



# RESILIENCE FOR PEOPLE AND BIODIVERSITY

PROGRAMME REPORT 2023 TO  
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND





Villagers walking along a road in Amani, Tanzania.  
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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>AAH</b>	Africa Adaptation Hub (WWF's regional programme)	<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>ACBA</b>	African Civil Society Biodiversity Alliance	<b>KRC</b>	Kenya Red Cross
<b>AWF</b>	Africa Wildlife Foundation	<b>KWS</b>	Kenya Wildlife Service
<b>CCTT</b>	East Africa Wildlife Court Case Tracking Tool	<b>MFA</b>	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
<b>COP28</b>	28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	<b>MOFE</b>	Ministry of Forests and Environment
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation	<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding (agreement)
<b>DGBP</b>	Danida Green Business Partnerships	<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small and Medium size Enterprise
<b>EAWCH</b>	East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub (WWF's regional programme)	<b>NBS</b>	Nature based Solution
<b>ESSF</b>	Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>EU</b>	European Union	<b>PSEAH</b>	Prevention and elimination of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
<b>EUDR</b>	EU Regulation on deforestation-free product	<b>PWC</b>	PricewaterhouseCoopers
<b>EUR</b>	Euro	<b>REDD+</b>	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
<b>FDf</b>	Forest Development Fund	<b>SMART</b>	Spatial monitoring and reporting tool
<b>FMU</b>	Forest Management Unit	<b>TAL</b>	Terai Arc Landscape (Nepal)
<b>FPIC</b>	Free, Prior, Informed Consent	<b>TC5</b>	Fifth Transitional Committee
<b>HWC</b>	Human Wildlife Conflict	<b>UNEA</b>	United Nations Environment Assembly
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation	<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar

Report by international programme of WWF Finland

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Many species depend on the Amazon river ecosystem, including the Amazon River Dolphin shown on the cover of the report.  
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the second year of implementation, the Resilience for People and Biodiversity programme proceeded as planned and there weren't any observations which would cause need to make changes on programme level Theory of Change or Result Framework. Some small adjustments were made to the targets of the indicators.

The programme is moving towards achieving the targets and in some cases they have already been achieved, which was also expected due to the nature of the indicator. All assumptions of the programme's Result Framework are still valid. The programme's Midterm Review started in late 2023 and the outcome of the review will guide the implementation of the last two years of the programme and future planning of cooperation between WWF Finland and its partners.

In 2023, several countries globally prepared National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

to implement the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Goals. WWF participated actively in the preparation process in several countries. For example, in Nepal and Tanzania WWF facilitated the participation of local communities and civil society to the national processes. In Finland, WWF also participated in the expert group which continued the preparation of the National Biodiversity Strategy.

In Finland, WWF continued advocacy on climate and biodiversity themes during the elections and after that towards the new government and members of parliament. In the Government Paper Finland commits to the international agreements and mentions even a nature positive target, but unfortunately the delivery of these promises seems very weak in WWF Finland's opinion. This is based on the actions and especially the extensive budget cuts both on national and international levels.

## OUTCOME 1. BIODIVERSITY IN LANDSCAPES SECURED

Total of **29,972** people benefitted from conservation, sustainable management and use of renewable natural resources in the programme areas. **10,218** were women, **6,377** representing indigenous groups or ethnic minorities, **183** of them were people with disabilities and **4,208** were youth.

Total of **2,362** smallholder farmers were supported to improve income, food security and climate resilience. **4** of them was person with disability and **126** were youth.

Total of **1,060,309** hectares of forests and freshwater areas were designated under protection or conservation, out of which **1,004,638** hectares were fully new areas that WWF supported.

- **1,004,638** hectares of forests were put under new protection or conservation status.
- **68,486** hectares of forests were supported to be controlled by indigenous people and/or local communities.

Total of **2,035,472** hectares of forests were put under sustainable forest management.

- Out of these **1,739,628** hectares were new areas.
- For **295,844** hectares work had started earlier and continued in 2023.

Total of **14,829** hectares were supported under restoration. **1,627** hectares were fully new areas.

## OUTCOME 2. CLIMATE RESILIENCE ENHANCED

**10** Nature Based Solutions and climate change adaptation plans, policies and initiatives were adopted to improve the climate resilience of ecosystems, species and people.

Total of **17,961** people benefitted from climate activities under the programme. Some of them have benefitted also from other activities.

## OUTCOME 3. INCLUSIVE AND JUST NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE IMPROVED

**125** 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

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

**2,485** public officials and other duty-bearers capacitated and supported in natural resources governance and climate adaptation.



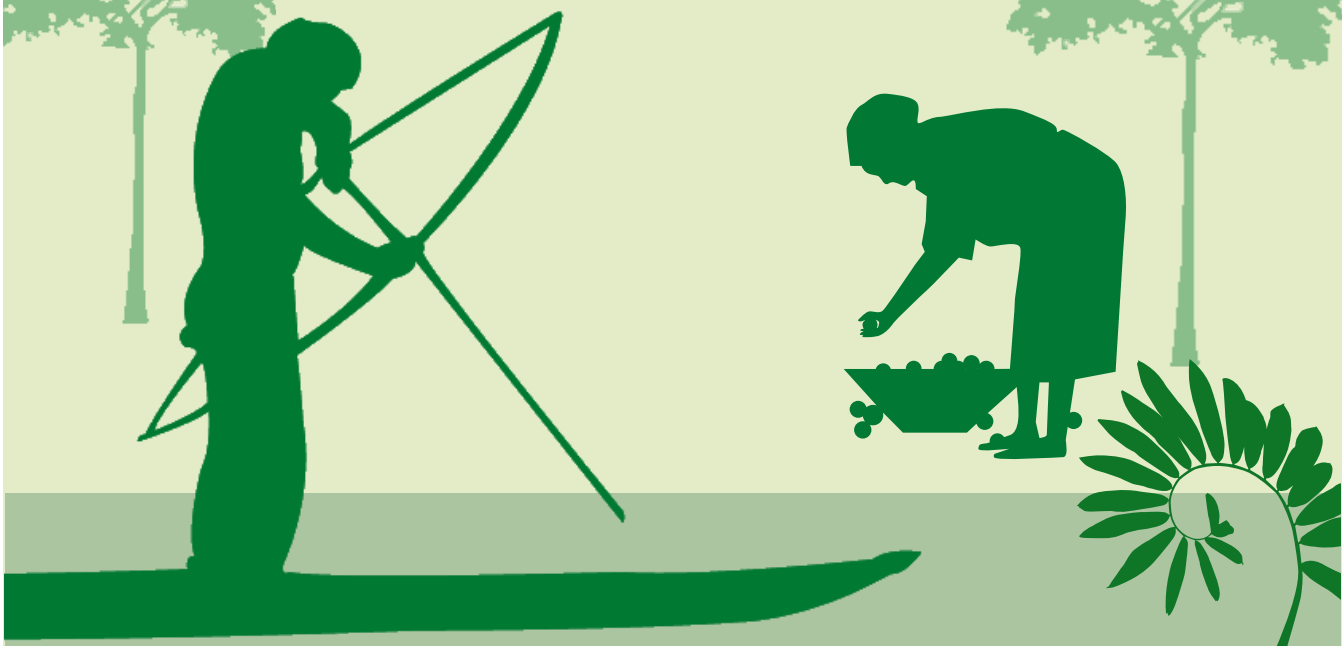
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A tree nursery on West-Kalimantan, Borneo.  
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## PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES IN 2023

		FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
NUMBER OF DIRECT BENEFICIARIES	RIGHT HOLDERS	15 658	21 085	36 743
	DUTY BEARERS	892	1 579	2 471
	TOTAL	16 550	22 664	39 214
NUMBER OF INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES	RIGHT HOLDERS	73 587	67 658	141 245
	DUTY BEARERS	3 514	4 862	8 376
	TOTAL	77 101	72 520	149 621
TOTAL BENEFICIARIES		93 651	95 184	188 835



# PROGRAMME KEY OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS ACHIEVED IN 2023



Black rhino mother and a calf in Lewa & Borana Conservancy, Kenya.

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

### Population trends of priority species

Although many species still face extinction and global populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles keep on falling there are also powerful examples globally of success on species conservation. In the programmes partner countries in Kenya the population of black rhinos has reached 1,000. Population has now more than doubled from less than 400 individuals in the 1980s. But elephant populations in Kenya have suffered as a result of climate change as over 600 elephants have died from drought. Partners reporting to this indicator are Nepal and the East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub (EAWCH) and in Nepal there were no censuses of priority species conducted in 2023.

### Trends in net annual natural forest change

On an impact level the forest cover change for 2023 was not analysed against the programme specific indicators. This will be done at the end of the four-year programme. Globally, forest cover and deforestation trends regarding the year 2023 were reported by the Global Forest Watch in April 2024. The results show that deforestation of primary tropical forests continued being 3.7 million hectares per year with slight reduction from the previous year. The biggest loss was in Brazil with the Democratic Republic of Congo coming as second. Brazil and Colombia were able to reduce their deforestation rates whereas in Bolivia and Laos, which are also Resilience programme countries, as well as in Nicaragua deforestation increased strongly. Meanwhile, Indonesia, which is also a partner country in the Resilience programme, managed to keep rates of primary forest loss near record-low levels although a little increase from previous year.

On the programme level, WWF Finland together with Arbonaut company, supported four programme offices (Tanzania, Madagascar, Laos and Indonesia) in preparing forest cover change and deforestation analysis for their programme

landscapes. The results of this analysis varied: e.g. in Madagascar deforestation was reduced in the programme landscape and in Borneo the deforestation was reduced in those areas where interventions were focused, while in other areas deforestation still continued mainly due to palm oil plantation expansion. In Tanzania there were signs of deforestation and forest degradation in some parts of the landscape. In Laos, the analysis showed that there are high deforestation hotspots in the landscape and that the focus of interventions should be channelled more in those areas.

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

In order to track progress towards the programme's impact on the socio-economic status in programme communities, socioeconomic wellbeing surveys were conducted in Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda and Laos. The survey captured baseline data on natural resource management, governance, access, and conflict, as well as the socio-economic elements of human wellbeing. The survey also provided information on how, e.g., women, indigenous people and disabled people perceive their role in making decisions on and access to natural resources.

Most of the surveys revealed that social wellbeing was good in all communities: people feeling happy with their social networks and community relations. Human wellbeing aspects differed among the countries' communities, nevertheless the dependency of the communities to surrounding natural resources was validated to be high. Aspects of economic wellbeing, however, indicated that access to markets, ability for savings and having enough money to meet household needs were low, for example. Also, in some communities it was perceived that disabled people and women do not get equal say and possibility to participate in decisions over natural resources. The survey validated that people living near to national parks and nature reserves experience most human-wildlife conflicts. Most people were found to be knowledgeable of and using local grievance mechanisms. The surveys will be repeated in 2025 and will contribute to the monitoring of social benefits of the programme.

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

The assumptions still hold and indication towards aiming for impact is seen as the programme has started to contribute towards the programme

In the programmes partner countries in Kenya the population of black rhinos has reached 1,000. Population has now more than doubled from less than 400 individuals in the 1980s.

Two young wild tigers running along riverside in Bardia National Park, Nepal.

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outcome to enhance climate adaptation. However, at the moment there is no impact that could be yet detected.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- Censuses are conducted regularly
- Data availability
- Best available science and local knowledge is available for the design of the adaptation projects and communities are willing to implement
- “Healthy environment contributes to well-being of people: Government authorities support tenure process and recognise indigenous people and local communities as customaries of the forests/land”

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

Terai Arc Landscape was recognized by UNEP as one of the best examples of large-scale and long-term ecosystem restoration in any country or region, embodying the 10 Restoration Principles of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. WWF Finland has supported WWF Nepal’s work and cooperation

with the Government of Nepal on this landscape under this programme and also by previous support from MFA. This recognition highlights the impacts of long term conservation work done in cooperation with the stakeholders.

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

In 2023, the programme supported community-based conservation and natural resources management in most of the partner countries. Altogether 29,972 people benefitted from the conservation, sustainable management and use of renewable natural resources (indicator 1a). Out of these 10,218 were women, 6,377 belonged to Indigenous groups or ethnic minorities, 183 were persons with disabilities and 4,208 youth. 17,961 people benefitted from activities increasing specifically climate resilience, indicator 1b (more detailed description of activities enhancing climate resilience is found under outcome 2.). It has been positive to see that the capacity building for the programme partners and the cooperation with local disability organisations has resulted in improved engagement of people with disabilities in the programme.

66% of the target for indicator 1a and 88 % of the target for indicator 1b is achieved which means that the programme is advancing according to the original plan. Some countries have set the original target very high, whereas some countries have already achieved their target.

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

The programme has continued to provide support to various livelihood activities to improve incomes and diversify income sources. In addition, support to livelihoods is provided to reduce communities' dependency on harmful natural resource use, meanwhile enhancing their opportunities to benefit from sustainable natural resource management. The programme has supported improved agricultural practices and various agricultural commodity producer groups around, e.g. coffee, honey, broom grass and vanilla. Altogether 3,543 smallholders have been supported in the first two years of programme implementation. There were some delays in getting the work started on livelihoods support in some of the countries of the programme. The pace of implementation is expected to pick up in the next year of implementation in the countries where work has lagged behind so far.

Providing support on livelihoods to vulnerable communities and local peoples living next to, or within, protected areas remains a key component of WWF's approach. Working together with communities on sustainable agricultural production and natural resource management does not only support the communities but also helps the management of protected areas and is key to sustaining results.

### **Advancing protection, restoration and sustainable management of natural resources**

In 2023, altogether 1,060,309 hectares of forests were designated under protection or conservation. Out of these 68,486 hectares belonged to local communities or Indigenous people. 55,671 hectares of these were areas that work had started earlier and continued and 1,004,638 hectares completely new areas. The biggest achievement was gained in Borneo, where multi-year support for the designation and recognition of important orangutan habitat and high conservation value area of 1,004,434 hectares was approved by the district and province level governments as "Provincial Strategic Area". The programme has achieved its original four-year target for environmental protection already in the middle of the program. This is mainly because in Borneo the target was a lot smaller than what was achieved through the designation of the Provincial Strategic Area (over 1 million hectares).

Further 2,035,472 hectares of forests were put under improved management. 1,739,628 hectares were new areas, for 295,844 hectares work had started earlier and continued in 2023. A big achievement in 2023 was the finalisation of the forest fire management plan for the Itenez protected area in Bolivia which covers over 1 million hectares. In addition, community village land use plans and community forest management plans were supported in various countries. In Borneo, various government forest management units were supported with improved management, some of the areas also overlapping with the West Kalimantan Province strategic areas mentioned above. 98% of the four-year target has been achieved.

The programme also supports the restoration of ecosystems in the programme landscapes. In 2023, 14,829 hectares of restoration was done in programme landscapes (86% of the programme's four-year target reached). 1,627 ha were new, and for 13,202 ha restoration had started before 2023.

The programme also allocates technical and financial support to the management of protected areas and national parks that have been protected earlier. These areas need constant support for 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.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- Communities and targeted right holders willing to work together with WWF
- Governments have enabling environments for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to operate, private businesses willing to invest in sustainable production, nature based livelihood models are economically viable
- Government authorities are supportive and recognise importance of sustainable forest management and protection
- Forest landscape restoration adopted by stakeholders

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

For conservation to be effective, local communities must benefit from conservation efforts. The programme supports local communities and indigenous peoples

A big achievement in 2023 was the finalisation of the forest fire management plan for the Itenez protected area in Bolivia which covers over 1 million hectares.



A local woman demonstrates scraping of cinnamon tree in East-Usambara, Tanzania, where WWF promotes sustainable spice farming.  
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to establish, expand, sustainably manage, and fully benefit from community forest, wildlife, and conservation areas. In the first two years of implementation, 43 MSMEs have been supported to improve access to value chains and/or markets, this is 73 % of the programme target. Target for this indicator was revised from 139 to 59, as for Borneo the original target (100) was for people, while it should have been for MSMEs (20).

No changes have been reported in the operational environments for the MSMEs. Many of the communities WWF supports are in close proximity to protected areas that are often difficult to reach, have limited access and limited income opportunities. This restrains the scope of livelihood options and smallholders in many programme areas have limited market access and only few off-takers for their products. Value addition often works best where there is a sufficient concentration of producers of a single commodity which attracts buyers that are willing to pay a better price for higher quality.

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

In 2023, the programme supported the development of 23 land use, watershed and forest or forest fire management plans to protect or sustainably manage natural resources such as forests and rivers. These included, for instance, Sintang district spatial plan in Borneo and forest fire management plan for the Itenez protected area in Bolivia. Many land use processes are multi-year and include sub-plans to prepare for the master plans. On the other hand, many of the plans are on community level and the process is faster.

51% of the programme target has been achieved. In some countries more plans have been already prepared compared to the original target whereas in some countries the implementation is still behind. In general the progress is steady. For instance in Laos the delay of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government has also delayed the land use planning process which will start in 2024.

In addition, the programme supported the monitoring of biodiversity values to provide crucial information for decision makers and planners to secure the areas with high biodiversity values as well as species habitats and movement. In 2023, 26 different assessments and monitoring processes were implemented, for instance a study on ecological values of the Itenez river in Bolivia and a wildlife

survey in Xe Pien National Park in Laos. Also, training for biodiversity monitoring and conservation for communities, government and private sector has been supported. 56% of the programme target has been achieved.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- Government authorities sensitised about inclusive land use planning, shared vision for resilient and sustainable landscapes can be achieved with stakeholders
- Methods and technology available for efficient monitoring, capacity to monitor exists

**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**

The assumptions for Outcome 2 still hold. Stakeholders still are willing to co-create and adopt Nature based Solutions (NbS) for climate change, financing can be identified for implementation of adaptation interventions, international dialogue on NbS is still progressing positively and adequate knowledge and information on climate change still exists.

**Nature Based Solutions and adaptation projects, policies and / or initiatives adopted**

There has been a good uptake on integration of climate resilience into the programme. So far altogether 38% of the total programme outcome has been achieved. In 2023, a total of 16 NbS and adaptation projects, policies or initiatives were adopted. This indicates that the implementation is relatively well aligned with the targets, considering that the outcome target assumes that adaptation plans, policies and initiatives which have been supported and developed during the first years have then been implemented or taken into use. Conducting vulnerability assessments during the first two years of the programme (e.g. in Bolivia, Indonesia - both Borneo and Papua, Laos, Tanzania and Madagascar) has enabled the programme countries to utilise

In 2023, 26 different assessments and monitoring processes were implemented, for instance a study on ecological values of the Itenez river in Bolivia and a wildlife survey in Xe Pien National Park in Laos.



During the dry season, there is always a fire burning somewhere in the Amazon rainforest. In Bolivia a plan for managing forest fire has been created with the support from WWF.

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the results thereof either to advocate for the inclusion of climate resilience to relevant government processes and plans, or use the results to guide implementation of conservation activities in practice. In addition to the local level, the Africa Adaptation Hub (AAH) contributed to regional and global level policy processes in influencing climate negotiations as part of WWF network, and started supporting the implementation of the two regional climate adaptation projects for WWF that were approved for funding in 2022.

Programme partners have furthermore capacitated and supported both rights holders and duty bearers' capacities in climate resilience. Altogether 17,961 rights holders were supported in climate adaptation in 2023. From these 7,181 (40%) were women, 7,423 (41%) indigenous, 85 (0,5%) disabled and 427 (2,4%) were youth). Additionally, 826 duty bearers were capacitated or supported in enhancing climate resilience in 2023.

#### **Tons of CO<sub>2</sub> sequestered or avoided**

Over 2.7 million hectares of new forest areas have been brought to improved forest management, restored or protected in 2023. In addition, work continued in over 350,000 hectares of forests. Moreover, the capacity building process to enhance the existing capacities of the programme partners on deforestation and forest carbon monitoring was concluded. Based on the training provided by the Finnish consultancy company Arbonaut in 2022 and some technical support, WWF Laos, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Indonesia conducted deforestation and forest carbon analysis in their project landscapes/areas in 2023.

Only four programme partners made an analysis of the carbon sequestration/avoided carbon emissions in their programme areas. Thus it is not meaningful to aggregate the avoided carbon emissions or amount of carbon sequestered at the programme level. Also, carbon monitoring may not be as important of an issue for the partner countries to monitor than monitoring forest cover change. Therefore it is suggested to leave Outcome 2 indicator 2 out from the Results Framework. The work to conserve, restore and sustainably manage the forests in the programme areas will still remain as the main focus of the work and will be tracked under Outcome 1, and the capacity building support provided will continue to help monitor the deforestation and degradation, even though programme wide metrics were not able to be accomplished to verify the carbon sequestration/avoided carbon emissions.

The training held for programme partners was utilised at the WWF network level, as it was integrated to the network wide training platform. Also, in 2023 a specific initiative has been launched in the WWF network to build internal capacities in carbon monitoring. This may offer an opportunity for the programme partners to build on the efforts done under the Resilience programme and further continued support to those programme partners, who might need carbon monitoring in their future work on NbS for climate mitigation initiatives, for example.

In addition to the above, WWF Indonesia in Papua conducted a study on climate budget tagging in Tambrauw Regency. The study on climate budget tagging is crucial in Indonesia, as financing for climate change activities, including mitigation,

Altogether 17,961 rights holders were supported in climate adaptation in 2023.

NbS have also been identified in programme areas to enhance climate resilience by preventing flooding, protecting forest and marine areas, and conserving customary lands.

is not available despite government efforts. The budget tagging process will improve transparency in financing the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, aiming to achieve national targets as part of fulfilling the commitments for 2030 through the nationally determined contributions of Indonesia under the Paris Agreement. Similarly, WWF Nepal has been supporting the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) for mitigating climate change impacts through REDD+. WWF facilitated preparation of the Emission Reduction Program Document for the Terai Arc Landscape with the potential to recover up to USD 45 million in lieu of 9.16 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e sequestered over a six-year period ending 2024. The Government of Nepal submitted a Measurement, Reporting and Verification report to the World Bank in September 2023 to claim the results-based payment, which is under review.

**OUTPUT 2.1 RIGHT 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 PEOPLES RESILIENCE.**

**Adaptation plans and Nature Based Solutions initiatives developed and supported with specific aim on climate resilience**

Total of 24 adaptation plans and NbS initiatives were developed and supported in 2023 with specific aim to enhance climate resilience in the programme areas. This constitutes 81% of the whole programme target being achieved by the midterm of the programme.

The stakeholders still provide adequate support for climate mitigation and adaptation actions, and a conducive environment for civil society organisations (CSOs) to influence policies, plans and strategies still exists, which means the assumptions still hold to carry out the work.

The programme supported government authorities and local communities for example in implementing Nature-based Solutions and adaptation through restoring degraded areas and floodplains, employing bioengineering, constructing check dams, fencing, and riverbank plantations. Construction efforts and riverbank plantations were done to safeguard high flood risk agricultural and forest lands benefiting communities.

Capacity building for government officials on climate change and collaboration with various stakeholders, including government, CSOs, local communities, and the local private sector has continued. Restoration

plans for critical areas were facilitated and NbS have also been identified in programme areas to enhance climate resilience by preventing flooding, protecting forest and marine areas, and conserving customary lands.

Climate vulnerability assessments were conducted in several programme areas, which highlighted adaptation measures and early warning systems needed for addressing issues like drought, floods, wildfires, and crop pests. The findings lead e.g. to the development of fire management plan and customised training as well as informed programme interventions and plans for 2024, development of local context specific adaptation plans and local land use planning.

A regional [African Nature-based Solutions for Adaptation workshop](#) was also held for WWF NbS and adaptation practitioners. WWF Finland provided additional financial and technical support to AAH and leveraged 25,000 EURs from WWF Denmark to organise this workshop. It aimed at facilitating cross-learning and sharing, ensuring linkages and synergies, unlocking barriers and opportunities and how WWF can drive more impactful NbS work at scale in Africa. [Collaboration was strengthened with strategic partners](#) such as UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent (IFRC), Kenya Red Cross (KRC), and Embassy of Denmark during a one day conference aiming to improve the understanding of the enabling conditions (barriers and opportunities) for NbS implementation in policy frameworks and improve coordination and foster collaboration across NbS related initiatives in Africa.

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

Climate related decision-making processes (10) were influenced and climate financing leveraged through advocacy. This means that at the end of 2023 the programme has achieved 89% of the total programme target.

Capacity and awareness building as well as support in climate change and disaster risks reduction have been used as ways of advocacy on various stakeholders, including government, CSOs, local communities, and the local private sector. Training sessions, e.g. on climate change vulnerability assessment aiming to raise awareness and build capacity at the different administrative levels were

conducted. The climate vulnerability assessment data has been used to advocate for natural resources finance and investments as well as it has informed spatial planning. The programme has furthermore supported the advocacy to accommodate sustainable community land use that is adaptive to disasters and aligned with planned support facilities for handling disaster risks to the development plan.

The programme contributed also to WWF's advocacy in climate adaptation at regional and global level. The programme supported WWF's participation in the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) consultations on "Nature based Solutions for Supporting Sustainable Development" to elevate WWF's position and recommendations, which were also featured in the consultancy paper.

The WWF network adopted contributions from the programme on climate adaptation to the official WWF network positions and asks for the Africa Climate Week and Summit, as well as the climate negotiations at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28). [A policy brief](#) for Nature based Solutions for Adaptation, and contribution to the [WWF Africa expectations paper](#) were made.

Additional support was also provided to the WWF network in the development of two policy briefings for climate negotiations COP28 on [Adaptation Finance](#) and on [Loss and Damage](#). Furthermore, [a blog on Loss and Damage](#) was written by a network expert prior to the Fifth Transitional Committee (TC5) meeting on the 2nd of November reflecting WWF's key asks. The outcomes of COP28 were, e.g. the adoption of a decision that operationalised the Loss and Damage fund with financial pledges totalling more than USD 792 million, which was a decision welcomed by WWF. The Global Stocktake outcome contained some other good elements such as a call for an end to deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 and references to Nature based Solutions and food systems. On the contrary, the outcome on adaptation and particularly on the Global Goal on Adaptation was disappointing in the view of WWF. Parties were unable to agree on concrete quantitative targets and indicators and decided to start a two-year process to develop them. Finance for adaptation was similarly weak, with only repeated pledges to double adaptation finance.

Communication during the COP28 emphasised the [role of nature in tackling the impacts of climate change](#).

Furthermore, collaboration with Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF) to pursue the agenda around protected areas and climate adaptation in Africa was strengthened. Jointly with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and AWF, a side-event was organised during the Africa Climate Week on "Protected and conserved areas as a solution to climate change". Key partners in the session were KWS, African Civil Society Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA), UNEP and Adaptation Fund, with WWF. Also, two side-events in COP28 "[Scaling up tangible nature-based solutions for adaptation initiatives in Africa](#)" and "[Accelerating transformative youth led actions on nature based solutions for adaptation in Africa](#)", involving eight African youth organisations, were organised.

### 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 has achieved 50% of the target on the number of developing country CSO's capacity improved and it is expected that the target will be reached (including disability, gender and indigenous people organisations).

There were no significant changes on the status of the civic space in the partner countries in 2023. Globally the situation for environmental human rights defenders remains challenging. WWF partner offices are working closely with the government partners even in the countries where civic space might be limited by bringing additional technical support for the line ministries and agencies. WWF helps also to communicate the government decisions and regulations to the local communities and districts, for example in Indonesia.



In West Papua, local indigenous peoples protect their forests using the traditional conservation method, "Sasi".

© TIITU SAARIKOSKI / WWF



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

The programme has proceeded well in achieving its advocacy target, number of policies or decision-making processes and investments influenced. 95% of the target has been already achieved, but it needs to be noted that the target will be revised during the Midterm Review. In Uganda, WWF influenced more policies (district forest management plans) than anticipated at the beginning of the programme. In Nepal and Finland, WWF influenced the preparation of Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. In Nepal and Uganda, WWF influenced national forest policies, guidelines and forest trade. For example, WWF has supported the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) in Nepal to develop working procedures for mobilisation of the Forest Development Fund (FDF). FDF is a trust fund created within the MoFE as a part of a sustainable financing mechanism for the forestry sector in Nepal.

A big achievement in 2023 was the new EU Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR) that came into force in June and will become applicable as of 30 December 2024. Companies placing or exporting products (soy, beef, coffee, cacao, timber, rubber, palm oil) in or from the EU market have to conduct due diligence to confirm that no deforestation or degradation has occurred in the production after 31st of December 2020. Companies also have to verify that human rights, and the rights of affected indigenous peoples have been respected. [This regulation](#) is a big win for WWF and for the work against deforestation.

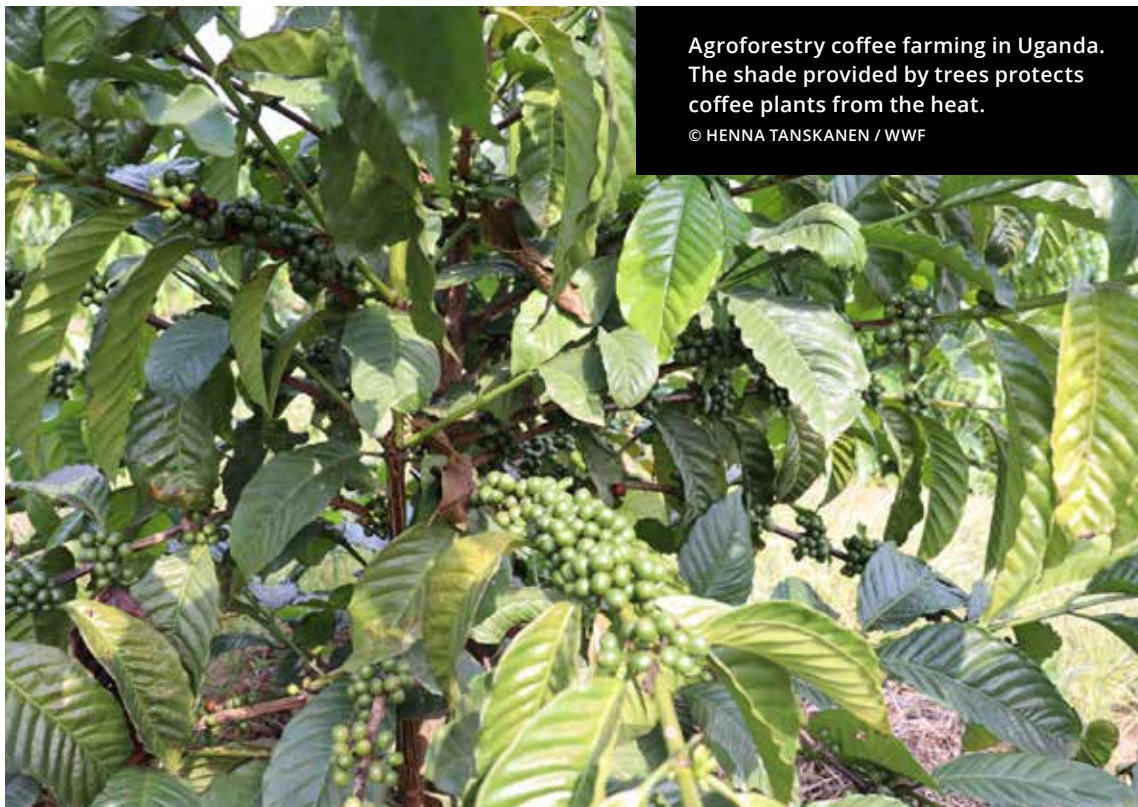
EU is the second biggest importer of deforestation after China and WWF hopes that the new regulation will have positive impacts on halting deforestation.

WWF Finland, in coordination with other WWF offices and European non-government organisations (NGOs), was active in promoting the regulation all the way from the beginning of the process in 2021 until the end and is still strongly continuing to advance ambitious implementation of the regulation in coming years. In Finland, a working group was established by the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry for the preparation of the regulation nationally but neither WWF Finland nor any other NGO was invited to be part of the group. It was a big disappointment that civil society was excluded from the group.

WWF Finland has regularly shared [updates](#) about the state of the EUDR process on its communications channels. In 2022, as a part of the wider Together4Forests campaign, WWF [encouraged people to appeal](#) to Finnish members of the European Parliament to ensure a strong Deforestation Regulation. In June of 2023, when the regulations entered into force, WWF published [a news article](#) which was shared in WWF's social media channels and newsletter. The post in LinkedIn was especially successful with 4942 views and 79 clicks, which was great since companies are WWF Finland's target audience in LinkedIn.

In 2023, WWF Finland supported the advocacy skills development of its partners by providing financial support to the Asian WWF offices advocacy training which was implemented by WWF networks Global Policy and Advocacy Team and providing facilitation

A big achievement in 2023 was the new EU Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR) that came into force in June and will become applicable as of 30 December 2024.



and expertise on African advocacy workshop which was organised in Tanzania in October 2023.

In Finland the advocacy work was focused on elections. After the election climate change was acknowledged in the new Government Paper but biodiversity was not recognised as a priority at national or international level. As dialogue about environmental issues and biodiversity with government parties was challenging, WWF was able to contribute to the prevalent security-focused dialogue by bringing connections of environment, climate and security to the conversations. This topic has been gaining increasing attention and WWF has been able to enrich the dialogue by bringing in aspects of nature loss and climate change as threats to human, local, national and international security. The advocacy messages were directed to the preparation of Finland's new Foreign and Security Policy Report through different channels, as WWF was not invited directly to present its views on this process. It must be noted that in 2023 WWF Finland's work on the security theme received additional funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) Peace Mediation Unit (project coordinators salary and some communications costs). While continuing dialogue on this theme with the WWF network, UNEP and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) it was noted that the programme's work especially in East-Africa is already closely linked to potential conflicts caused by climate change or other environmental factors. Additional analysis and attention on the topic was also requested from EAWCH, since crime also creates insecurity.

Working with the governments (duty bearers) and providing them the needed technical support is a crucial role that WWF plays in all partner countries.

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

In 2023 through this programme, WWF capacitated and supported several duty bearers in all partner countries and in Finland, but the programme has achieved only 28% of the target. In several countries the programme has been able to reach more duty bearers than planned but in some countries the achievement of this target will take some more time, especially in EAWCH which provides capacity building for rangers. Working with the governments (duty bearers) and providing them the needed technical support is a crucial role that WWF plays in all partner countries and an important approach in ensuring sustainability of the programme approaches, because while providing technical support the approaches will be aligned with government plans. The good progress also on influencing policies in partner countries and engaging with other CSOs are supporting the sustainability approach of the programme. WWF Finland's representative attended the Finnish Development Policy Committee's field trip to Kenya, which provided an opportunity to have in depth discussion with Committee members from different political parties.

### **Reduced incidences of illegal wildlife activities in programme landscapes or national level**

Partners reporting to this indicator are Borneo, Tanzania, Uganda and EAWCH. The percentage



Restoration of mangrove forests is one example of Nature-Based Solutions. Mangroves create habitats for fish (thus bringing more income to fishers) and simultaneously they offer protection from storms.

© HENNA TANSKANEN / WWF

target varies between partners. In Borneo, community-based patrols have done monitoring using spatial monitoring and reporting (SMART) tools, and the presence of human activities inside the forests is still intense, including poaching, illegal logging and non-timber forest products harvesting. Based on the information from the Muheza District and from communities through the wellbeing survey, there were no illegal wildlife activities in the programme area in Tanzania. The EAWCH reports that due to drought, conflicts and illegal activities are increasing in the area. The drought (following Covid) is causing extreme pressure on local livelihoods and increasing dependence on natural resources resulting in increased illegal activities such as bushmeat, sandalwood harvesting and more recently ivory trafficking. The hub is working closely to monitor these changing drivers and the impact it is having on illegal activities. The African Organised Crime Index reports an increase in fauna and floral crimes in East Africa. The report also highlighted an increase in corruption in the region highlighting an increased need to focus on illegal wildlife trade drivers and preventing crime. For Uganda, there was no data available for 2023. For this indicator the programme is not moving towards the target (reduced incidences) at the moment. It also has to be acknowledged that the illegal activities are not systematically monitored everywhere.

The EAWCH has supported TRAFFIC to launch the East Africa Wildlife Court Case Tracking Tool (CCTT). The tool allows users (including prosecutors) to visually monitor criminal activity from wildlife crime court cases. It contains records and information on the cases collected to enhance the capacity and knowledge of regional prosecutors on case

monitoring, analysis, and reference for prosecuting crimes. The tool is dynamic and interactive, reflecting analytics for wildlife crime court cases and their attributes. The CCTT will be linked to the Eastern Africa Association of Prosecutors' website to enable prosecutors to navigate through and access the necessary information. The website will cover all of the Eastern Africa Association of Prosecutors members including Zambia, Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- CSOs and community-based organisations are willing and have capacity to participate, conducive environment for CSOs to influence policies/ plans and strategies exists
- Government authorities are willing and allow WWF to provide support to and training for their officials
- Continuous monitoring of illegal wildlife conducted by government authorities and programme partners

**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**

Partners reporting to this indicator are Borneo, Nepal, Uganda and EAWCH, and the target is a declining trend, specific numeric target has not been set. At the time being, the trend in HWC is not declining and especially in Uganda and Nepal the conflicts

between humans and wildlife have been increasing: mostly wildlife damage of crops and property, and livestock predation, but also human injury and death. In Borneo the reported incident is related to orangutans in smallholder palm oil plantations. Nepal has seen a rise in the number of wildlife and the number of tigers has nearly tripled in a decade, which means also increasing encounters. Based on an analysis done in Queen Elizabeth National Park in the Greater Virungas landscape in Uganda in 2023, increasing HWC incidences are attributed to dwindling ungulate species migration in corridors, increased human population in the fishing villages and around Queen Elisabeth Protected Area, leading to increased interface between wildlife and people. Other drivers that accentuate HWC incidences include among others inadequate benefits from wildlife, limited sustainable alternative livelihoods, drought, climate change and frequent wildfires also induced vegetation changes in the protected area, increasing the areas covered by invasive and unpalatable species, pushing some wildlife to move outside protected areas in search for pasture/forage. WWF is supporting government partners to address these challenges also in Kenya and Tanzania. To further analyse these conflicts and also possible linkages to climate change, the programme connected to WWF network's internal working group on fragile and conflict affected areas. EAWCH has leveraged GBP 600,000 to expand efforts to address HWC challenges.

In Nepal, the programme supports interventions to reduce negative human-wildlife interaction and mitigate its impacts on communities through various preventive and remedial approaches. Preventive measures include early warning systems, predator-proof corals, fencing, alternative livelihood options and wildlife behaviour, rescue and HWC sensitization training, whereas the remedial measures include relief funds and insurance schemes. Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University, was provided with a research grant for "Spatio-temporal patterns of human and livestock attacks and locating the risk sites for these attacks in the buffer zone of Bardia National Park, Nepal from 2013–2022". The study observed significant trends in HWC within Bardia National Park, identifying the north-western parts of the buffer zone as vulnerable to both human attacks and livestock depredation. It identified specific risk sites and conflict hotspots, offering valuable insights for developing targeted policies and strategies to mitigate HWC. For 2024, additional support of EUR 25,000 was allocated to Nepal's programme budget to address HWC.

In Nepal, the programme supports interventions to reduce negative human-wildlife interaction and mitigate its impacts on communities through various preventive and remedial approaches.

### **Demonstrable progress in implementation of the Zero Poaching Framework**

This is measured by an indicator used by WWF Network's Wildlife Practice: "Demonstrable progress in implementation of the Zero Poaching Framework as measured by increasing scores against each of the six pillars using the Wildlife Crime Prevention Framework". Target is that 3 landscapes in Eastern Africa have seen reductions of poaching with 2 landscapes reporting zero poaching of target species. EAWCH is the only partner contributing to the target, but also in Borneo programme has supported work to reduce poaching.

In 2023, Wildlife Crime Prevention Framework scores increased in 10 sites in Eastern Africa by an average of 10%.

In Uganda and Rwanda, the EAWCH has supported the development and implementation of national SMART databases to manage the national parks. In Kenya, three marine national parks (Watmu, Mombasa and Kasiti) are now using SMART with support from WWF and partner NGOs. In the Mara the system has been strengthened to support conservancy management and is now linked to the conservancy management plan with grazing monitoring (legal and illegal). WWF is currently working with 40 protected areas in Kenya to improve the use of technology; this equates to over 400 rangers working on SMART to improve patrolling and adaptive management.

In Borneo, the programme has supported adoption of SMART monitoring. Currently, an identification process has been carried out on the Forest Management Units (FMUs) that have adopted the SMART system to support the recommendations for SMART implementation in their technical implementing units, and 50% of the 17 FMUs in West Kalimantan are already acquainted with the SMART concept. The designed SMART application is then handed over to the head of the division for learning its usage and functionality based on modules provided by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- Continuous monitoring of HWC conducted by government authorities and programme partners
- Government authorities willing to commit and develop zero poaching strategies, communities willing to support zero poaching



Broom grass is being collected in Nepal.

© TANJA PIRINEN / WWF

### 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**

There was no significant increase on leveraged funding as there were no suitable funding windows open for WWF Finland or its partners in 2023, but the programme has achieved almost half of the target on number of solutions leveraging funding (48%). Especially in Borneo, WWF and the programme have been successful in tapping programme approaches to the local government community level funding instruments, but in several partner countries there has not been any progress in leveraged funding. In addition to incorporating the programme approaches to the government plans, the leveraged funding has a crucial role in securing the sustainability of programme approaches and might need more attention in the last two years of the programme.

A major disappointment for the programme in 2023 were the extensive development cooperation funding budget cuts in Finland. According to WWF's knowledge, the Government of Finland didn't make any additional commitments to the global biodiversity funding but made an extensive reduction to its Green Climate Fund commitment in 2023. The only positive side of Finland's climate finance was the commitment to the new Loss and Damage fund which was launched at COP28. Even though the commitment was small, it gives a strong signal of Finland's commitment in the present financial and political situation in Finland.

#### **Partnerships and coalitions developed**

The programme has achieved its target on the number of partnerships and coalitions developed. The cooperation with these partners will continue throughout the programme implementation and some additional partnerships will be also created during the two years of the programme as 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 which has increased WWF's role in establishing partnerships and coalitions. Most of the partners have done cooperation at least on some level with local disability organisations, gender-focused organisations and indigenous people organisations.

Most of the partners have done cooperation at least on some level with local disability organisations, gender-focused organisations and indigenous people organisations.

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

The programme partners have all continued to implement the WWF network standards on [Environmental and Social Safeguards and Statement of Principles](#), which help the programme to live up to the WWF's social and human rights commitments in relation to place-based work. Safeguards screenings have been conducted and recommendations have been and are taken into use through mitigation planning and implementation. The programme has already been able to achieve its target on the number of safeguard processes and FPIC processes. This is as expected, as all the programme interventions should follow identified safeguards processes from the beginning of the programme.

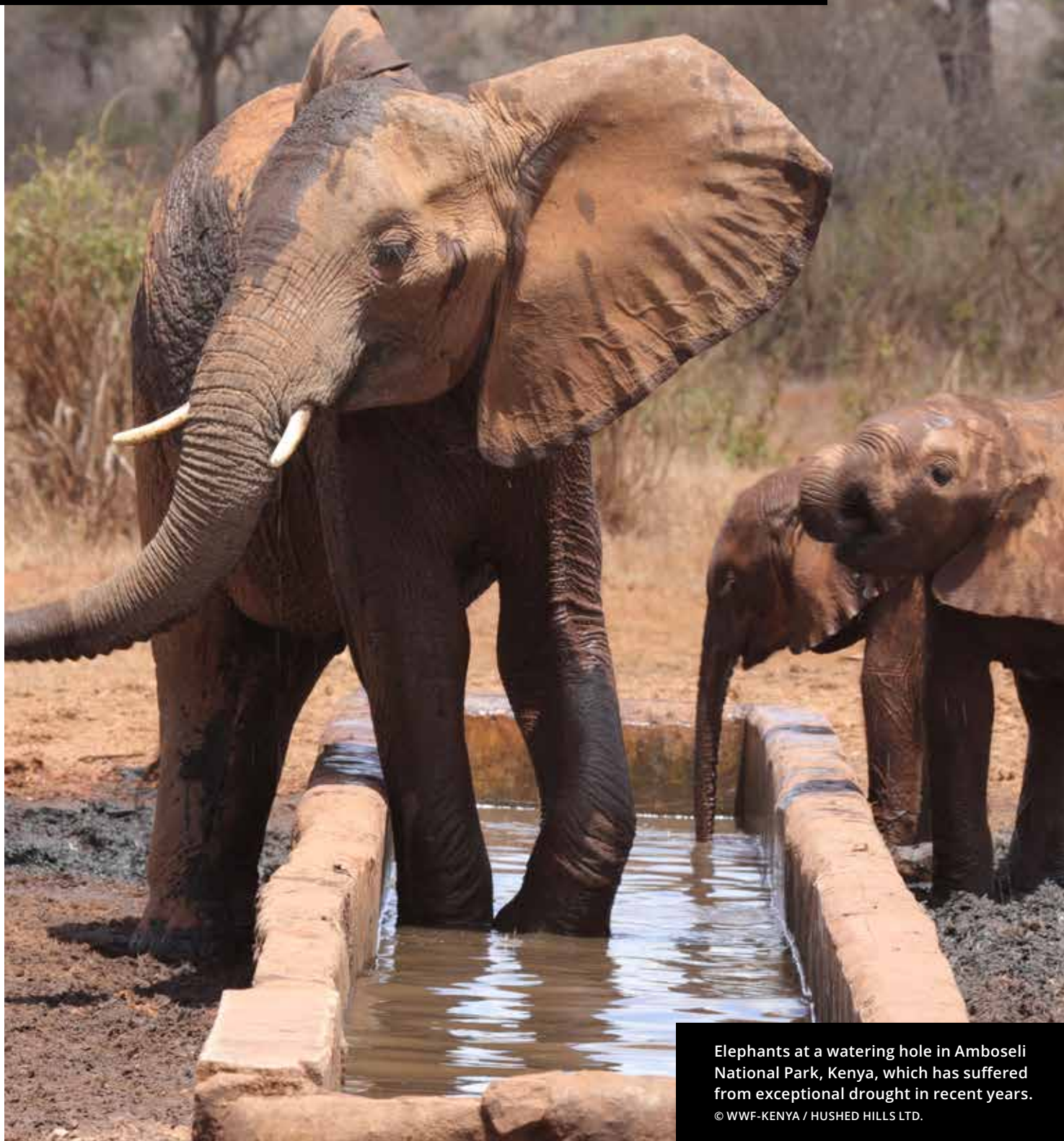
Furthermore, since upholding safeguards is a process that has to be maintained all the time, the programme has been able to achieve more than targeted. This is because in many programme areas where the safeguards screening and mitigation planning has already been implemented, follow up training, checks that the grievance mechanisms work etc. have been carried out. Similarly in several countries like in Indonesia - Borneo and Papua as well as in Madagascar a FPIC process is done for each intervention.

In 2023, additional financial support was provided to WWF Uganda to complete the stakeholder engagement and mitigation planning process for Bwindi-Mgahinga sub-landscape, where the programme works with communities and indigenous people around Bwindi National Park. One grievance has been raised through the WWF mechanisms in Madagascar, which has been managed through community consultations.

Original assumptions of the Results Framework are still valid.

- Suitable legal instruments (policies and guidelines) are in place for sustainable financing mechanism
- Strategic partnerships identified, value added and vision shared among partners
- Indigenous peoples and local communities are willing to co-operate, WWF and it's partners have adequate capacity

# SUCCESSSES, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED



Elephants at a watering hole in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, which has suffered from exceptional drought in recent years.

© WWF-KENYA / HUSHED HILLS LTD.

Slow procurement processes for equipment and services have been identified as a cause for several delays in implementation across the programme partners. In addition, contracting processes with authorities have taken long and local government processes have been slow in some countries. These have caused delays in implementation at least in Uganda, Madagascar, Bolivia and Laos.

Some partners have faced challenges with human resources. The Africa Adaptation Hub has only two people and needs more staff, and there are plans to support new positions under the programme in 2024 and 2025. In Laos there was a three month's gap before the replacement of the resigned project manager was hired, and in Papua there were challenges to hire the project coordinator. In some countries local governments or municipalities have limited staff resources, and in some cases this causes delays in programme implementation, while in some cases WWF is able to support authorities to implement activities.

It has been positive to see that the capacity building for the programme partners and the cooperation with local disability organisations has resulted in improved engagement of people with disabilities in the programme. There are still many challenges, such as lack of knowledge and capacity of partners to further improve the better engagement of people with disabilities. Constant training and capacity building is needed to strengthen disability inclusion.

The programme included climate resilience as one of its outcome areas and has provided some initial support through joint sessions over the past years to enhance climate sustainability of the programme interventions and climate resilience of the people, ecosystems and species. This has been working well, the programme partners have started to integrate analysis on climate risks and vulnerabilities into their programme planning and using the analysis in advocacy to duty bearers, mostly local government's planning and policy processes. Partners have also identified and worked on local government processes, through which adaptation as well as mitigation measures can be enhanced like climate budget tagging in Indonesia and REDD+ in Nepal.

Big challenges the programme faced in 2023 were the droughts in Kenya, Northern Uganda and Northern Tanzania. This following on from Covid placed extreme pressure on local livelihoods and increased dependence on natural resources resulting

in increased illegal activities such as bushmeat and sandalwood harvesting and more recently ivory trafficking. The programme under the Illegal Wildlife Trade Hub is working closely to monitor these changing drivers and the impact it is having on illegal activities. However, the African Organised Crime Index reports an increase in fauna and flora crimes in East Africa. The report also highlighted an increase in corruption in the region highlighting an increased need to focus on illegal wildlife trade drivers and preventing crime. WWF Finland, together with the Illegal Wildlife Trade Hub, initiated close cooperation with the WWF network's internal working group on fragile and conflict affected areas. This working group enables WWF Finland also to share its advocacy approach on climate change and environment linkages with national and global security agenda.

There were some challenges in communication and advocacy work in Finland. Former Twitter (now "X") has undergone drastic changes during the past year and several organisations have withdrawn from the platform. Twitter has been an important tool for WWF's advocacy work: it's a platform for public discussion and a channel where decision makers can be reached. X's future being unclear, we have had to consider alternative platforms suitable for advocacy work. In 2023 the war in Ukraine still affected the media landscape, as well as the national elections (during which the main focus of debates was economics, rather than climate or nature) and the latest escalation of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Undoubtedly these topics affected the amount of news produced about environmental issues.

WWF Finland applied successfully for a grant from Danida Green Business Partnerships (DGBP) to develop agroforestry coffee production through a private sector-NGO partnership. WWF has a strong track record from working with the private sector to solve environmental problems. The four-year Danida funded project is further strengthening WWF Finland's role as a trusted partner and demonstrates that suitable funding instruments are central in enabling the private sector to contribute to sustainable development in partnership with NGOs. The DGBP application process was divided into two phases. Applicants were shortlisted based on brief concept notes describing the partnership and its aims. The development of a detailed full proposal knowing the amount of grant to be awarded enabled a smooth planning process and efficient use of resources in the grant writing process.

The capacity building for the programme partners and the cooperation with local disability organisations has resulted in improved engagement of people with disabilities in the programme.



# RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT



Participants of the African Nature-based Solutions for Adaptation workshop on a field trip to a restored mangrove forest in Malindi, Kenya.

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## MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

WWF Finland monitors the programme via regular (monthly or quarterly) calls with partners, quarterly financial reports, technical reports, active email communication and monitoring visits. Implementing WWF offices monitor programmes locally. Progress of the programme is monitored via the Result Framework and its indicators. Midterm Review of the programme will be conducted in 2024 by an external evaluator. The Terms of Reference for the Midterm Review was prepared and shared in December 2023.

In 2023 WWF Finland conducted monitoring visits to Nepal, Madagascar, Tanzania and Bolivia. Also the Asia-Pacific Shareholder group meeting in Vietnam and Nature based Solutions and Climate Adaptation workshop in Kenya were attended.

Based on the observations during the monitoring visit to Nepal, it seems that despite many challenges the programme is going well. The biggest challenges are political instability, HWC, inflation, climate change, infrastructure development and forest fires. The plan in Nepal is to graduate to a middle income country in 3–4 years, although some believe it will take longer. This came up in several discussions and has to be taken into account while planning the next programme phase, as it will impact funding.

WWF Madagascar, like several other WWF offices, arrange regular quarterly support group meetings amongst the national offices providing funding to the implementation. WWF Finland's International Programme expert participated in the regular calls but in 2023 also participated in the group's face-to-face meeting in Toliara and met with programme teams in Antananarivo. The support group meeting enhanced the understanding of the supporting offices in the WWF Madagascar strategy and aligned the programmes better to thrive towards the set goals. Synergies between programmes were identified, e.g. with the WWF US and Denmark's Nature based Solutions Origination Platform, a large two landscape wide programme funnelling private sector funding to the conservation work under planning, and the Resilience programme, both of which work in the Northern Highlands landscape. The work WWF Finland has supported is used as a model to scale the work wider under the new programme by WWF US and Denmark. As a follow up, when WWF Madagascar experts visited WWF Denmark, they also visited Finland and among others stakeholders met

with a Finnish company, which uses and procures vanilla for their products, to provide information on the conservation issues related to vanilla cultivation to the company but also to see if there would be possibilities in future for any collaboration with Finnish companies too.

A programme monitoring visit was conducted in Tanzania. WWF Finland experts coordinated the visit with WWF Switzerland, which is also providing support to the East Usambara and coastal forests sub-landscape where the Resilience programme works. Joint monitoring visits add value to the implementation by both using resources more efficiently, but also diffusing siloes between different projects and programmes. The monitoring visit validated that the implementation is on course, but also identified a need for concentration on actions in order to effectively achieve outcomes especially on the capacitation of communities on spice productions through agroforestry and climate smart methods and value chain development and access to markets. Also, the project could add further value by advocating local government on integration of the conservation efforts through agroforestry and climate adaptation into their respective plans.

Monitoring visit was also conducted in November to Bolivia. Two staff members from WWF Finland and two private donors from Finland joined the trip. Several government representatives were met as well as some meetings held with local communities inside the Itenez protected areas. The main challenge is the lack of funds and capacity of the municipalities to manage the Itenez park. There were only three park rangers in the over one million hectare area. The management committee of the park has not been functioning for a while. Water has not been included as an important theme in the development and management plans which is a challenge that WWF tries to promote and solve. Also, forest fires are a huge problem in the area.

The Asia-Pacific Shareholder Group meeting in November 2023 focused on improving the network's funding model to country offices, to reduce fragmentation and enhance strategic thinking. In addition, the meeting served as an efficient platform to discuss on-going issues with the country offices and regional staff, and to deepen our understanding of the priorities of other donor offices so that our support can be used as effectively as possible.

The programme level, target for the number of people benefiting from conservation, sustainable management and use of renewable natural resources,

Joint monitoring visits add value to the implementation by both using resources more efficiently, but also diffusing siloes between different projects and programmes.

WWF sees the outcome of the 2023 election in Finland (Government Paper) and the extensive budget cuts as a risk to WWF's ambition to support Finland to be the global flagship on tackling the climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

climate activities and agricultural production (Outcome 1 Indicators 1a, 1b and 1c) has decreased due to the need to correct Tanzania's targets. Targets for Tanzania were calculated based on the originally planned 20 villages, but since the programme was only able to fund work in a smaller area at the beginning of the project, the targets should have also been decreased accordingly to 9 villages. This mistake has been corrected to reflect the real situation.

Outcome 2 Indicator 2 (Tonns of CO2 sequestered or emissions avoided) will be left out. This is explained in Outcome 2 chapter.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Each partner office has their own risk management system and keeps their own risk registers. WWF Network has a Risk Management Hub, that provides guidance, material, training and support on risk management to WWF offices. Risks are discussed with partners during monitoring visits and calls, at least annually. In Finland risks are discussed in the quarterly programme update meetings. WWF Network's ESSF and FPIC process are also part of the risk management. They are described under output 3.2.

In December WWF Finland organised a Zoom session (customised version of "Discrimination & Harassment Free WWF" training) on prevention and elimination of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) to programme partners. It was held by an expert from WWF Network (Head of Workplace Investigations, WWF International). The session was recorded for those who could not attend the live session. Needs for further training on PSEAH will be discussed with partners in 2024.

In autumn 2023 WWF Finland ordered an additional financial inspection to WWF Uganda, which is a new partner to WWF Finland since 2022 (in the previous programme phase we supported WWF Uganda under the East Africa Forest Programme coordinated by WWF Tanzania) and has the biggest budget of all partners under this programme. The audit was conducted by PwC Uganda (only they sent a proposal for the open call) and it started in November and continued until February 2024. Based on this assignment and WWF Finland's own observations it was agreed to include light financial inspection and discussion about financial management to all monitoring trips.

WWF sees the outcome of the 2023 election in Finland (Government Paper) and the extensive budget cuts as a risk to WWF's ambition to support Finland to be the global flagship on tackling the climate crisis and biodiversity loss nationally but also to Finland's commitments on these topics globally. This risk might materialise as a budget limitation in the upcoming new programme period. WWF Finland will continue its advocacy measures to mitigate this risk.

Due to a small accident during the monitoring trip in late 2023, WWF Finland decided to update its travel safety guidelines. Updated guidelines will be ready in early 2024.

WWF Finland also prepared for a possible public critical discussion and questions regarding the use of development cooperation funding based on the couple of cases where media raised these issues with other Finnish NGOs. WWF Finland prepared a document summarising its approaches on how it monitors and audits its own work and its partners.

Delay in Laos on signing the MoU with the government was noted and followed up with regular discussion with WWF Laos. WWF Laos prepared a plan for alternative activities in case there would not be a MoU with the government.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The workplan and budget were revised three times in 2023. All revisions were sent to and approved by MFA.

In 2023, an unallocated budget was used for several activities. EUR 30,000 was allocated to ESSF activities in Uganda. EUR 20,000 was allocated for a biodiversity survey in Xe Pian National Park in Laos and EUR 10,000 to Nepal for a study on human-wildlife conflicts. EUR 13,375 was allocated to Tanzania for the Timber Trade Forum and participation in the NbS Global Standards training by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which were both postponed to 2024. It was also used to support development of a chocolate scorecard website (EUR 10,000), advocacy training workshop for Asia offices (EUR 10,000), Nature based Solutions and Climate adaptation capacity building/knowledge exchange workshop for African WWF offices (EUR 15,000), side event and capacity building of WWF offices



Forest restoration area in Tunggon village, Lao PDR.

© VISA TUOMINEN / WWF

in Africa for climate negotiations, COP28 (EUR 15,000), production of communication materials from Borneo (EUR 7,000) and additional audit of the WWF Uganda office (which was finalised in 2024). EUR 3,000 was allocated to Bolivia for journalistic investigation, allocation was done at the end of year 2023, and this was not included in the budget revisions that were sent to MFA for approval in 2023.

Part of Finland’s budget was reallocated to partners during the year. EUR 18,541 was allocated to conduct wellbeing surveys in Laos, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda. EUR 6,510 was allocated to Madagascar for the photographic expedition. EUR 7,000 to Bolivia for journalistic investigation (in addition to EUR 3,000 from the unallocated budget), this allocation was done at the end of

2023, and was not included in the budget revisions that were sent to MFA for approval in 2023.

WWF Finland ordered an additional audit of WWF Uganda, covering Finland’s support in 2020–2022. The audit started in November 2023 and will be finalised in 2024. WWF Uganda is a new partner to WWF Finland (direct contract from 2022, earlier funding to Uganda was via East Africa Regional Forest Programme coordinated by WWF Tanzania) and has the biggest budget under the programme.

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

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The total available budget for the programme in 2023 was EUR 3,821,485, out of which EUR 3,248,262 MFA support and EUR 573,223 self-financing. The total costs of the programme in 2023 were EUR 2,959,974.

The spending was 77 % of the available annual budget. Compared to the original 2023 budget (without carry forwarded amount from 2022), spending was more than 100%, so the delayed start of the programme activities in the first year of the programme is impacting the burn rate. In Laos, the official signing of the MoU with the government has been delayed significantly and despite promising development early 2024, the process is still pending. This has delayed part of the activities in Laos. Also in Borneo, Madagascar and Bolivia there's been delays due to the schedules and processes of local partners. Also some recruitment and procurement processes have taken longer than expected. In Finland, there were savings in the personnel budget as two of the programme staff contributed to and were paid partly from a programme funded by Danida, some had unpaid leave and some were working part-time at their own request. Half of the Midterm review was budgeted for 2023, but it started in early 2024.

In Laos, Uganda and Bolivia the reported achievements were fully funded by this programme. Also for Africa Adaptation Hub, this programme's funding was 100% of the reported results. In Tanzania, this programme's funding was 91% of the reported activities.

In Madagascar, reported achievements under Outcome 1 were fully funded by this programme. Under Outcome 2 this programme's contribution was 100 % and under Outcome 3 the contribution was 57 %. From the total Northern Highlands Landscape's funding, this programme's share is around 15% annually.

In Nepal, for the output level, reported achievements were fully funded by this programme. For overall Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), this programme's contribution is approximately 11% and for Western TAL 57%.

In Borneo, this programme's contribution varied under different outputs, being 70-100%. For the whole Arabela landscape, 60-70% of the funding was from this programme. In Papua, this programme's contribution was 100%.

For East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub, this programme's contribution is 40% of the hub's annual budget. This programme's contribution to reported activities in 2023 varied between 50–100%.

Expenses in the least developed countries (Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda, Laos and Nepal) were EUR 1,411,535, which is 48 % of the total expenses. Expenses in the fragile states (Madagascar, Tanzania, Uganda and Laos) were EUR 1,108,497, being 37 % of the total expenses.

In addition to the Partnership Programme, WWF Finland supports the WWF network offices through a network service fee which was EUR 827,000 in FY23. This funding is used to support the WWF network, including offices in Africa and Asia, in organisational development and compliance of the network policies etc.

The detailed financial report is in Annex 3.



The Madagascan Tchitrec in an endemic species widely distributed throughout Madagascar.

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## Expenses by countries/regions

Programmes	Total actual costs, €
Madagascar	229 713
Tanzania	243 499
Uganda	407 781
Indonesia	319 499
Laos	227 505
Nepal	303 037
Bolivia	170 212
Africa Adaptation Hub	133 102
East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub	136 550
<b>Total costs of programmes</b>	<b>2 170 898</b>

<b>Finland</b>	
Personnel	384 384
Communications	81 384
Advocacy	62 281
Planning, monitoring and evaluation	67 384
<b>Total costs in Finland</b>	<b>595 433</b>

Admin costs (7%)	193 643
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<b>Total costs</b>	<b>2 959 974</b>
<b>MFA support used</b>	<b>2 515 978</b>
<b>WWF Finland self-financing</b>	<b>443 996</b>



WWF promotes sustainable cacao farming in Bolivia.  
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## ANNEXES

1. Result framework
2. Risk matrix
3. Financial report
4. Audit report



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