in the outcome can partly be attributed to working closely with the communities and authorities, continuous engagement in local, regional and global climate decision-making and policy processes, as well as the use of climate vulnerability and risk evidence in planning, advocacy and implementation.

Through its Natural Disaster Fund, WWF Finland was able to leverage and mobilise additional resources to respond to natural disasters in Bolivia, Kenya and Indonesia.

Working with the authorities and closely collaborating with the communities also enabled stronger integration of community priorities into public planning.

stakeholders would support climate mitigation and adaptation actions was demonstrated by their willingness to conduct more adaptation interventions aimed at building local adaptive capacities.

Climate change impacts people's everyday lives and livelihoods, and it can be seen as a reason for the good uptake of and demand from communities for adaptation interventions. Over the programme period, the benefits for the rights holders were mainly gained through strengthened livelihood resilience and food security, reduced exposure to floods, erosion, drought and fire, improved water availability, and better locally relevant adaptation options as well as the restoration of degraded ecosystems and the maintenance of ecosystem services.

Climate vulnerability assessments and studies at the local level were conducted in Papua, Laos, Tanzania, Madagascar, Uganda and Bolivia to gain more information on, for example, climate hazards and exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity. Concrete improvements to climate resilience related to livelihoods were advanced through the adoption of nature-based and climate-smart measures in vanilla, coffee and spice farming systems, for example. Climate-resilient agricultural practices, agroforestry and income diversification measures, such as the use of shade-tolerant planting and drainage systems to reduce flooding, and use mulching, terracing and crop diversification to maintain moisture, reduce erosion and improve food security in spice farming, were established.

Also, low-cost bioengineering, local adaptation planning, check dams, as well as wetland, forest and floodplain restoration to protect people's housing, agricultural and forest lands from climate-related hazards was implemented in Nepal. Local climate vulnerability studies and localised adaptation planning were translated into household adaptation plans, for example, and installing rainwater harvesting tanks also reduced the burden on women and girls and lowered human-wildlife conflict risks in Uganda.

The WWF network's collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in nature-based solutions for adaptation and disaster risk reduction was strengthened during the programme period. The programme initiated coordination and collaboration with the Finnish Red Cross, contributed to COP advocacy on adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and supported development of on-site joint programming between the two organisations in Nepal.

Furthermore, through its Natural Disaster Fund, WWF Finland was able to leverage and mobilise additional resources to respond to natural disasters in Bolivia, Kenya and Indonesia. These funds were used for immediate emergency responses for people and habitats affected by natural disasters, alongside measures aimed at preventing similar events from taking place in the future.

Climate related decision-making processes influenced, and climate financing leveraged through advocacy

During the programme period, WWF worked with and consistently supported public officials, municipal actors, protected area authorities and other authorities to strengthen adaptation planning and implementation. Altogether, 2,067 duty-bearers were capacitated on adaptation and nature-based solutions over the programme period, and by the end of the programme, 47 climate-related decision-making processes were influenced and climate financing leveraged through advocacy, corresponding to 168% of the target.

For duty-bearers, the main benefits were improved access to climate risk information, stronger technical and institutional capacity, and better tools to integrate climate adaptation into land use plans, local development plans and policy processes. Working with the authorities and closely collaborating with the communities also enabled stronger integration of community priorities into public planning, as well as helping to get their voices heard in decision-making at different levels. The environment for CSOs to influence policies, plans and strategies was conducive during the programme period, which enabled the programme to exceed the target.

For example, WWF Nepal was able to sensitise over 400 municipal representatives from 14 municipalities on climate change, disaster risk reduction and environment-friendly planning, while WWF Bolivia sensitised almost 300 authorities on fire management planning.

In policy advocacy, the WWF Africa Adaptation Hub was able to elevate adaptation priorities and promote NbS approaches within climate and biodiversity agendas through participation in major policy platforms, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties (COP) processes, the Africa Climate Summits/Weeks, the National Adaptation Plan Expo, the Africa Protected Areas Conference, Africa Protected Areas Directors (APAD) and the Western



In the Amani area of Tanzania, spice cultivation is the main livelihood for many people. Clove trees provide continuous tree cover for the plantations, help prevent soil erosion, and improve soil health.

© JAPHARY KIWANGA / WWF TANZANIA

Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) regional meetings.

In addition, the strategic collaboration of the Africa Adaptation Hub with WWF country offices, regional programmes, CSOs and international partners, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Regional Collaboration Centres (UNFCCC

RCC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), strengthened the Hub's advocacy efforts and expanded its influence in policy discussions. Collaboration with pan-African youth organisations also enabled youth voices and priorities to be heard in e.g. the African Protected Areas Directors (APAD) Conference and the Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) Kigali Call to Action.

OUTCOME 3. ENHANCED CAPACITY OF WWF AND WIDER CIVIL SOCIETY GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO ADVANCE INCLUSIVE AND FAIR NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENTS AND TO REDUCE ILLEGAL PRACTICES

Developing country CSOs with improved capacity to influence development in line with Agenda 2030

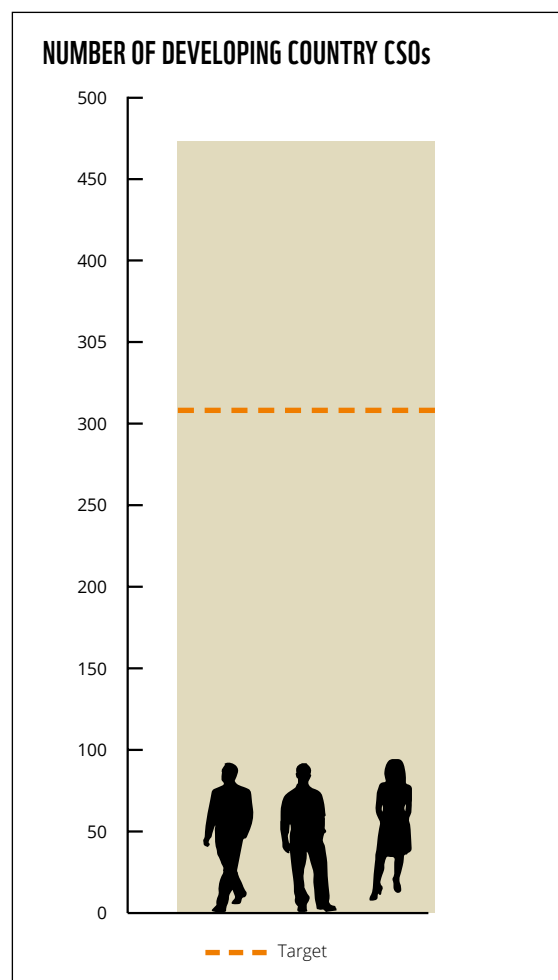
The programme exceeded the targeted number of civil society organisation (CSO) partnerships. In total, the programme cooperated with and capacitated 472 CSOs, 75 of which were reached during its last year. This represented a 154% achievement against this indicator. This includes collaboration

with organisations representing women's rights, disability inclusion, and Indigenous Peoples, although no specific targets were originally set for these groups. At the programme level, cooperation was carried out with 14 women's rights and gender equality CSOs, 14 disability-focused CSOs, and 36 Indigenous Peoples' organisations.

From the programme partners, the Africa Adaptation Hub far exceeded its target for engaging CSO partners. This overachievement was made possible by utilising existing WWF network initiatives and delivering capacity-building support across major regional landscape programmes in Africa. Also, in Papua, more CSO partnerships were created than expected. This is because the cooperation only started during this programme period, and in the initial phase it was challenging to estimate the number of partners. A higher-than-expected result indicates that WWF is a welcomed and respected partner in Papua.

According to the CIVICUS Monitor, the programme was implemented during 2022–2025 predominantly in restricted civic space environments, with partner countries rated as obstructed, repressed or closed throughout the period. Civic space remained consistently constrained in Uganda, Tanzania, Nepal, Bolivia and Indonesia; in Madagascar it deteriorated, the country being downgraded to repressed in 2025; and in Laos it remained closed. CIVICUS has consistently identified environmental and climate-focused CSOs and defenders as among the most at risk in these contexts, facing criminalisation, judicial harassment, surveillance and, in some cases, violent responses to protests related to land use, extractive activities and natural resource governance. These conditions shaped programme implementation and underscored the importance of conflict-sensitive, adaptive and rights-based approaches to supporting civil society engagement on biodiversity and climate resilience.

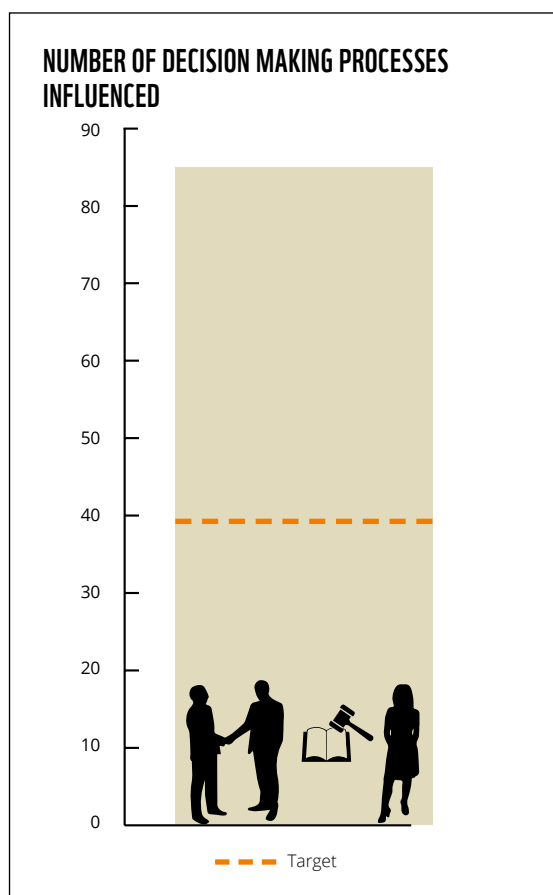
Taking into account these challenges to the civic space, the programme approach of strengthening cooperation and capacity is fundamental. The programme having achieved more CSO partnerships than expected indicates that the assumption was valid: CSOs and CBOs are willing and have the capacity to participate, and a conducive environment for CSOs to influence policies, plans and strategies exists. It also indicates that the value and role of WWF as an international NGO are respected and appreciated in the partner countries. But the same time, the working conditions for CSOs in almost all partner countries have become more challenging, especially in the programme's sectors.



The working conditions for CSOs in almost all partner countries have become more challenging.

Sustainable and inclusive natural resources policies and decision-making processes and investments influenced

The programme exceeded its target to influence policies and decision-making processes. The achievement of 218% means that during the programme implementation, there were more opportunities for WWF to engage in policy processes, but in several countries, there was also a need to emphasise political processes more to ensure the impact and sustainability of programme approaches. During and right after the COVID-19 pandemic, there was increased pressure to utilise natural resources, and at the same time, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework opened doors and opportunities for more active policy-level engagement.



WWF Finland's views were reflected in the committees' final positions, demonstrating clear influence and impact.

The values of this indicator are quite small, under 10 policies, in most of the partner countries. The largest number of policy processes was influenced in Finland, where 34 policy processes in total were influenced during the programme period. During the programme period, WWF Finland submitted a substantial number of position papers and expert

views to various parliamentary committees, and the number of requests received from the committees increased notably compared to previous years. The feedback from parliamentarians and government authorities has been consistently positive, and in many cases, WWF Finland's views were reflected in the committees' final positions, demonstrating clear influence and impact. However, despite this recognition, these positions did not translate into increased funding for biodiversity or climate action from the Finnish government, which was the ultimate target of the advocacy work.

On the other hand, the adverse developments, especially at the EU level, have kept WWF Finland busy defending environmental and climate policies, particularly during the last years of the programme. Although WWF Finland provided evidence-based inputs on the importance of keeping the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) intact, also influencing through the media, in the end it didn't have positive effect on the Finnish government's position. Unfortunately, Finland supported both the delay to and the simplifications of the law. However, in general during this programme period, WWF Finland strengthened its position and expertise on this topic and gained media visibility by commenting on the progress on EUDR; and joint advocacy with companies was also noted as a strong advocacy approach. The WWF network has a European Policy Office based in Brussels that follows EU policies, including the EUDR. The contribution from this office to WWF Finland and its advocacy work demonstrated the added value of the network.

Over the 2022–2025 programme period, WWF Finland significantly strengthened its role in global and national CBD advocacy, emerging as a trusted expert and active contributor to the implementation of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. WWF Finland participated in key CBD bodies and negotiations, including the preparation of Finland's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), and joined the Finnish delegation to CBD COPs, reinforcing its formal influence in global biodiversity policy. Partner offices also contributed to and participated in global policy processes during the programme period. The programme supported WWF Nepal and WWF Tanzania representatives' participation in the negotiations and supported advocacy capacity building in the WWF network. On global advocacy work, WWF collaborated with Finnish companies, especially S-group. This included, for example, organising side-events at these meetings.



Women-led knitting business in the programme area. The programme supported the group's establishment and provided training.

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The Africa Adaptation Hub had an important role in preparing for and participating in the COP meetings, the African Climate Summit and the Africa Climate Week.

WWF offices consistently advanced GBF implementation by supporting national policy processes, engaging partner countries, communicating GBF priorities to stakeholders and the media, and contributing expert views across national biodiversity and climate committees. The Africa Adaptation Hub had an important role in preparing for and participating in the COP meetings, the African Climate Summit and the Africa Climate Week, not only strengthening WWF's views and role but also facilitating the participation of other stakeholders, especially CSOs. The programme also supported the participation of African WWF experts in the CITES COP 20 meeting in 2025. CITES CoP20 demonstrated Africa's growing strategic leverage in wildlife trade governance, while underscoring the need for stronger technical and financial support to translate listings into conservation impact.

WWF Madagascar played a strategic role by contributing to the revision of Madagascar's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). It provided support to the Ministry of Environment to ensure meaningful inclusion of community and regional voices. WWF facilitated multi-stakeholder regional consultations, amplifying the priorities of local communities, civil society, private sector actors, and decentralised authorities. Uganda's early submission of its Seventh National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity underscored the country's strong commitment to biodiversity conservation, with WWF Uganda playing a central technical and programmatic role throughout the process. Following sustained engagement with the CBD focal point and participation in national stakeholder consultations, WWF Uganda's interventions were directly integrated into the report, particularly in the areas

of biodiversity restoration, monitoring, evidence systems, policy engagement and inclusive conservation. These milestones in Madagascar and Uganda were not reached with the direct support of the programme, but they show the role the programme partners role play in their countries. In Indonesia/Papua, the programme directly supported the establishment of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM) as a locally led conservation approach. Community and village governments, facilitated by WWF, jointly identified and agreed on conservation value areas and discussed governance arrangements. The proposed OECM protection areas are in both the terrestrial and marine zones of Nanggouw Village.

Public officials and other duty bearers capacitated and supported in natural resources governance and climate adaptation

During its last year, the programme reached 138% of the target for the number of public officials and other duty bearers capacitated and supported in natural

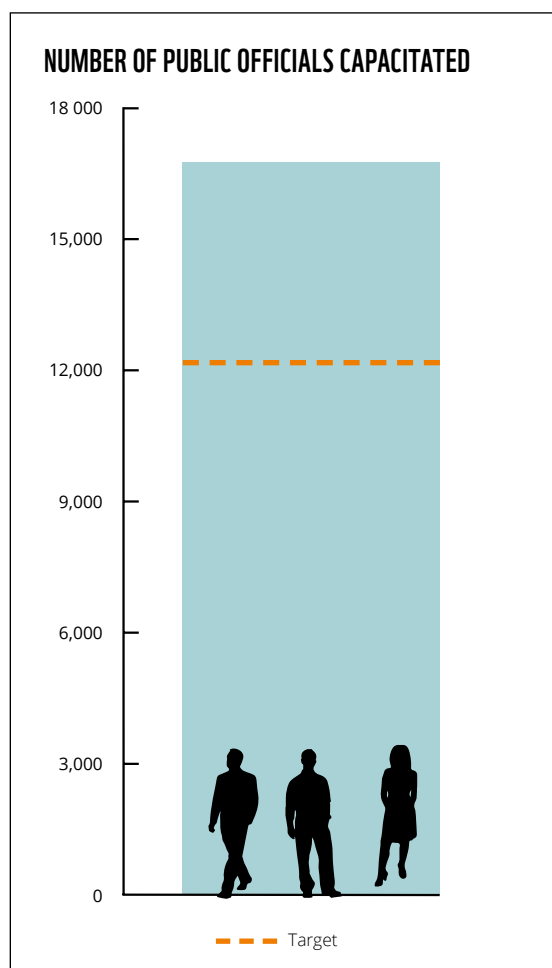
resources governance and climate adaptation, when the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub reached a huge number of rangers in their trainings. In 2025, ranger standard operating procedures were developed to govern the operations of over 4,500 community rangers in Kenya. These standards have been used to train rangers across Kenya by WWF partners and institutions supporting community rangers. With wildlife authorities in Kenya and Uganda, training materials were developed and additional funds secured to train over 1,000 rangers. The East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub was the biggest contributor to this indicator, reaching more than 12,000 duty bearers during the programme period. In other partner countries, the programme was able to reach more duty bearers than expected, for the same reasons as described under the previous advocacy indicator. There have also been efforts by the WWF network to strengthen the network's advocacy skills during the programme period, to which WWF Finland and this programme have also contributed.

Working with government actors (duty bearers) and providing them with technical support are key roles that WWF plays across all partner countries. This approach is essential for ensuring the sustainability of programme outcomes, as technical assistance helps align project activities with government plans and priorities. WWF collaborated with government representatives at multiple levels, from community and district officials to national ministries and international platforms. In addition, progress in influencing policy and strengthening engagement with other CSOs further contributed to the long-term sustainability of the programme's approach.

The programme assumption that government authorities would allow WWF to provide support to and training for their officials is still valid, even though there were extensive changes and challenges in governments in several partner countries and limitations on civic space. WWF was able to retain its reliability and relevance with local officials, even though in several countries the pressure to utilise natural resources increased, especially from rising economies such as China, India and Brazil and particularly in African partner countries.

Reduced incidents of illegal wildlife activities in programme landscapes or national level

Against this indicator, the programme did not achieve its target. The assumption that continuous monitoring of illegal wildlife activities would be conducted by government authorities and programme partners can



WWF was able to retain its reliability and relevance with local officials.

be deemed valid. The only partner with a numeric target for this indicator was the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub. In 2025, EUR 20,000 from the unallocated budget was allocated to Laos to address illegal wildlife trade.

The Hub's target of a 20% reduction in wildlife crime seizures from the 420-incident baseline was not achieved. Over 750 wildlife crime incidents were recorded across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Somalia during the programme period, involving illegal possession, trafficking, and commercialisation of protected species, primarily elephant ivory, but also pangolin scales, cheetah cubs, bushmeat and other wildlife products. Kenya and Uganda were the most frequently reported countries. Kenya saw seizures ranging from small ivory consignments to high-value trafficking cases involving foreign nationals, pointing to its role in international trafficking routes, while bushmeat cases indicated ongoing domestic consumption of protected species. Uganda showed a strong and increasingly coordinated enforcement response, with many incidents linked to named multi-agency operations near major protected areas. In Tanzania, the most significant 2025 case was a seizure in the Ruvuma Region involving 64 elephant tusks, 145 hippo teeth, and other wildlife products valued at over TZS 314 million. However, measuring actual reductions in illegal wildlife activity is methodologically challenging, as increased detection and reporting – a sign of improved capacity – can appear as an increase in incidents, even though incidents may in reality have decreased.

Despite this target not being met, there have been significant reductions in the poaching of key species, as described in the chapter Demonstrable progress in implementation of the Zero Poaching Framework. There were also other successes. In Uganda, management effectiveness scores in key protected areas have improved, providing a strategic roadmap for deepening management support to ensure the continued reduction of illegal activities and the preservation of biodiversity across these critical landscapes.

WWF Laos supported national authorities in several significant enforcement actions against illegal wildlife trade. Key achievements included the seizure of over 543 kg of pangolin scales and the arrest of a key trafficking kingpin, the government's first-ever closure of a bear bile farm in Vientiane, and a tiger skin seizure linked to online trafficking. At the policy level, WWF supported the finalisation of the National Tiger Action Plan 2026–2035 and the Roadmap for the Closure of Tiger Farms.

Illegal wildlife trade remains high globally and the demand for bushmeat, for example, is increasing in East Africa. There has also been an increase in demand for wild animals as exotic pets. Poaching remains a threat, and poachers are targeting new species. Achieving reduction in wildlife crime is difficult for several reasons. Political instability and elections in multiple countries temporarily weakened law enforcement capacity and political will, with some countries experiencing increased illegal activity – including deforestation and wildlife trade – precisely during election periods. The loss of USAID funding had a severe impact on the capacity of the EAWC Hub and its partner TRAFFIC to implement field-level interventions. Human wildlife conflict, exacerbated by extreme weather events and growing wildlife populations, continued to create conditions that drive retaliatory killing and illegal offtake. Weak enforcement by some government counterparts limited the effectiveness of programme investments in monitoring and patrolling. Law enforcement gaps persist also in the prosecution and conviction of wildlife crime offenders. Together with TRAFFIC, the EAWCH analysed court cases related to wildlife trafficking. In 2025, out of 59 people arrested, 16 were charged. This indicates that while arrests were common, not all of them immediately led to formal charges, suggesting that many cases were either still under investigation or resolved differently. Regarding convictions and sentencing, only a few cases have progressed to imprisonment or fines.

OUTPUT 3.1 WWF TOGETHER WITH DUTY BEARERS AND RIGHTS HOLDERS HAS CO-CREATED SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE AND TIMBER TRADE, POACHING AND HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICTS

Trend (number, frequency and intensity) in levels of Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) incidents

The assumption was continuous monitoring of HWC conducted by government authorities and programme partners, and this is still valid. Human wildlife conflicts (HWC) are a challenge for local communities, particularly in Nepal and East Africa, driven by habitat encroachment by humans and recovering wildlife populations. Human–wildlife conflicts are also closely linked to climate change and land use pressure. Conflicts are not decreasing, but partners are increasingly shifting from ad hoc conflict response toward more systematic coexistence models (like the Conflict to Coexistence approach), combining prevention, early warning systems, livelihoods, insurance and compensation mechanisms, community engagement, and stronger local governance. In some landscapes this has already reduced

Achieving reduction in wildlife crime is difficult for several reasons.

retaliation killing of wildlife, even when conflict incidents themselves remain high.

In East Africa, human–wildlife conflict emerged as an intensifying challenge, exacerbated by extreme weather events including prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall. These climatic pressures pushed wildlife into agricultural areas in search of food and water, increasing incidents of crop raiding and livestock predation – particularly in Kenya and Tanzania. The situation was further complicated by elections in multiple countries, which disrupted local governance structures and temporarily weakened the capacity of wildlife authorities to respond effectively. Mitigation efforts focused on strengthening community-based early warning systems, supporting the installation of physical barriers such as beehive fences and predator-proof enclosures, and promoting compensation mechanisms for affected households. The programme also worked to improve the management of wildlife reserves (government and community protected and conserved areas) to respond to HWC incidents more swiftly and consistently. The Conflict to Coexistence (C2C) approach and Safe Systems have been adopted in the SOKNOT, Ruvuma and Greater Virunga landscapes. The Conflict to Coexistence is an integrated, stepwise approach to enable systematic HWC management planning, implementation, and monitoring. WWF has supported the development of the C2C approach in collaboration with subject-matter experts and partner organisations.

The programme provided support for various interventions aimed at minimising negative human wildlife interactions.

In Nepal, increasing in-migration to the Terai is creating human pressure on programme sites. In addition, successful conservation efforts (like the tripling of Nepal’s tiger population) have led to rising wildlife populations. With the increase in human settlements near the fringes of wildlife habitats, coupled with intrusive human behaviour, the incidences of human–wildlife conflict are frequent. Human–wildlife conflicts are not a challenge only in Terai, but also in mountain landscapes, where livestock depredation by snow leopards has significant economic consequences for local communities. To address these challenges, the programme provided support for various interventions aimed at minimising negative human wildlife interactions and mitigating their impacts on communities through preventive and remedial measures. During the programme, a total of 50,000 EUR from the unallocated budget was added to Nepal’s budget for a study to identify and map risk sites and for mitigating human wildlife conflicts. Preventive measures in Nepal include early warning systems, fencing, alternative livelihood options, and training on wildlife behaviour, rescue and sensitisation whereas remedial measures include relief funds

Mountain gorilla poaching reached zero.

and insurance schemes. Furthermore, the capacity of the local community was strengthened to mobilise a community-run Livestock Insurance Scheme (LIS) in mountain landscapes.

Demonstrable progress in implementation of the Zero Poaching Framework

The East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub is the only partner contributing to this target. The target was to achieve poaching reductions in three key landscapes in Eastern Africa: the Greater Virunga Landscape, Laikipia (in Kenya), and SOKNOT (Southern Kenya – Northern Tanzania Landscape). The assumption that government authorities are willing to commit to and develop zero poaching strategies and communities are willing to support zero poaching can be seen as valid.

In Kenya, the Zero Poaching Framework was applied to rhino conservation across 15 rhino reserves, with significant results. Kenya’s black rhino population grew from 966 in 2022 to over 1,050 by 2024, and the framework helped achieve zero rhino poaching across all reserves in 2022. Only eight rhinos have been poached in Kenya since the programme began, and two in Tanzania over the same period – a 50% decline compared to the previous programme period. The framework strengthened strategic coherence across the rhino programme by ensuring that resources and operational support are distributed according to shared priorities and risk assessments rather than site-by-site considerations. A clear indication of the success is that the Kenyan government – previously reluctant due to poaching pressure – has now committed to expanding rhino habitat range, a step that would have been considered too risky five years ago.

In the Greater Virunga landscape, the GVTC (Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration) zero poaching project supported the formulation and approval of a regional wildlife crime interagency working group involving the governments of Rwanda, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Baseline data was collected from eight protected areas to guide priority interventions, including ranger equipment and training, strengthened inter-agency collaboration, and community engagement. TRAFFIC conducted trafficking assessments to ensure that enforcement efforts addressed wider trade routes beyond the protected areas themselves.

Mountain gorilla poaching reached zero, down from three incidents in the preceding period, and elephant poaching fell to fewer than ten animals per year in



African elephants in Kenya. Anti-poaching efforts supported by the programme are delivering results. In Kenya, elephant populations are increasing.

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Kenya and Tanzania, compared to approximately thirty annually in prior years. These reductions are reflected in growing wildlife populations: Kenya's elephant population grew to over 42,000, Tanzania's rebounded to over 60,000, and Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park recorded its highest elephant estimate since the 1950s.

OUTPUT 3.2 ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORTED AND PARTNERSHIPS CREATED TO ADVANCE INCLUSIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE AND INNOVATIVE AND LONG-TERM FINANCING SOLUTIONS FOR CONSERVATION

Solutions leveraging and influencing funding to natural resources management and conservation

The programme has contributed to mobilising and influencing funding through a combination of technical support, policy engagement, and strategic partnerships. Finnish funding played a catalytic role, enabling programme implementation while also leveraging additional resources through co-financing and alignment with other initiatives.

At country level, the programme supported the development of financing mechanisms and investment-ready approaches that integrate conservation and livelihoods. In Nepal, long-term support has enabled progress in REDD+ implementation, resulting

in the government receiving results-based payments for emission reductions. This demonstrates how long-term investments in sustainable forest management and community engagement can unlock significant international climate finance.

Over the four-year programme, WWF Finland was successful in securing funding from the Relex Foundation to continue supporting WWF Indonesia's work in Borneo. In addition, WWF Finland was able to secure funding from two separate sources, P4G (Pioneering Green Partnerships, Investing in Impact) and DGBP (Danida Green Business Partnerships) to work on coffee agroforestry transformation in Vietnam. The initiation for the partnership has its origins in the Resilience programme in Laos, and it has led to a partnership with a coffee company, Slow. The partnership is demonstrating how interconnected work can support nature protection and sustainable coffee production in a commercially sustainable model.

The East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub has been successful in supporting funding for new projects, including a EUR 9.4 million grant from the EU, largely thanks to staff time supported by the Resilience programme. District forestry plans (Uganda) and municipal-level development plans (Bolivia) are central for creating local frameworks that allow public funding allocations towards sustainable resource use and enable investments into forest-based value chains.

Finnish funding played a catalytic role, enabling programme implementation while also leveraging additional resources.

Despite the extensive budget cuts to the development aid in Finland during the present government, the Finnish funding for climate change and biodiversity protection has remained quite constant (based on MFA statistics that end in 2024), with a slight increase in biodiversity and a slight decrease in climate funding. WWF Finland continued its strong advocacy work to protect this funding throughout the programme period towards politicians and decision-makers as well as the broader public by emphasising its crucial role.

The assumption that suitable legal instruments (policies and guidelines) would be in place for a sustainable financing mechanism changed during the programme period due to the extensive geopolitical changes and especially political changes and decisions in several countries, which led to globally extensive budget cuts to ODA. These budget cuts impacted programme implementation only in East Africa, where one of the programme partners was depending heavily on USAID funding, but the reduction of ODA has limited WWF Finland and its partners' possibilities to access additional funding for the programme approaches. While the overall funding landscape has become more challenging, suitable instruments remain available.

Partnerships and coalitions developed

The programme has developed 93 partnerships or coalitions that promote the programme's objectives, which is 310% of the targeted amount. In addition to existing partnerships, all programme partners along with WWF Finland have been able to create new partnerships during the four years, which verifies that WWF is still seen as a relevant partner in all programme countries including Finland. After the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the interest in addressing biodiversity loss has increased, strengthening WWF's role in establishing partnerships and coalitions. Most partners have carried on a level of cooperation with local disability organisations, gender-focused organisations and Indigenous People organisations. The programme-level assumption that strategic partnerships would be identified, value added and vision shared among partners, held throughout the programme period.

Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC) consultations held and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESSF) processes supported

The human rights-based approach (HRBA) has been embedded throughout programme implementation

by adopting the WWF network's environmental and social safeguards standards as an inherent part of conservation action. HRBA has been operationalised through Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes, participatory planning, environmental and social safeguards implementation, grievance redress mechanisms, harm prevention, and through measures to amplify positive social impacts. Capacity has also been strengthened on rights-related risks, including the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. In line with the WWF Statement of Principles on human rights, gender equality and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, environmental and social safeguard procedures have been applied consistently across all interventions and landscapes, ensuring that programme activities not only avoid rights violations but instead aim to enhance them.

The programme exceeded its target by achieving 310% of its target for the number of safeguard measures and FPIC processes implemented, reflecting strong integration of human rights protections into programme delivery. Notably, FPIC has become established as a core element of each conservation intervention rather than only a planning requirement, with communities having genuine opportunity to voice their views, including the right to withhold consent and decline cooperation, throughout implementation. E.g. WWF Nepal established institutional partnerships with the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), and with WWF Nepal's support, NFDIN conducted national, regional, and local-level consultations with diverse stakeholders and developed the first official National Implementation Guideline for FPIC, launched in 2023.

Grievance mechanisms have been established in all programme countries. Recognising that such systems are only meaningful when actively used, deliberate efforts were made to raise community awareness of available channels. During the programme period, a small number of cases were reported and resolved in accordance with WWF procedures. This demonstrates that building trust, awareness and understanding of grievance mechanisms remains essential and should be continued over the long term.

The assumptions in the programme Theory of Change were that Indigenous Peoples and local communities demonstrate willingness to co-operate, and WWF and its partners' capacity are adequate and further improved during the programme. These assumptions hold throughout the programme implementation.

Grievance mechanisms have been established in all programme countries.

SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED



In Uganda, climate-smart agriculture techniques are used in community banana plantations to improve soil fertility and water retention.

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WWF Finland has also had a significant role in strengthening its partners' and especially the WWF network's advocacy.

Some of the challenges, successes and lessons learned are also reflected directly under the description of outcome and output level achievements.

By its active international policy advocacy participation, WWF Finland has also had a significant role in strengthening its partners' and especially the WWF network's advocacy work through participating in the Global Policy and Advocacy team's work. This has proven to be a good approach, taking into account the extensive political realignment globally in past four years. WWF Finland's connections and active approach also connected WWF's finance experts to the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, which was established on Finland's initiative in April 2019. This led to the inclusion of biodiversity into the Coalition's agenda and WWF now being an official Knowledge Partner of the coalition. This demonstrates WWF Finland's capability to utilise the Finnish government's ambition on global environment and climate policy together with the WWF networks' reach and expertise, to advance the joint agenda on a global scale.

Since the historic achievement of adopting the Global Biodiversity Framework in Montreal, the geopolitical context for implementing nature and climate commitments has become significantly more fragmented and competitive. The WWF network has noted the need to strengthen and realign global advocacy work. The network's new Green Diplomacy tool helps position advocacy within this new reality by linking biodiversity to the core concerns of statecraft – security, economic resilience, and strategic alliances – at a time when rising multipolarity, eroding trust in multilateralism, and the geopolitical use of ODA make global cooperation increasingly difficult. The advocacy work with realigned messages only just started at the end of the programme period and will continue from 2026 onwards by providing more specific views on the ODA reform as well. This programme, through the WWF staff expertise and time allocation, has contributed to this WWF network-wide development. In Finland, a media event and cooperation with the media related to the CBD COPs proved a very successful way to increase the Finnish media's interest in and understanding of biodiversity loss during this programme period.

During the programme period, the public media space was dominated by security, and WWF Finland started to proactively emphasise the role of environmental action as a core element of peace and stability. It was strategically valuable that the MFA and the programme provided an opportunity for WWF Finland to focus on this theme. WWF Finland's work has also strengthened the WWF network's work and

position on this theme. WWF Finland's connection with WWF Ukraine seemed to provide added value to several Finnish stakeholders, even though there was no programme funding provided for WWF Ukraine under this programme period.

In general, WWF Finland strengthened and developed its role and communication content especially on development cooperation aspects during the programme, enabled and complemented by WWF Finland's communication experts' visits to the partner countries. More communication materials were prepared for WWF Finland's communication channels, and these materials were also shared with the MFA and embassies to enable them to share Finland's development cooperation achievements in their communication channels. Another success was the organising of detailed media briefings and rapid responses to breaking news, which resulted in widespread media coverage, particularly around EUDR-related communication and the COP meetings. Communication around WWF reports and scorecards was also highly successful, repeatedly generating extensive media visibility and strong social media reach.

In general, social media communication remained challenging, as the algorithms of some social media platforms particularly hinder the visibility of climate-related content. After leaving X, WWF Finland has focused more on communication through LinkedIn and Bluesky. However, these channels have not yet been able to fill the gap left by X in reaching societal and political stakeholders.

WWF Finland continued close cooperation with the MFA in Finland, including regional departments, country teams and embassies. In 2025, WWF Finland and the MFA cooperated during the Finnish Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) chairmanship to promote sustainability and environmental values by utilising the [sustainable meetings concept](#). WWF also participated in the OSCE climate seminar in June 2025 and arranged WWF Ukraine's contribution during the seminar. This kind of work hopefully provides the MFA with added value from WWF beyond development cooperation.

During this programme period, WWF Finland began collaborating with WWF Bolivia in the Amazon. Adding Bolivia to the programme created better opportunities for WWF Finland to communicate about environmental challenges in the Amazon region, such as forest fires. The COP30 meeting in Brazil in particular drew attention to the Amazon region, and WWF Finland was able to use this opportunity to

report on the programme's work and themes in the Finnish media. During the programme implementation in Bolivia, it became evident that illegal gold mining poses a severe and growing threat to the region, causing significant damage to waterways, biodiversity and human health. Similar mining-related threats were increasingly emerging in other programme countries as well, including in Papua. This led WWF Finland to recognise mining and minerals as a critical cross-cutting issue requiring dedicated attention and investment within the programme.

WWF Finland also contributed to broader awareness by publishing a report on the environmental and human rights impacts of minerals and metals imported to Finland

In response, WWF Finland invested in building strategic foundations to address these threats at multiple levels. A workshop supported by WWF Finland brought together Amazon region experts and resulted in a concrete three-year workplan with a budget and funding proposal to combat illegal gold mining. At the network level, a WWF mining and minerals expert, also supported by WWF Finland, finalised an internal position on terrestrial mining to guide the work of WWF offices globally. WWF Finland also contributed to broader awareness by publishing a report on the environmental and human rights impacts of minerals and metals imported to Finland, with findings shared through a public webinar, including with several Finnish companies. Together, these efforts reflect a deliberate shift from responding to individual threats towards shaping a more coordinated and strategic approach to mining-related challenges.

Integrating disability inclusion across the programme was a gradual process that required sustained effort and capacity building. In the early stages, partners faced real challenges in knowing how to approach disability inclusion in a conservation context, but through dedicated workshops, peer learning, and collaboration with local organisations of persons with disabilities, their confidence and competence grew steadily. Over the four years, this investment translated into tangible results – including policy-level change, such as the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Nepal's revised 2025 Community Forestry Guidelines – demonstrating that a systematic, long-term approach pays off. The programme also produced a pioneering step-by-step guidance document for disability-inclusive conservation, positioning WWF Finland as an early mover not only within the WWF network but within the broader environmental sector, where disability inclusion remains rare.

Along with the strong emphasis on applying environmental and social safeguards during the programme, WWF internally launched its guidelines for inclusive conservation. Inclusive conservation, as WWF defines it, "conservation done right", works to improve the

lives of people and to protect nature by making sure diverse groups, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, persons with disabilities, women, and youth, have a real say in how conservation is done. It tackles biodiversity loss, climate change, and inequality together by addressing the power imbalances and structural barriers that get in the way of fair and effective conservation. WWF Finland collaborated with WWF Indonesia, WWF Netherlands and WWF International to pilot the development of an inclusive conservation action plan for WWF Indonesia through collaborative workshop planning and joint capacity strengthening during the programme. WWF Indonesia is now one of the first offices in the WWF network that has developed concrete inclusive conservation action plans for the land- and seascapes it works on.

The following lessons learned can be drawn from the climate component of the programme. In programming, integration of climate resilience as its own outcome area was integral to advancing climate resilience and adaptation measures in the programme implementation in a systematic way and to ensure adequate budgeting for it. Enhancing resilience also has positive implications for the sustainability of the programme's conservation outcomes in the long run.

Understanding the local climate impacts for people and nature can be seen as a prerequisite for locally led adaptation. The use of climate studies and analysis conducted by the programme at the start of the programme, working and learning from the rights holders and working through and with local institutions and duty bearers to advance climate-resilient plans and development measures helped to gain positive results in Outcome 2. Climate risk and climate vulnerability assessments, studies etc. improved understanding of local climate impacts on people and ecosystems, enabling better-informed interventions, and allowed the findings to be embedded in ongoing planning and advocacy. Therefore, one key factor driving the achievement of Outcome 2 was the programme's ability to respond to the needs of rights holders and duty bearers. It did this by generating evidence and meaningfully embedding climate adaptation into local planning, development, and livelihoods interventions, thereby building climate resilience at a time when the effects of climate change are increasingly affecting communities in programme locations and creating urgent demand for adaptation measures.

The use of Training of Trainers, lead farmer and peer-to-peer models on climate-smart agriculture has been effective in reaching the targeted rights holders in climate adaptation interventions. Seeing the tangible benefits gained by the pioneer farmers encouraged



A protected leatherback turtle nest on a beach in Tambda, West Papua.

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Conservation results for people and nature can be adversely affected or even wiped out due to negative climate impacts.

the neighbouring farmers to adopt the new methods, making these approaches successful in spreading the adaptation practices.

Conservation results for people and nature can be adversely affected or even wiped out due to negative climate impacts. E.g. in Bolivia, prolonged droughts combined with anthropogenic pressures in clearing land for cattle ranging have caused severe and widespread wildfires, threatening people's survival and protected areas.

It has been evident during the programme period that climate change has been impacting the implementation of the programme. In response to the challenge of climate change and in addition to the programme implementation, WWF Finland developed a separate [Natural Disaster Fund](#), which supported several programme partners which are increasingly faced with the combined pressures of climate impacts and nature

loss. The resilience programme served as a key channel for this emergency support to people and nature when disasters occurred. During the programme period, WWF Finland provided 70,000 EUR funding from the Natural Disaster Fund to support WWF [Bolivia](#), Indonesia, Vietnam and Kenya.

During the programme reporting, it was noted that the indicators on poaching, illegal wildlife crime and human–wildlife conflicts were found to be challenging, because accessing data on illegal activities is challenging in general. Although several programme partners work on these themes, only the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub has been reporting on these under this programme. This challenge has been taken into account when planning the next programme phase.

While significant progress was made in forest conservation and restoration across the programme, achieving consistent carbon monitoring proved

challenging. Only four programme partners were able to conduct carbon sequestration and avoided emissions analyses, which made programme-wide aggregation of results infeasible. For many partner countries, tracking forest cover change represented a more relevant priority given their local contexts and capacities, and thus the programme made a change to its Results Framework and opted to remove the indicator measuring sequestered or avoided CO₂ from the programme-level monitoring.

In the last year of the programme, an independent evaluation commissioned by the MFA assessed the results of Finland's development cooperation in the environment and natural resources sectors over the period 2010–2024, including forests, biodiversity, water, energy and disaster risk management. WWF Finland has been implementing projects and programmes during the evaluation period, and it contributed to the evaluation through its results and also by providing insights to the evaluation team and participating in the meetings arranged during the evaluation.

The evaluation finds that civil society organisations have played a central role in delivering results

The evaluation finds that civil society organisations (CSOs) have played a central role in delivering results, particularly in areas where biodiversity has only recently been integrated into bilateral programmes. Significant outcomes in conservation, monitoring and governance have been achieved through CSO and multilateral channels.

Within this, organisations such as WWF have been key implementers, translating Finland's technical expertise into practical, locally grounded solutions – for example, through community-based forest management and ecosystem protection – contributing to reduced deforestation and improved environmental resilience. At the same time, the evaluation suggests that the role of CSOs, including WWF, remains more operational than strategic within Finland's cooperation framework, pointing to an opportunity to better embed their contributions in programme design and strengthen biodiversity as a more central and scalable priority.

WWF Finland's new programme Together for People, Nature and Climate (2026–2029) responds well to the recommendations of the evaluation. The programme places biodiversity at its core, applies a strong human rights based and inclusive approach, and builds long-term, landscape-level partnerships with governments, civil society and local communities to ensure institutional anchoring and sustained impact. It also

combines conservation with livelihood development, climate adaptation and policy engagement, supporting the translation of technical expertise into practical and locally grounded solutions.

The evaluation and Finland's development policy framework, including the Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation, place emphasis on technological and digital solutions for addressing climate change. At the same time, WWF Finland underlines that nature-based solutions (NbS) should play a stronger and more explicit role within Finland's overall climate approach. The evaluation itself recognises Finland's long-standing expertise and international credibility in the natural resources sector, particularly in forestry, which provides a strong foundation for scaling up NbS approaches. Strengthening the role of NbS would not replace technological solutions, but rather complement them by delivering multiple benefits, including climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity conservation.

At the same time, the evaluation points to areas where further strengthening could enhance alignment. In particular, there is an opportunity to sharpen programme focus and to make pathways for scaling and financing more explicit, ensuring that successful approaches can be sustained and replicated. In addition, while private sector engagement is clearly embedded in the programme, further development of preparatory support and facilitation mechanisms would strengthen its effectiveness in line with the evaluation's recommendations.

The programme was planned with the partners in a very extraordinary situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though the possibilities for fully participatory and dialogue-based planning process were limited, the Theory of Change was found solid. It was tested annually by reflecting on the assumptions in annual reports. However, a more in-depth analysis of assumptions would be useful e.g. at a mid-term review to assess if programme's approaches respond effectively to the ToC logic. Some indicator-specific target revisions were made, and now at the end of the programme, we see in some indicators that the target setting was not realistic. The overachievement on some of the targets might have been caused by insufficiently precise planning and analysis work during the planning process, but also by the capability of the programme and its partners to utilise the opportunities for greater impact during the implementation process.



RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT

Coffee plants grown in agroforestry
in the programme area in Laos.

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

WWF Finland monitors the programme implementation via regular (monthly or quarterly) calls with partners, technical reports, quarterly financial reports and monitoring visits. Progress of the programme is tracked through the indicators of the result framework. Implementing offices have their own monitoring personnel and systems to monitor the programme locally.

The programme-level external evaluation was a Mid-Term Review that was conducted in 2024. Final assessments are done locally on country level, and most of them are done or finalised in the beginning of 2026, so they were not available for this report.

At the end of 2025, before starting the reporting process for the programme, WWF Finland organised sessions to discuss reporting and to go through reporting requirements with all partners. The result framework and indicators were also reviewed together to make sure all partners reported them using the same logic. At the end of 2025, WWF Finland commissioned a training course “Gender Integration in Conservation” from CARE for programme partners.

During the programme period, 2–3 monitoring visits per partner country were conducted. In 2025, the following visits to partner countries were made:

- **Nepal.** A monitoring visit to Nepal was carried out in March by a senior conservation officer and a senior international development expert from WWF Finland. The project area was visited and meetings were held with several stakeholders. Topics discussed included, among others, habitat management, sustainable forestry, future outlook for community forestry, human–wildlife conflicts and livelihoods and their sustainability. Human population dynamics, with youth moving abroad and to cities, are expected to have an impact on WWF programming in the long term. Nepal’s graduation from LDC status, once it takes place, is another major event that will influence funding streams in the country. Overall, the programme is well on track, the selected approaches are appropriate and progress is good.
- **Laos.** The MFA funding has supported WWF Laos’ work in Xe Sap national park (6 villages) since 2018. The support for Dong Hua Sao and Xe Pian national parks was added in the current FORRED I programme (2022–2025), but the

start of the work with these villages was delayed until August 2024 due to the slow MoU process. WWF Laos will phase out work in Xe Sap under the new FORRED II project (2026–2029). A monitoring visit was carried out in December to visit project stakeholders and government officials. The discussions focused on the sustainability of interventions, especially in relation to the programme’s exit from Xe Sap, and on ensuring a timely MoU process for the new FORRED II project. A finance check was also conducted at the project’s field office.

- **Bolivia.** A monitoring visit to Bolivia was carried out in September by a project manager and a communications expert from WWF Finland. Some project activities had fallen slightly behind schedule due to the severe wildfire season the year before and exceptionally heavy rains in the previous spring of 2025. However, things seemed relatively good and good progress was expected. During the visit, the team travelled to the current project area in the Iténez protected area, where they learned more about the work of volunteer wildfire brigades and efforts to protect river dolphins. The team also visited a cattle ranch that may become a partner in the next programme phase, and met with a university and research institute that are key partners of WWF Bolivia. Good communication materials were collected for the COP 30 climate meeting communications as well. WWF Bolivia appointed a new Country Director during the year. There were also general elections in Bolivia in 2025, and big changes were expected as a result of having new right-wing president and the end of the decades-long left-wing government.
- **EAWCH.** A senior conservation officer and a communications specialist participated in the annual meeting of the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub in Tanzania in September. During the meeting, the Hub, WWF country offices and TRAFFIC presented their work. The trends and challenges in IWT within East Africa were discussed. WWF offices in the region rely strongly on the Hub’s support in IWT work, also in fundraising, which takes up a lot of the Hub coordinator’s time. It was discussed how the Hub could best support WWF country offices in IWT work. WWF Finland produced communication materials about the Hub’s work during the trip.
- **Tanzania.** A monitoring visit to Tanzania was carried out right after the EAWCH meeting, on the same trip to Tanzania (a senior conservation officer

Livelihood diversification is consistently used to reduce pressure on forests.

and a communications specialist). WWF Finland's senior international forest expert also joined the monitoring visit. During the visit, communication materials about the project were produced. Project funding and activities were on hold due to investigations in WWF Tanzania, which posed several challenges. However, before the halt, the activities had progressed well. The investigations are now finished and project activities continue in 2026.

- Finland's Ambassador to Indonesia, Mr Pekka Kaihilahti, made a historic first official visit to West Papua in June 2025, meeting with local authorities, village communities, and civil society organisations under the Resilience programme. Key topics in the discussions included Indigenous Peoples' rights, natural forest conservation and its financing, as well as human rights and environmental challenges linked to mining and large-scale agricultural investments.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAMME INTERVENTIONS

Sustainability of the programme is addressed through several interconnected approaches. Institutional embedding and local ownership are the primary strategies, with conservation practices integrated into government plans, policies and mandates at local, provincial and national levels.

In Nepal, the programme has been implemented as part of the larger landscape programme and alignment with national priorities has been ensured. Continued government engagement at federal, provincial and local levels and WWF Nepal's strategic presence in the landscape ensure that the interventions and results achieved will be sustained, expanded and further institutionalised. WWF Nepal facilitated the development of a 10-year (2026–2035) strategy and action plan for the Terai Arc Landscape. WWF supported guidelines on wildlife-friendly infrastructure and FPIC processes were formally endorsed by the government, institutionalising programme approaches beyond the project's lifetime in Nepal. In Indonesia (Papua/Tambrau), a community-led ecotourism institution was formally established through a village regulation, and local groups have begun accessing conservation financing independently. In Laos, land use plans and forest management tools were handed over to government counterparts with capacity-building in monitoring systems as part of an explicit exit strategy. In Tanzania, communities developed a sense of ownership over

Village Land Forest Reserves, and governance structures such as Village Natural Resource Committees were strengthened to maintain activities beyond the project period. In Bolivia, WWF organised training for municipal governments to strengthen the incorporation of climate adaptation and water management into municipal territorial development plans (PTDIs) for 2026–2030, ensuring that programme approaches continue through local government planning cycles.

Livelihood diversification is consistently used to reduce pressure on forests while generating self-sustaining economic benefits for communities. In Uganda, Tanzania, Nepal, Bolivia and Indonesia, the programme invested in nature-based enterprises – including beekeeping, agroforestry, ecotourism, spice farming and timber cooperatives – to provide communities with economic alternatives that are aligned with conservation goals and self-sustaining in the longer term.

Capacity building of civil society organisations and local institutions is pursued across all countries to ensure continuity beyond the project period. In Uganda, the core focus of the programme has been on strengthening local institutions to ensure sustainable, community-led conservation. Six cooperatives were strengthened, and a new landscape-level CSO is being developed for the Maramagambo-Ishasha sector in Uganda. In Madagascar, a grant management support team and capacity-building plan for CSOs were put in place to address gaps in the effectiveness of local CSOs.

Financial sustainability mechanisms, including community-based financing and leveraging of external funding sources, have been developed in several contexts. In addition to MFA funding, the Africa Adaptation Hub has secured multi-year funding from NORAD, ensuring continuity of its regional work. In Indonesia, the Nanggouw ecotourism community received external funding from the Blue Abadi Fund and national government recognition, reducing dependency on project funding. In Nepal, the programme contributed to strengthening the Forest Development Fund, which invests in the forestry sector in Nepal, and to developing PES mechanisms. Moreover, the programme contributed to initiating REDD+, from which the Government of Nepal has been receiving results-based payments. The Ministry of Forests and Environment is expanding carbon financing through REDD+ and other market-based mechanisms, which also contributes to financial sustainability.

Challenges to sustainability were also acknowledged; financial sustainability beyond donor funding

The silky sifaka lives in the humid forests of northern Madagascar. The programme supports the protection of the region's forests.

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One of the success stories was the development of inclusive, participatory land-use planning across the Arabela landscape.

remains a challenge across most country contexts, and the loss of major donors (like USAID) during the programme period highlighted the vulnerability of some interventions to shifts in the funding landscape. Continued attention to policy integration, local ownership and diversified financing will be critical in the next programme phase. The EAWCH noted that the sustainability of funding for wildlife crime interventions is limited, particularly following the loss of USAID support, which increased competition for resources and left some activities dependent on a narrow funding base. Tanzania highlighted that some interventions – particularly those related to persons with disabilities and newly established community groups – will still require external support for registration, fundraising and project management. In the Africa Adaptation Hub report, geopolitical uncertainty and shifting donor priorities were identified as the primary long-term risks to sustainability.

After almost 15 years of Finnish-supported conservation work in Borneo, the programme was successfully exited during this period – with continued operations secured through alternative funding, ensuring WWF Indonesia's valuable work in the landscape carries on. Over more than a decade of Finnish support in the Muller-Schwaner-Arabela landscape, the programme achieved significant conservation and livelihood outcomes, placing over 2.4 million hectares of forest under improved management or protection and supporting the establishment of community forests,

indigenous conservation areas, and FSC-certified timber concessions. One of the success stories was the development of inclusive, participatory land-use planning across the Arabela landscape, securing crucial habitats for orangutans. By the programme's close in 2023, over 4,400 people had directly benefited from conservation and sustainable natural resource management activities – including local and indigenous communities, women, youth, and persons with disabilities – while nature-based livelihoods such as coffee, rubber, ginger, and honey production were strengthened and communities were supported in accessing government development funding. In line with WWF Indonesia's own strategic priorities, Finnish support was subsequently redirected to Papua, where new conservation needs and opportunities had been identified and best practices of the work in Borneo could be replicated.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Each partner office has its own risk management system and keeps its own risk register; they follow the programme's risks either in a programme-specific risk register or as part of the office's risk register. WWF Finland keeps a programme-level risk register, which has been created using the WWF network's risk register template. At programme level, there are 30 risks identified. Risks are classified as external or internal and divided into six categories: People (staff), Strategic & Programmatic,

Financial, Operational, Reputation & Fiduciary, and Environmental & Social.

Overall, risk management is functioning, but some risks were underestimated at design stage, especially political change, institutional weakness, climate variability and land-use pressure. Most partners responded with adaptive management, closer government coordination and advocacy work, stronger FPIC and safeguards, revised scheduling, and targeted capacity building.

Across the partners, the main risks are quite consistent. Climate and environmental risks are common, especially drought, erratic rainfall, forest fires, flooding, and other extreme weather events, which have, for example, delayed the planting of seedlings, reduced restoration success, and increased pressure on ecosystems and livelihoods. Drought also increased human–wildlife conflicts. To mitigate these risks, nature-based solutions (NbS) were applied as part of the programme intervention approach for flood protection, erosion control, and ecosystem restoration. Climate vulnerability assessments and community-level adaptation plans were developed and implemented. Early warning systems and community preparedness were strengthened. Bioengineering measures — check dams, plantations along embankments, and fencing — were used to safeguard agricultural and forest land from flood damage in Nepal. In Bolivia, fire management plans and volunteer firefighter brigades were established, with specific attention to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency response.

Another common group of risks is political and governance-related risks. Political instability, weak law enforcement, limited staff capacity in government agencies, staff turnover, administrative delays, and changing political conditions were identified and realised risks in several partner countries. Some of these risks were underestimated or unforeseen, like the severity of civil unrest after elections in Tanzania and youth-led political protest in Nepal. These factors slowed implementation, weakened monitoring and enforcement, and in some cases reduced continuity. Elections in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda caused civil unrest, interrupted policy engagement, and disrupted leadership support. In Tanzania, internet connection went down, the WWF office was temporarily closed, and field activities were suspended following post-election unrest. In Madagascar, local elections led to increased deforestation and poaching beyond what had been anticipated in the risk matrix.

In Nepal, the transition to a federal governance system created ongoing policy conflicts between government tiers and frequent transfers of forestry and protected area officials, delaying some activities. In Laos, weak law enforcement by government and national park authorities proved more severe than initially estimated. In Uganda, shrinking civic space and increasingly top-down government approaches constrained civil society engagement. To mitigate the impacts, activities were realigned and rescheduled to work around political disruptions. Proactive coordination with incoming government officials was prioritised after elections. Policy advocacy was maintained through regional and global platforms to strengthen the enabling environment even when national-level engagement was limited. The likelihood of civil unrest was updated upwards in the programme-level risk matrix following its materialisation in several partner countries.

Several partners also raised broader risks for the programme approach, livelihood and land-use risks, which are also analysed under Outcome 1. In Laos, the expansion of cassava cultivation increased pressure on restoration sites and forest loss. In Bolivia, illegal gold mining, mercury contamination, fires, agricultural expansion, and weak municipal ownership are major risks.

The broader geopolitical environment, including ODA cuts linked to shifting donor priorities, is a growing programme-level risk, challenging the predictability and sustainability of activities. The withdrawal of USAID funding had an unexpected impact on conservation, particularly through budget cuts for an important partner for the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub. Limited fundraising success also affected the Africa Adaptation Hub, as submitted proposals to UNEP NAP and IKI funding calls were unsuccessful.

Two cases of suspected misuse of funding in partner offices triggered investigations by WWF International. Financial risk management processes and contract templates between WWF Finland and partners were strengthened following the investigations. Based on these cases, financial risk management processes and guidelines on the management of confidential information were improved at WWF Finland. Contract templates between WWF Finland and partners were also strengthened following these investigations, and the programme risk matrix was crosschecked with the contract to ensure adequate coverage of items and management actions.

The broader geopolitical environment is a growing programme-level risk.



Members of Nanggow village in West Papua. The village has been successful in developing an ecotourism model.

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The workplan and budget were revised five times in 2025. All revisions were sent to and approved by the MFA.

In 2025, unallocated budget (EUR 128,968 + admin 7 %) was used for several activities. These allocations were included in the budget revisions that were submitted to the MFA during the year. The amounts were added to the budget of the applicable partner, and amendments to the agreements were drafted and signed.

- African Adaptation Hub, for hiring a communications consultant and an assistant for the Hub (was also supported in 2024). EUR 10,000
- Africa Adaptation Hub, for the increased personnel budget, as the hub was relocated to Nairobi. EUR 6,150
- Africa Adaptation Hub, for the expenses of the Hub's regional meeting. EUR 5,583
- East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub, for communications resources. EUR 20,000
- East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub, to pilot an insurance fund for community rangers. EUR 5,625
- Laos, to address illegal wildlife trade. EUR 20,000
- Nepal, for managing human–wildlife conflicts. EUR 15,000
- Nepal, for the mapping of Community Forests across the Terai Arc Landscape with geospatial data. EUR 7,000
- Madagascar, for the equipment of vehicles for off-road conditions. EUR 9,000

- Bolivia, for the expenses of the regional workshop on illegal mining (covering 50% of the expenses of the workshop and travel costs). EUR 20,250
- Papua, for capacity building and training in the project villages. EUR 10,000

During 2025, a total of EUR 90,144 from Finland's MEL and advocacy budgets was reallocated to partners: EUR 10,000 to Madagascar, EUR 18,911 to Indonesia, EUR 10,000 to Nepal, EUR 10,000 to Bolivia, EUR 31,233 to Africa Adaptation Hub and EUR 10,000 to East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub.

There were delays in programme implementation in Uganda and Tanzania in 2025 due to the investigation of suspected misconduct, which were reported to the MFA. During this period, fund disbursements from WWF Finland were temporarily suspended, which consequently affected programme implementation. Investigations will continue in early 2026. As a result, the countries were not able to fully achieve the targets set for the programme period.

In 2025, WWF Finland, together with WWF International and network offices, reviewed and further strengthened guidelines and procedures related to fraud, corruption, and misconduct. Lessons learned from this process have been incorporated into the programme risk matrix and contract templates.

After the programme period had ended, Madagascar notified WWF Finland that some costs were not fully reflected in earlier reports, leading to an inaccurate view of available funds and subsequent overspending. The issue did not indicate intentional misuse, but

highlighted the need to strengthen financial follow-up, internal controls, and overall budget oversight.

The programmes were audited in the respective countries, using the template provided by the MFA. The costs of WWF Finland, as well as the programme-level report, were audited in Finland by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The total available budget for the programme in 2025 was EUR 3,385,173, of which EUR 2,877,397 was MFA support and EUR 507,776 self-financing. The total costs of the programme in 2025 were EUR 2,667,610. EUR 717,563 is carried forward to 2026.

Expenses in the least developed countries (Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda, Laos and Nepal) were EUR 1,174,688, which is 44 % of total expenses. Expenses in the fragile states (Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda and Laos) were EUR 821,639, totalling 31 % of the total.

In Laos, Indonesia, Bolivia and Uganda, the reported achievements were fully funded by this programme. For the Africa Adaptation Hub, 90% of the reported results were funded by this programme, and the remaining results were achieved through co-financing, strategic partnerships and synergies with other WWF programmes and initiatives. In Tanzania, this programme's contribution is 16 % of the work in the Water Towers Landscape, but the reported activities were fully funded by this programme.

In Nepal, for the output level, reported achievements were fully funded by this programme. For the overall Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), this programme's contribution is approximately 18%, and for the Western TAL it is 71%.

In Madagascar, reported achievements were 99 % funded by this programme. Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 were fully funded by this programme; under Outcome 3, there was also funding from Sweden. From the total funding for the Northern Highlands Landscape, this programme's share was around 41 % in 2025.

For the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub, this programme covered 42% of the Hub's annual budget in 2025. This programme's contribution to reported activities varied between 20% and 50%.

In addition to the Partnership Programme, WWF Finland supports the WWF network offices through

a network service fee, which was EUR 1,481,867 in FY2025 (18 months). This funding is used to support the WWF network, including offices in Africa and Asia, e.g. in organisational development and compliance with the network policies. WWF Finland established a Fund for Natural Disasters in 2024. In 2025, WWF Finland supported WWF Kenya, WWF Indonesia and WWF Vietnam, each with EUR 10,000 from the Fund for Natural Disasters.

Expenses by countries/regions 2025

Programmes	Total actual costs, €
Madagascar	401 029
Tanzania	116 163
Uganda	79 612
Indonesia	226 125
Laos	224 835
Nepal	353 049
Bolivia	174 796
Africa Adaptation Hub	134 176
East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub	146 726
Total costs of programmes	1 856 512

Finland	
Personnel	443 528
Communications	85 017
Advocacy	54 957
Planning, monitoring and evaluation	53 080
Secondments	
Total costs in Finland	636 582

Admin costs (7%)	174 516
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Total costs	2 667 610
MFA support used	2 267 469
WWF Finland self-financing	400 141



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