



2025 Impact Report

IUCN US Fund

2025 Impact Report

Washington, DC

iucnus.org

In this Report

03

Our Mission

11

Hosted Initiatives

04

Letter from the
CEO and Board
Chair

12

Board of Directors

05

2025 Impact

13

Contact and
Contributions

06

2025 Financials

07

Projects

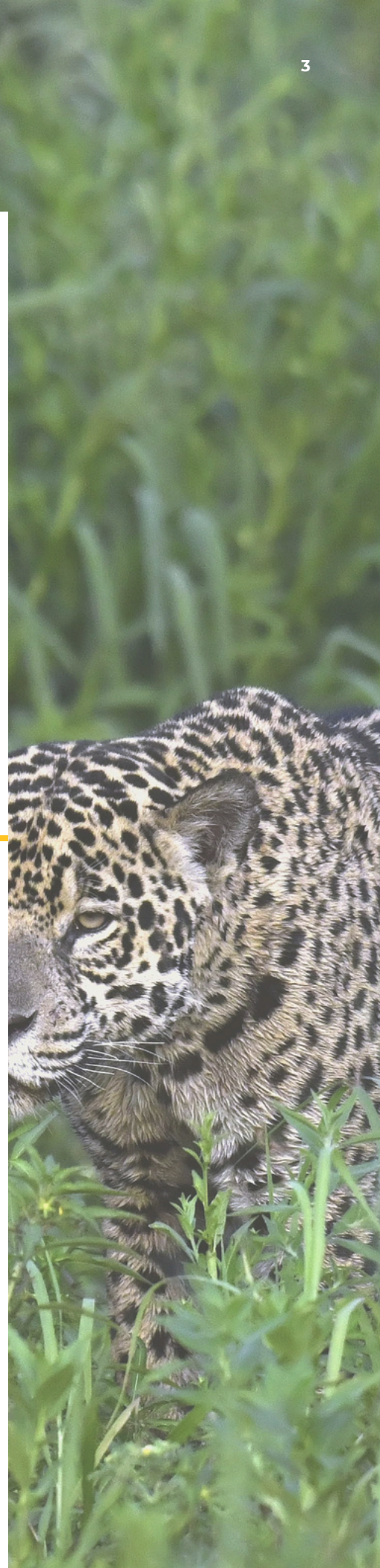


A Force for Nature

IUCN isn't just the world's largest and most respected conservation network - it was also the first. Since 1948, IUCN has worked tirelessly and effectively to advance conservation policies, programs, and projects that benefit and protect fragile ecosystems, vulnerable species, and human communities.

From helping to lead initiatives focused on outlawing trade in endangered species, to establishing the initial parameters for sustainable development, the Union has brought organizations and nations together to set the global conservation agenda for more than 75 years. Established in 1964, IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species is the world's most comprehensive resource focused on the extinction risk status of plants and animals. IUCN's network of more than 19,000 Commission members constitutes the world's leading brain trust for creating actionable solutions to the environmental threats confronting our world.

IUCN US Fund connects US philanthropy and donors to IUCN's global portfolio of work, and supports conservation action around the world while also providing the foundations for IUCN's convening power and scientific expertise.



Letter from Chair & CEO

In 2025, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our US donors and partners, the IUCN US Fund mobilized more than \$3 million in philanthropic support to advance IUCN's global mission to **protect nature and the future it sustains**. IUCN US Fund in turn made over \$6.5 million in grant disbursements in 2025, helping **deliver conservation impact in tangible and deeply human ways across regions and ecosystems**. From island nations across Africa working to transform plastic recycling systems and initiatives supporting **sustainable livelihoods** like lotus farming in Vietnam, to preserving **Indigenous knowledge** in Tanzania and **critical research** and protection planning for African elephants. With Conservation Allies and partners, IUCN US Fund supported the **2025 International Ranger Awards** - honoring the courage, resilience, and perseverance of rangers across the world, raising public awareness about the importance of such professionals, and providing winners with funds to support the land they help protect.

Across continents, IUCN project teams also advanced efforts to establish the Vjosa Wild River National Park in Albania, one of Europe's last free-flowing river systems, and strengthened understanding of ecosystem restoration benefits across South America, alongside many other vital initiatives that together form a truly **global portfolio of action**. This impact is made possible because of a shared belief: that nature is not an abstraction, but the foundation of our well-being, security, and hope.

In 2025, we strengthened that belief with action. We **refreshed our identity**, becoming the IUCN US Fund, launched a **new website**, and welcomed new Board members whose leadership will help guide our next chapter. 2025 was also marked by the **IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi** - held only once every four years - which brought together over 10,000 participants from 189 countries and resulted in the adoption of 148 Resolutions that will help shape the global nature agenda for years to come.

We are stepping into **a new and ambitious era**, one that deepens and reimagines how the United States connects to the world's conservation union. The United States played a founding role in IUCN in 1948 and has shaped its work for decades. Today, we honor that legacy not as history alone, but as a **living responsibility** - to build enduring partnerships, mobilize bold solutions, and ensure that US philanthropy continues to help safeguard nature for generations to come.



Dr. Paul Salaman
Chair of the Board



Dr. Tracy Farrell
Chief Executive Officer

2025 Impact

The IUCN US Fund supports a diverse portfolio of international conservation projects that translate US philanthropic support into measurable, on-the-ground impact for nature and people. This includes contributions to the protection of the Vjosa River in Albania, where technical support helped enable the establishment of Europe's first Wild River National Park, safeguarding one of the continent's last free-flowing river systems and its exceptional biodiversity. The Fund also advances Nature-based Solutions for coastal and marine ecosystems, convening investors, scientists, and project developers to scale restoration efforts globally, alongside support for science-driven conservation such as strengthening biodiversity data and species assessments that inform the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#).

In Vietnam, the portfolio is expanding significantly with two major initiatives underway: [one project develops a sustainable lotus silk value chain](#) in Vietnam's Mekong Delta to strengthen flood-resilient livelihoods while restoring natural water retention and supporting ecosystem regeneration through nature-based solutions, and another works to [increase coastal resilience in the Mekong Delta](#) through large-scale mangrove restoration, helping communities adapt to climate change while restoring critical coastal ecosystems.

Together, these efforts demonstrate how the Fund connects US donor resources into integrated conservation solutions—from protected areas and species conservation to climate-resilient landscapes and sustainable livelihoods.

Mobilized \$3 million USD in support for conservation:

- Facilitated US Foundation (\$2,680,000) and Individual (\$381,000) support for IUCN and continued to connect US philanthropy to IUCN global impact

Supported 9 projects around the world through grant disbursements totalling over \$6.5 million:

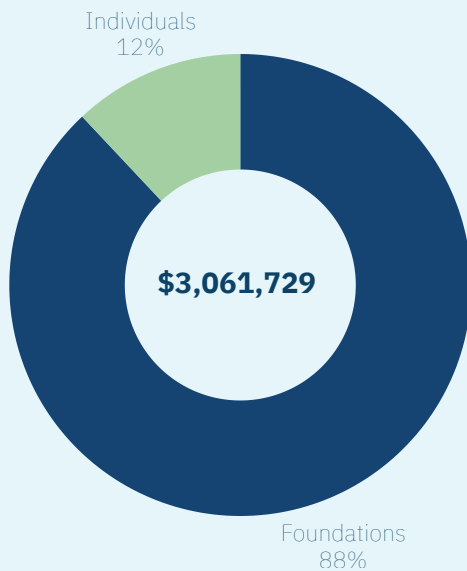
- Key program initiatives including species and ecosystem conservation, both global and regional in scope
- Commission internships and initiatives

Refreshed our brand identity for a new and ambitious era:

- Rebranded from IUCN US to IUCN US Fund and launched a [new website](#), improving access, storytelling, and engagement
- Invested in our capacity to support IUCN long-term and catalyze a new generation of US supporters

2025 Financials

In 2025, IUCN US Fund disbursed more than \$6.5 million dollars in support for conservation programmes throughout the Union, and brought in over \$3 million in new support. Many of the supported projects are multi-year engagements with funds being allocated as projects require. Funds raised in 2025 were lower than those allocated, as reflected below.

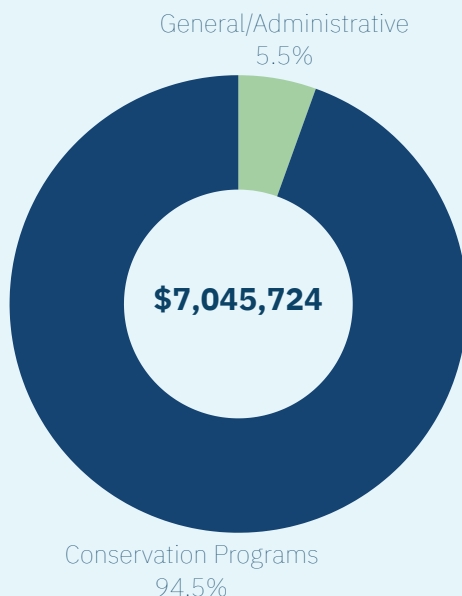


Funds Raised

88% of funds raised originate from **US-based foundations**.

12% of funds raised originate from **individuals** seeking to make a difference in international conservation. Of which:

- \$60,683 unrestricted individual donations
- \$20,433 towards IUCN Red List
- \$300,000 from IUCN Patrons of Nature



Funds Allocated

IUCN US Fund made **\$6,658,637** in grant disbursements in 2025 to support **on-the-ground conservation projects** and **conservation policy** initiatives of IUCN:

- 9 international conservation projects
- US National Committee support
- IUCN Commission support

2025 Projects

IUCN US Fund supports global conservation projects that protect ecosystems, strengthen conservation science, and promote sustainable livelihoods. The IUCN US Fund supports conservation initiatives around the world that safeguard ecosystems, advance conservation science, and strengthen sustainable livelihoods. In Southeast Asia, it supports a [lotus-based livelihoods project](#) in the Mekong Delta that promotes sustainable lotus silk production while preserving the natural flood regimes essential for biodiversity and climate resilience. In Europe, the Fund helped support the establishment of [Albania's Vjosa Wild River National Park](#)—the continent's first Wild River National Park—protecting one of Europe's last free-flowing rivers and its exceptional freshwater biodiversity. With US philanthropic support, the Fund also contributes to globally significant conservation science initiatives, including the [African Elephant Database and Status Report](#), which provides comprehensive data on elephant populations across Africa to inform conservation policy, planning, and action.



Additional IUCN US Fund supported projects with a global scope

[Global freshwater fishes assessment](#)

[BEFoRE - BEnefits From REstoration](#)

New projects

in 2025

From cutting-edge research to Union-wide initiatives, IUCN US Fund supported projects are driving conservation impact around the world and uniting NGOs, governments, and Indigenous Peoples organizations to transform life and livelihoods.

Learn more about all IUCN US Fund supported projects at iucnus.org/projects

Developing Sustainable Value Chains for Lotus Silk Products to Support the Flood Storage Strategy for the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

Supported by [**The Coca-Cola Foundation**](#)

The [Sustainable Lotus Silk Production](#) project works to develop a viable value chain for lotus silk in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, supporting local communities while advancing flood management strategies.

By promoting the cultivation and production of lotus silk, the project strengthens sustainable livelihoods for farmers and artisans in a region increasingly vulnerable to climate-driven flooding. Lotus plants play a natural role in flood mitigation, making their cultivation a dual-purpose solution that benefits both ecosystems and local economies.

The project also aims to connect producers to broader markets, ensuring the long-term viability and scalability of lotus silk as a conservation-linked industry. This third phase of the broader initiative launched in 2025, building on prior research to translate findings into real-world economic and environmental impact.



A lotus farmer in Vietnam demonstrates lotus stem fiber spinning, or lotus weaving. Lotus silk is considered one of the rarest and most labor-intensive textiles in the world, and its production a sustainable and culturally invaluable practice.



Project update: Advancing circular solutions to plastic waste across seven African island states

The IslandPlas project represents IUCN's commitment to tackling plastic pollution at its source in some of the world's most ecologically sensitive coastal environments. Through strategic partnership with IUCN and support from The Coca-Cola Foundation, this partnership is helping build lasting waste management infrastructure that empowers local communities and protects island ecosystems.

Learn more about all IUCN US Fund supported projects at iucnus.org/projects

Supported by **The Coca-Cola Foundation**

The IslandPlas project continues to make meaningful progress in its mission to **address plastic pollution** across seven African island nations. Launched with a US\$10 million grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation to IUCN, the three-year initiative targets **Mauritius, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, São Tomé & Príncipe, Seychelles, and Zanzibar**. The project takes a community-centered approach, with ambitions to enhance the livelihoods of approximately 9,600 individuals in the informal waste sector, collect approximately 14,000 tons of plastic waste, and recycle approximately 5,600 tons - while channeling **capital investment toward local innovation and enterprise development in the recycling sector**.

In 2025, that ambition began to take shape in tangible, human terms. Governments in Cabo Verde and São Tomé & Príncipe adopted the project's Zero Plastic Waste Campaign as official national initiatives. In Madagascar, informal women waste pickers saw their monthly incomes rise from USD 40 to USD 177 - a fourfold increase in just six months. Young entrepreneurs advanced a digital circular-economy platform to global finals at Ocean Hackathon Africa, signaling a new generation of island-led innovation.

Across the region, national partnerships were forged, steering committees stood up, and the evidence base for scaling was built. The plastic volumes recovered in this first year were modest by design - the priority was laying foundations strong enough to support long-term impact. With national partners now fully mobilized and operational rollout underway for 2026, IslandPlas is poised to move from promise to scale. *Read more about IslandPlas on iucnus.org.*



Projects reaching completion in 2025

One IUCN US Fund supported project reached completion in 2025. From cutting-edge research to Union-wide initiatives, IUCN projects are driving conservation impact around the world and uniting NGOs, governments, and Indigenous Peoples organizations.

Learn more about all IUCN US Fund supported projects at iucn.org/projects

BEFoRE - Benefits From Restoration - the biodiversity and community benefits from restoration projects in diverse jurisdictions and landscapes

Supported by the [Alcoa Foundation](#)

The BEFoRE (Benefits from Restoration) project led by IUCN in collaboration with the University of São Paulo (USP) and Iceland University, is an ambitious initiative funded by the Alcoa Foundation that seeks to advance global restoration knowledge and practice. Aligned with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, BEFoRE supports the global goal to restore 30% of degraded areas by 2030. Focusing on how social and environmental factors shape restoration success, the project aims to translate research into practical guidance for integrating restoration within the mitigation hierarchy, including biodiversity offsetting strategies used by governments, the private sector and conservation organizations.

Through its three interconnected components (Research, Development and Outreach Programs) BEFoRE monitors real-world restoration projects, develops accessible tools and resources for practitioners, and ensures that findings reach key end users. Together, these efforts foster collaboration across institutions and contribute to scaling up restoration initiatives worldwide.

Through its research programs in both countries, the project compiled restoration case studies to build standardized models that inspire investment confidence and support capacity-building worldwide, concluding its work in 2025.



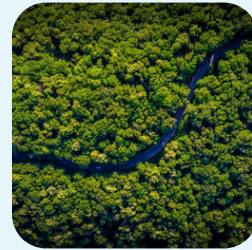
2025

Hosted Initiatives

The IUCN US Fund provides administrative support to a portfolio of [IUCN Commission](#) and partner initiatives, including awards, internship funds, and global campaigns that rely on US-based philanthropic funding. These [hosted initiatives](#) are aligned with IUCN's global conservation priorities and enable US donor contributions to be efficiently received, managed, and reported, while providing administrative and fundraising support through formal MoUs. Collectively, they strengthen delivery across species conservation, protected areas, education and communication, fisheries, and conservation finance.

IUCN WCPA INTERNATIONAL RANGER AWARDS

[Annual global award](#) led by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas recognizing outstanding rangers and ranger teams for their leadership in protecting biodiversity and supporting protected and conserved areas worldwide.



KENTON MILLER AWARD

[An award led by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas recognizing innovative leadership in protected areas management](#), celebrating individuals advancing creative and effective conservation solutions.



GEORGE RABB INTERNSHIP AWARD

A recognition and [internship](#) program honoring transformative contributions to species conservation within the IUCN Species Survival Commission.

#NATUREFORALL

[A global campaign](#) and coalition of over 650 organizations co-founded by the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication and IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas to inspire a deeper societal connection with nature and drive conservation awareness and action.



CEC/SSC BEHAVIOUR CHANGE TASK FORCE

An [Inter-Commission Task Force](#) of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication and Species Survival Commission that applies behavioral science to conservation practice, supporting more effective strategies for biodiversity outcomes through behavior-centered approaches.



IUCN CEM FISHERIES TASK FORCE

[A cross-commission initiative](#) of the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management promoting sustainable fisheries and ecosystem conservation by linking scientific expertise with policy and management tools.

IUCN US Fund

Board of Directors



Paul Salaman
Conservation Allies
Chair



Kevin Duffy
Earth University Foundation
Treasurer



Tracy Farrell
CEO, IUCN US Fund
Secretary



Dave Hole
Conservation International
Board Member



Liam Dall
African Parks Foundation
Board Member



Jonathan Kaledin
Volgenau Foundation
Board Member



Lucy Deram-Rollason
IUCN
Board Member



Tim Kelly
Earth HQ
Board Member



Christopher Dunn
Cornell Botanic Gardens
Board Member



Karin Kemper
Consultant
Board Member



2025 Impact Report
Washington, DC
iucnus.org



info@iucnusfund.org



IUCN US Fund



iucnus.org



1 (301) 678-3830



1828 L Street NW, Suite 1050
Washington, DC 20036

To learn more about supporting IUCN US Fund and, in turn, the work of International Union for Conservation of Nature around the world, please visit the IUCN US Fund [Donations page](#).

Individual donors and foundations alike can help advance global conservation by supporting IUCN's network of scientists, Members, and partner organizations; foundations may also choose to fund specific [IUCN projects](#) around the world. All contributions to IUCN US Fund help ensure that resources reach the places and initiatives where they are needed most.

