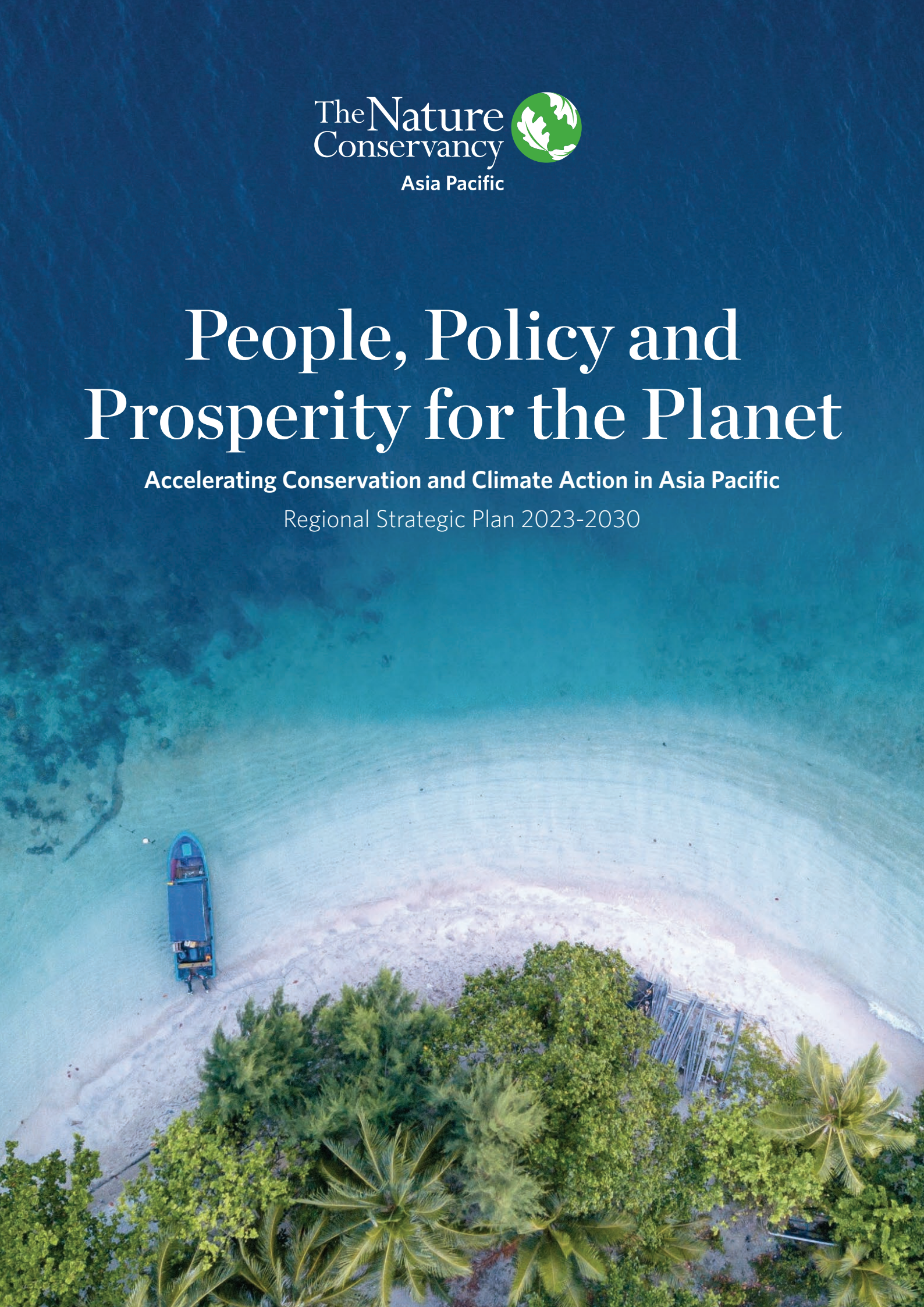


People, Policy and Prosperity for the Planet

Accelerating Conservation and Climate Action in Asia Pacific

Regional Strategic Plan 2023-2030



Pictured here: Diane Pitt-Nichols of the Tjungundji, an Indigenous community in Cape York, Queensland, Australia. The Nature Conservancy works with First Nations communities throughout Australia to advance our shared 2030 goals. © Annette Ruzicka

Cover: Aerial view of Raja Ampat, Indonesia, where TNC and Indonesian partner Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara (YKAN) work together on coastal and marine conservation initiatives. © Setiono Joko Purwanto/TNC Photo Contest 2019



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Plan at a Glance

The Nature Conservancy's Mission

To conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

Vision

A world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives.

Global Indicators of Success

- Limit temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius
- Protect 30% of the Earth by 2030
- Achieve the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Asia Pacific 2030 Goals



Climate

Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by **291 million metric tons of CO₂e** per year.



Lands

At least **178 million hectares of land** are protected, restored or benefiting from improved management.



Oceans

At least **38 million hectares of oceans** are protected or benefiting from improved management.



Freshwater

At least **16,900 kilometers of rivers** and **2.5 million hectares of lakes and wetlands** are protected, restored or benefiting from improved management.



People

At least **358,000 people** are benefiting from improved rights to manage their natural resources, accessing sustainable economic development opportunities and participating in decision-making.

Strategies and Outcomes for Asia Pacific

Strategy 1: A Strong Foundation for Success

- **Outcome 1.1: Thriving teams**
An inclusive and culturally competent organization that welcomes, employs and retains people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- **Outcome 1.2: Robust finances**
Regional- and country-level teams are in positive financial positions, built on a growing base of support from a diverse pool of funding.
- **Outcome 1.3: Engaged partners and supporters**
Growing support from a diverse network of volunteer leaders who are committed to supporting TNC's mission.
- **Outcome 1.4: Impactful science**
TNC-led science, representing a diverse set of perspectives and people, is continuing to shape successful conservation programs across Asia Pacific.

Strategy 2: Policy Settings to Advance Conservation

- **Outcome 2.1: Improved policy capacity**
Asia Pacific programs have the capabilities and resources needed to maximize TNC's policy impact in line with our 2030 goals.
- **Outcome 2.2: Policies to address biodiversity loss**
The right policy and regulatory frameworks are in place at national and subnational levels to achieve the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- **Outcome 2.3: Policies to tackle climate change**
Government agencies are supported to develop and implement policies needed to effectively tackle climate change with a focus on nature-based solutions.
- **Outcome 2.4: Policies to support sustainable commodities**
Policymakers are taking steps to address pressures on natural systems originating from the production of commodities, such as palm oil, timber and seafood, including impacts beyond Asia Pacific.

Strategy 3: People-Centered Conservation

- **Outcome 3.1: Equitable and inclusive conservation programs**
TNC is achieving better conservation outcomes because of a concerted effort to ensure our work is centred around diversity, equity and inclusion, with gender and human rights as guiding principles.
- **Outcome 3.2: Human rights-based approach to conservation**
The rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are being advanced through TNC's work, leading to improved conservation outcomes for nature and people.
- **Outcome 3.3: Sustainable economies and community partnerships**
TNC is working with community partners to co-create customized conservation financing solutions that support lasting and equitable community-based natural resource management.

Strategy 4: Prosperity for Nature

- **Outcome 4.1: Impact finance**
TNC has built a pipeline of initiatives that leverage private capital to achieve climate and biodiversity outcomes, including investments in technology and innovation.
- **Outcome 4.2: Environmental markets**
TNC is supporting emerging markets for carbon and biodiversity, ensuring robust rules are in place to deliver equitable benefits for people and nature.
- **Objective 4.3: Corporate practice and sustainable commodities**
Corporate practices in high-impact sectors—such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries and finance—are increasingly aligned with global conservation and climate goals.

Seeing the Forest for the Trees in This Defining Decade



NOT LONG AFTER BORDERS BEGAN TO RE-OPEN in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, I had the privilege of traveling to the Indonesian province of East Kalimantan, located on the island of Borneo. I was there to visit Merabu village, a five-hour drive from the nearest airport and nestled in tropical forests threatened by encroachment from oil palm plantations. It is a place where The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been supporting conservation initiatives for over a decade.

Merabu is a fantastic example of a local community choosing a different, more conservation-minded development pathway. Rather than clearing their forest to make way for oil palm or other commodities, Merabu chose to formally protect the forest and secure its natural and cultural assets into the future. With support from TNC's main partner in Indonesia, Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara (YKAN), they then set about pursuing other ways to earn income, including through ecotourism, sustainable cocoa production and non-timber forest products such as wild honey.

After spending two inspiring days with the Merabu community, which included a hike in pristine tropical forest, hours of conversation and gracious hospitality, I joined my colleagues from YKAN on the long drive back to town. As we reflected on the successes of Merabu and similar villages supported by YKAN across Indonesia, I couldn't help but notice that we were driving through miles and miles of land where the forests had either already been cleared or were seriously degraded. While deforestation has slowed in recent years, from 2002 to 2021 East Kalimantan lost 1.2 million hectares of primary forest—a nearly 10 percent decline, representing an area more than 12 times the size of Hong Kong.

As we arrived back in town and gathered for our evening meal, I asked the team a simple question: What would it take to achieve conservation outcomes like we had seen in Merabu across the entire province, or even the entire country? The answer I got is the same answer I get from teams in Mongolia, Australia, Papua New Guinea and indeed across the entire Asia Pacific region. To achieve lasting conservation outcomes at scale, we need the right enabling policies, we need the right economic incentives, and we need greater levels of participation and buy-in from local communities.

Over the past three decades, TNC has built a strong foundation of success across Asia Pacific. The new strategic plan builds on this foundation with a renewed focus on three pivotal areas of work all critical to our success: people-centered conservation, policy that delivers conservation outcomes and prosperity for nature.

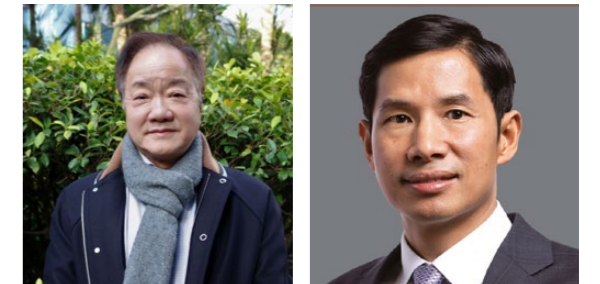
As you read on, you'll learn more about the potential of these three elements. But I want to end by acknowledging an equally important part of our success: you. Thank you for helping TNC achieve our ambition, uphold our values and define our vision in the Asia Pacific region.

Sincerely,

Will McGoldrick
Regional Managing Director
The Nature Conservancy-Asia Pacific



Together, We Find a Way A Note from TNC's Asia Pacific Council Co-Chairs



Moses K. Tsang (left) and Fred Hu

NATIONAL LEADERS ACROSS THE WORLD are coming together in agreement: Our planet faces the interconnected crises of rapid climate change and biodiversity loss. We have years, not decades, to address these threats.

Global agreements like the [Paris Agreement](#) and the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) are important steps, but agreements aren't enough. We need to translate these words into action.

One thing is for certain: The world will not reach its goals or achieve its solutions without the Asia Pacific region taking a leading role. As the engine room of the global economy and home to the largest share of the global population, Asia Pacific is a major driver of global climate change and nature loss. But it is also a powerful source of innovation and ideas that we need to harness to deliver global conservation success. Challenges—and solutions—do not stop at our borders. The entire world is in this together.

We are proud to support TNC's work in Asia Pacific and strongly endorse its new regional strategic plan to deliver lasting outcomes at scale between now and 2030. TNC partnerships between Asia Pacific and the world can help knit together the connections we need to save the planet. Together, we *will* find a way.

Sincerely,

Moses K. Tsang **Fred Hu**

Co-Chairs
The Nature Conservancy-Asia Pacific Council

A view of Laohegou Nature Reserve in China's Sichuan province. Helping to advance new and existing protected areas through habitat restoration, ranger training and other initiatives is one of TNC China's conservation priorities. © Nick Hall

Our Mission

To conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

Our Vision

A world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives.

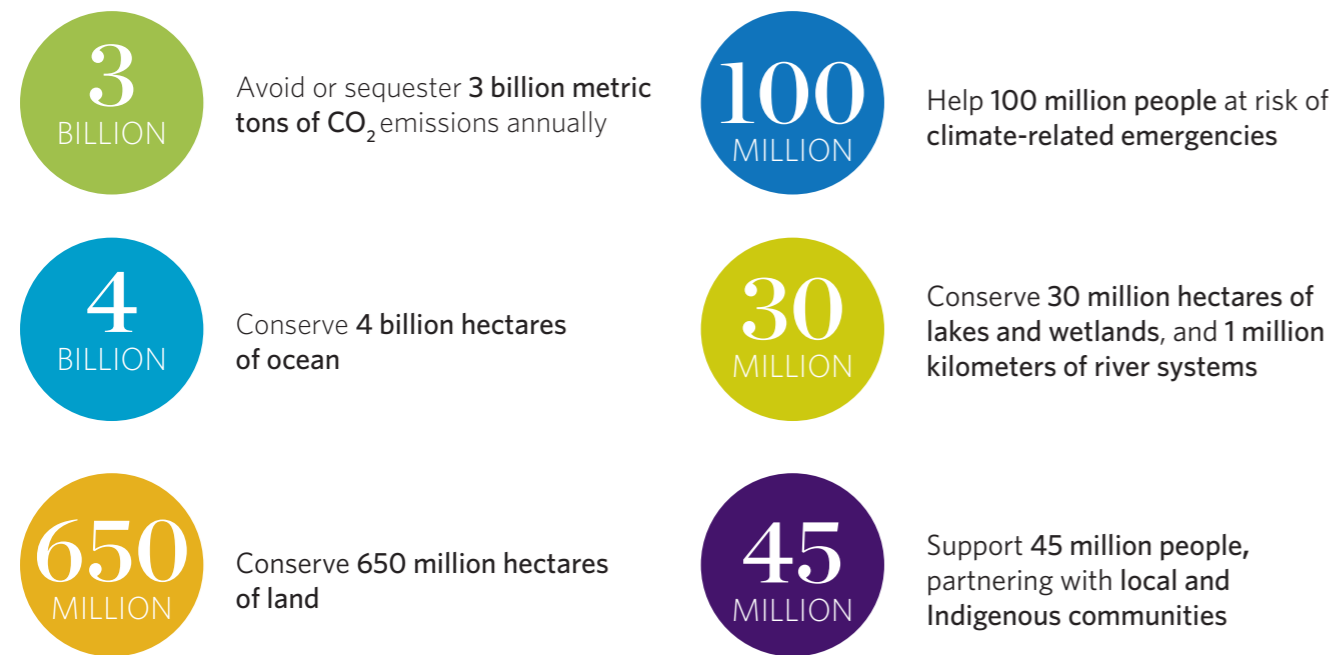
Our Values

- **INTEGRITY BEYOND REPROACH:** We will meet the highest ethical and professional standards in all of our organizational endeavors.
- **RESPECT FOR PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES:** We respect the needs, values and traditions of local communities and cultures, and we forge relationships based on mutual benefit and trust.
- **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY:** We recognize that conservation is best advanced by the leadership and contributions of people of widely diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities.
- **ONE CONSERVANCY:** We value the collective and collaborative efforts that are so essential to our success, and know our strength and vitality are core to us being one organization working together in local places and across borders to achieve our global mission.
- **TANGIBLE, LASTING RESULTS:** We use the best available science, a creative spirit and a nonconfrontational approach to craft innovative solutions to complex conservation problems at scales that matter and in ways that will endure.

Aerial view of Kerehikapa, located within a Marine Protected Area in Arnavon Islands of the Solomon Islands—a focus of TNC's in-country conservation efforts.
© Robert Taupongi

TNC's Global Conservation Plan

THE SCIENCE IS CLEAR: We must act now to halt catastrophic climate change and biodiversity loss. What we do between now and 2030 will determine if we slow warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius—the level scientists agree will avoid the worst impacts of climate change. We also need to conserve enough land and water to slow the rapid acceleration of species loss. Ultimately, we aim to safeguard people and the planet from the catastrophic effects of these crises. **TNC's global 2030 Goals are as follows:**



Measuring Our Impact

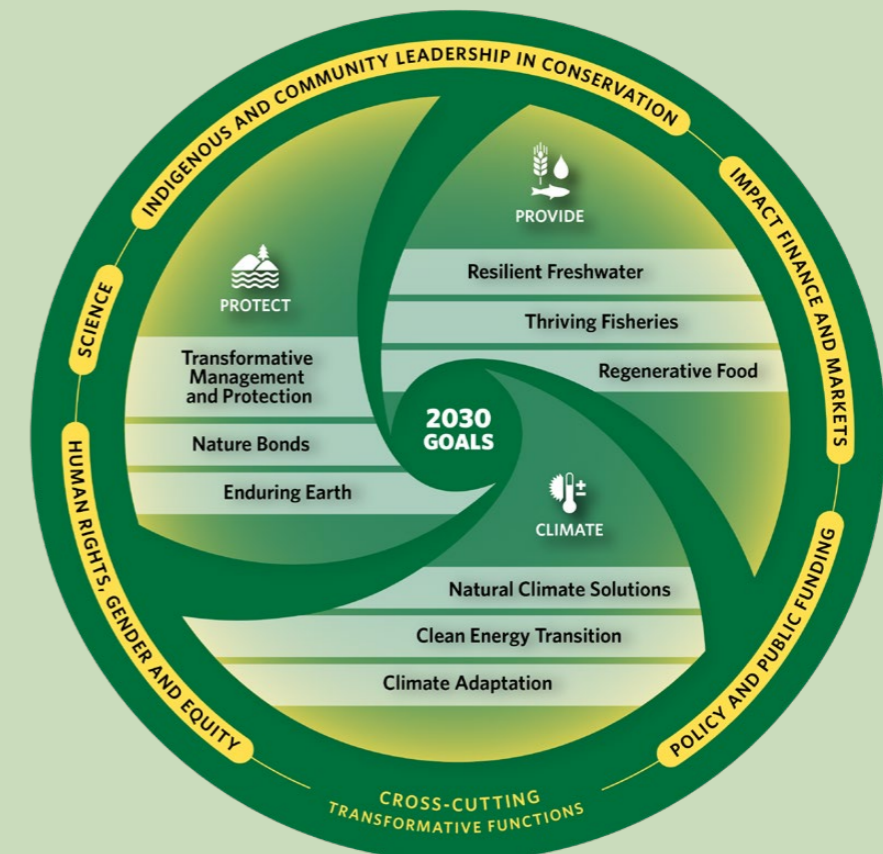
TNC is supporting governments, communities and businesses across Asia Pacific to create a future where people and nature thrive. This means we must address the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss while contributing to the region's social and economic development goals. **We aim to maximize our contribution to the following global frameworks:**

- Paris Agreement**
 This landmark [climate agreement](#) commits the international community to strive to limit global warming to no more than 1.5°C. This will only be possible if the Asia Pacific region rapidly shifts to clean energy, while protecting, restoring and sustainably managing carbon sinks found in nature.
- UN Convention on Biological Diversity/Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**
 This [framework](#) aims to reverse global biodiversity loss. In partnership with nations across the planet, TNC aims to see 30% of terrestrial, marine and freshwater systems protected by 2030.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals**
 Recognizing that conservation efforts will only be successful if they improve the lives and livelihoods of people, TNC is committed to supporting governments and partners across the Asia Pacific region to achieve the [17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

Pathways to 2030 Goals

To help clarify and better explain the work that will be contributing most significantly to our global 2030 Goals, TNC has identified nine promising pathways. These pathways are divided into three themes: **Provide, Protect and Climate**. Incorporated in all the nine pathways are five cross-cutting functions that are needed to enable and amplify our work. These functions are foundational and necessary for success in each of our pathways and beyond. They comprise science, policy, Indigenous and community-led conservation, impact finance and markets; and human rights, gender and equity.

PROVIDE	PROTECT	CLIMATE
Resilient Freshwater: Mainstreaming nature-positive solutions for improved freshwater management and climate adaptation	Nature Bonds: Transforming debt into conservation action, with an integrated transaction pipeline and corresponding systems-scale initiative around greening sovereign debt	Natural Climate Solutions: Protecting, managing and restoring ecosystems to maximize the mitigation potential of nature
Thriving Fisheries: Addressing gaps to ensure sustainably managed fisheries for ecosystem and human benefit	Transformative Management and Protection: Elevates and supports TNC's most powerful and complex protection projects around the world	Clean Energy Transition: Accelerating the renewable energy transition for a clean, green and equitable energy future, and driving policy to decarbonize transportation and other sectors
Regenerative Food: Transitioning food systems from extractive and degrading to productive and restorative, and eliminating habitat loss from key food supply chains	Enduring Earth: An unprecedented collaboration to combat the biodiversity and climate crises by unlocking 20 large-scale Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) initiatives	Climate Adaptation: Nature-based solutions that build the resilience and adaptive capacities of people and ecosystems in the face of climate change



Why Asia Pacific Matters

ASIA PACIFIC IS a region of extraordinary and diverse nature: the great tropical forests of Papua New Guinea and Borneo, the world's largest temperate grasslands that span Mongolia, and more than half the world's coastal mangroves. Asia Pacific's coral reefs are the most biodiverse marine ecosystems on Earth, and its open oceans provide more than half of the world's tuna.

We can't afford to lose these ecosystems. They are critical in the global fight against climate change and biodiversity loss.

At the same time, global and in-region consumer demand for commodities ranging from minerals and timber to fish and palm oil put immense pressure on Asia Pacific natural systems and the people who depend on them most. These pressures are magnified by climate change, with much of the region's natural assets, population and infrastructure heavily exposed to rising seas and more extreme climatic conditions.

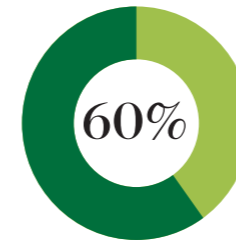
As the countries of Asia Pacific have become wealthier, they increasingly draw on commodities from other parts of the world, including Africa and Latin America, as well as contributing a growing share of global carbon emissions. It follows that the decisions made in Asia Pacific will increasingly shape the ecological future of the globe.



Left: Schooling fusiliers and healthy corals photographed in the waters of Kofiau Island, Raja Ampat, Indonesia. TNC, with in-country partner YKAN, works to protect the fisheries and marine environment of this international biodiversity hotspot. © Jeff Yonover; Below: The sky glows in the grasslands of Dornod province, Mongolia. Here, we're working to help Mongolia achieve its goal of protecting 30% of lands, lakes and rivers by 2030. © Bayar Balgantseren



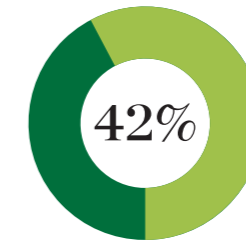
Regional Statistics



of the world's population, some 4.3 billion people, live in the region.



Nine of the 10 countries with the most people living in vulnerable, low-lying areas are located in Asia Pacific.



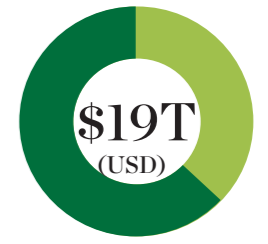
of all species in Southeast Asia could be lost by 2100; at least half of these would be global extinctions.



The region is home to two of the three largest carbon emitters (China and India).



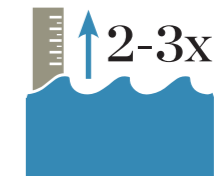
Over 40% of the region's coral reefs and mangroves have been lost due to extensive coastal development and unsustainable exploitation of marine resources.



representing 63% of Asia Pacific's GDP, is at risk due to nature loss.



Over the last 200 years, Australia has lost endemic plants and animals at a rate higher than any other continent, a problem driven by invasive species, habitat destruction and disruption of Indigenous Peoples' traditional land management.



In the Pacific, sea level is rising up to 2-3x faster than the global average.



Commercial logging in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. © Nick Hall

TNC's Plan for Asia Pacific

Business as Usual Won't Cut It

WE ARE PROUD OF TNC's contributions to conservation in Asia Pacific over the past three decades. Yet, the stark reality is that the region continues to lose nature at a rate faster than anywhere else in the world, and the region's carbon emissions continue to rise.

Through science, local partnerships and innovative pilots, we're learning what works. But "business as usual" won't solve the climate and biodiversity crisis. We must take effective conservation to a scale not yet achieved.

What stands in our way?

- Unsustainable commercial practices are more profitable than sustainable ones. Corporate sustainability is the exception, not the rule.
- Without local communities having a requisite voice in decision-making—and ultimately benefiting from the actions that follow—conservation won't last.
- Most government policies prioritize economic development over the environment, which often supports and/or rewards destructive commercial practices.

Our Asia Pacific Programs

TNC is helping to advance conservation outcomes in 18 countries and territories across Asia Pacific. This strategic plan focuses primarily on the following 9 countries, which are managed by the AP Regional Office:

Programs Managed by AP Regional Office	Year Established	Conservation Areas of Focus
Aotearoa New Zealand	2018	Shellfish reef restoration, community-based conservation, fisheries management
Australia	2002	Indigenous land management, coastal/shellfish reef restoration, blue carbon
China	1998	Natural Climate Solutions (NCS), protected areas management, regenerative agriculture
Hong Kong SAR	1997	Shellfish reef restoration, regional conservation thought leadership
Indonesia	1991	Sustainable forestry, coastal restoration, marine protected areas, fisheries management, blue carbon
Mongolia	2008	Protected areas creation and management, community-based conservation
Papua New Guinea	1997	Coastal conservation, "ridge to reef" conservation planning, women-led mangrove conservation
Singapore	2023	Market-based conservation initiatives, regional thought leadership
Solomon Islands	1992	Protected areas creation and management, community-based initiatives, women-led conservation

In addition to these geographies managed by the AP Regional Office, TNC also has programs in India, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, French Polynesia, and the U.S. territories of Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa. These programs are managed separately, but in close coordination and collaboration with the AP Regional Office.

Going to Scale with Lasting Benefits for People and Nature

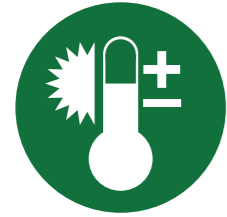
What does TNC need to do differently to help slow—and eventually reverse—these trends of rising carbon emissions and nature loss? We need to increase the scale of our work and ensure our outcomes last. To dramatically increase the scale and sustainability of TNC's impact in Asia Pacific by 2030 we plan to grow our investment in three pivotal areas:

- 1. Policy that delivers conservation and climate outcomes:** leveraging our science, practical field experience and strong partnerships to inform policy change at international, national and local levels.
- 2. People-centered conservation:** achieving equitable, inclusive and enduring conservation by putting people at the center of our conservation work.
- 3. Prosperity for nature:** harnessing financing and market-based incentives such as impact investing and carbon markets to achieve equitable conservation and climate outcomes while helping communities build economic resilience.



2030 Goals for Asia Pacific

TNC is committed to achieving the following outcomes by 2030 in Asia Pacific:



Climate Change

We will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **291 million metric tons of CO₂e per year** through increased abatement and sequestration...

...nearly the equivalent of France's annual carbon emissions (302 million metric tons).



Lands

Our work will achieve conservation outcomes through improved management, increased protection, restoration and avoided conversion across more than **178 million hectares** of land...

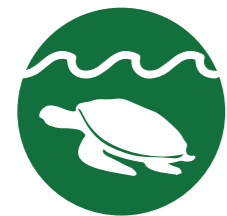
...a combined area larger than Mongolia.



Freshwater

Our work will deliver protection or improved management across more than **2.5 million hectares of wetlands and lakes and 16,900 km of rivers**...

...longer than the Yangtze and Nile Rivers combined.



Oceans

We will achieve protection or improved management across at least **38 million hectares** of ocean...

...an area larger than Norway.



People

TNC is working in Asia Pacific countries and territories with a combined population of 4.3 billion people. We aim to benefit all people through policies and market solutions that support a healthier and safer environment. Our projects will directly benefit at least **358,000 people** through their greater participation in natural resource decision-making, improved livelihoods, stronger security over lands and water, and increased resilience to climate impacts.

Clockwise from top: Members of the Gambir Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation, a TNC partner in Queensland, Australia. © Annette Ruzicka; In Hawke's Bay, located on New Zealand's North Island, TNC works with local government and landowners in the Land for Life initiative, which uses regenerative agriculture practices to reduce erosion, improve freshwater and build greater farm resilience. © Hawke's Bay Regional Council; Rangers in the Solomon Islands measure the length of a nesting leatherback turtle; © Justine E. Hausheer/TNC; TNC and the women's local conservation group Mangoro Market Meri conduct a mangrove ecology training in Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea. © Ruth Konia/TNC



Strategy 1:

A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS, TNC has built a foundation of strong in-country programs that are supported by regional and global teams. Our contributions to science, collaboration and innovation are globally recognized. Our strong partnerships and network of supporters—including our volunteer leaders—are built on trust and collaboration. And, crucially, through field projects and innovative financing initiatives, we have successfully demonstrated how biodiversity can be protected and climate change addressed.

To achieve lasting conservation outcomes at scale, TNC will continue to invest in the foundational strategies that give us credibility in Asia Pacific.

Outcome 1.1 | Thriving teams

An inclusive and culturally competent organization that welcomes, employs and retains people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Outcome 1.2 | Robust finances

Regional- and country-level teams are in positive financial positions, built on a growing base of support from a diverse pool of funding.

Outcome 1.3 | Engaged partners and supporters

Growing support from a diverse network of volunteer leaders who are co committed to supporting TNC's mission.

Outcome 1.4 | Impactful science

TNC-led science, representing a diverse set of perspectives and people, is continuing to shape successful conservation programs across Asia Pacific.

Key Performance Indicators for Strategy 1

- Staff engagement score of 80% or above, with annual improvements across diversity metrics
- Increasingly diverse staff and trustee network
- Positive equity position across the region as a whole and balanced budgets for each program
- Growing revenue base
- Growing number of peer-reviewed publications with authors from Asia Pacific, including an increasing number of women publishing



YKAN staff member Dr. Nisa Novita (left) and Dr. Evi Gusmayanti of Tanjungpura University measure carbon emissions in the peatlands of West Kalimantan province, Indonesia. © YKAN



Aerial view of Tesiin Gol River in northwestern Mongolia. The Eternal Mongolia initiative led by TNC is one of the region's most ambitious 30x30 conservation initiatives. © Bayar Balgantseren

CASE STUDY

Building on Our Foundation in Mongolia

ONE OF TNC'S MOST EXCITING PROJECTS in the Asia Pacific region is Eternal Mongolia, which aims to generate nearly \$200 million to protect and sustainably manage grasslands and other critical ecosystems totaling over 62 million hectares (an area nearly the size of France). This initiative, part of the [Enduring Earth](#) collaboration, received the backing of Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh and growing support from a wide range of local and international partners.

If successful, Eternal Mongolia will be one of the largest single conservation initiatives ever launched in Asia Pacific, one dedicated to protecting the world's largest remaining intact temperate grassland systems. The project has the potential to be an inspiring case study of achieving lasting conservation outcomes at an extremely large scale.

If we look beyond the exciting headline numbers, Eternal Mongolia is an initiative TNC is able to pursue only because the right foundations are in place.

We have:

- A 15-year track record and evidence base in Mongolia
- A diverse, capable, well-respected and well-connected team of Mongolian nationals leading our work
- A global cohort of experts across TNC's network who know how to structure complex financial deals to deliver conservation
- A dynamic group of trustees and donors who believe in and support our work in places like Mongolia

Put simply, the foundations TNC has built globally over more than 70 years, and in Mongolia for more than 15 years, give us the credibility and capabilities we need to convince the government, the private sector, communities and our partners to work with us on transformational initiatives like Enduring Earth.

Strategy 2:

POLICY SETTINGS TO ADVANCE CONSERVATION

PROTECTING NATURE in Asia Pacific requires government policies that promote, regulate and incentivize conservation in a manner equitable for those who are most impacted. While there are some bright spots, regional policy settings generally continue to encourage and enable the destruction and degradation of natural systems, resulting in increased carbon emissions. Often they are misaligned with the UN SDGs. And even when good policies are in place, many government agencies lack the resources needed to implement them and ensure their compliance.

As TNC works to help governments across the region put in place stronger policy and regulatory frameworks to incentivize and support conservation, we seek to:

- Bring world-class **science** and diverse knowledge to help government policymakers make informed decisions on difficult policy questions
- Implement **pilot projects** to demonstrate how conservation solutions play out, which gives policymakers both the confidence to act, and the evidence needed for appropriate budget allocations
- Build consensus and support for **new policies** by bringing to the table a wide range of partnerships
- Structure new and **innovative financing** arrangements to ensure policies are implemented and sustained over time
- Ensure that emerging policy and regulatory frameworks have **equity** at their core

Outcome 2.1 | Improved policy capacity

Asia Pacific programs have the capabilities and resources needed to maximize TNC's policy impact in line with our 2030 goals.

Outcome 2.2 | Policies to address biodiversity loss

The right policy and regulatory frameworks are in place at national and subnational levels to achieve the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Outcome 2.3 | Policies to tackle climate change

Government agencies are supported to develop and implement policies needed to effectively tackle climate change with a focus on nature-based solutions.

Outcome 2.4 | Policies to support sustainable commodities

Policy makers are taking steps to address pressures on natural systems originating from the production of commodities, such as palm oil, timber and seafood, including impacts beyond Asia Pacific.

Key Performance Indicators for Strategy 2

- All Asia Pacific programs have plans in place to support improved policy settings in line with 2030 goals
- At least 60% of annual priority policy objectives are either on track or achieved
- Policy plans across Asia Pacific are fully funded

Native forest grows to the shore on the northern West Coast of New Zealand's South Island, a site of a TNC-supported local conservation initiative known as Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance, or Collective Action for Our Nature.
© Ruth Bollongino/Fern Photos



Wetlands at the new Brindigabba National Park in New South Wales, Australia. The park was established in 2022 with support of TNC Australia and philanthropic partners.
© Joshua J. Smith Photography



CASE STUDY

30x30 Isn't Just Essential Conservation, It's Imperative Policy

AMONG THE ELEMENTS adopted through the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is Target 3, better known as “30x30,” which calls for 30% of the world’s lands, inland water, and coastal and marine areas to be in effective protection and management by 2030. Currently, about 17% of terrestrial and 8% of marine areas are under some form of protection. In many cases, the effectiveness of their protected status is in doubt. This means the new 30x30 target represents a significant commitment.

TNC has worked to conserve nature for decades, but we must accelerate our current protection pathways. Working project by project—a few thousand hectares at a time—won’t reach the 30x30 goal.

We need new approaches. We need supportive policies. And we can look to Australia as a model.

Australia is contending with one of the highest rates of species extinction in the world, and the nation is now the leading per capita contributor of coal-based carbon emissions. In response, the Australian government is taking several landscape-scale actions. In July 2022, Australia committed to 30x30. It is well-positioned to meet the goal, having pioneered several policy-based approaches to land conservation.

For example, Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) are managed for nature and cultural outcomes through voluntary agreements between Indigenous landowners and the Australian government. Currently, 82 IPAs cover more than 87 million hectares, comprising half of all protected land in Australia.

To support Australia’s national 30x30 goal, TNC works with state governments and private funders to protect large, biodiverse ecosystems at a landscape scale. In 2022, TNC helped to protect properties totaling more than 200,000 hectares.

TNC worked with the Queensland government to purchase and protect The Lakes and Bramwell and Richardson Stations. These landscapes are home to an array of precious wildlife and unique ecosystems, and the stations will return to First Nations ownership and Indigenous-led management. TNC also worked with the New South Wales government to create Brindigabba National Park. The new park secures nationally significant wetlands in perpetuity and will contribute to large-scale conservation outcomes. And in partnership with the South Australian government, TNC helped establish a blue carbon coastal wetland restoration project near the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary.

Strategy 3:

PEOPLE-CENTERED CONSERVATION

TNC'S VISION—A WORLD WHERE PEOPLE AND NATURE THRIVE—is only possible when we see that nature and people are interdependent.

TNC recognizes the importance of people-centered conservation efforts. Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) manage 17% of the world's forest carbon, 38% of all intact landscapes and much of global biodiversity. We work with communities because the people most impacted by our actions must be central to developing the solutions. TNC also works with communities because conservation outcomes are more likely to be sustained into the future if they are developed and led by communities. Solutions that don't advance the aspirations of the people who depend on natural systems probably won't work and certainly won't last. Solutions that do are central to our mission—and simply the right thing to do.

TNC's approach to supporting IPLC's natural resource management and decision-making is captured in the **Voice, Choice and Action Framework** (see infographic on next page).

One of the biggest challenges for people-centered conservation is that prevailing economic models do not account for the cost of exploiting nature or the lives of poor and marginalized people who depend on it. Conservation often doesn't pay as well as business strategies that degrade or destroy natural resources. While communities may want to protect nature, they can't be expected to trade their livelihoods for conservation.

We can also improve sustainable livelihoods, community well-being, and the quality and impact of conservation and climate work by supporting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) across Asia Pacific. By including diverse groups who are often excluded from decision-making and economic benefits, and by ensuring equitable distribution of resources and benefits, we can achieve bigger and better conservation outcomes that also contribute to community prosperity.

From informing government policies to driving activities in local communities, we aim to ensure that DEI and human rights are considered at all stages of conservation and climate efforts.

Outcome 3.1 | Equitable and inclusive conservation programs

TNC is achieving better conservation outcomes because of a concerted effort to ensure our work is centred around diversity, equity and inclusion, with gender and human rights as guiding principles.

Outcome 3.2 | Human rights-based approach to conservation

The rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are being advanced through TNC's work, leading to improved conservation outcomes for nature and people.

Outcome 3.3 | Sustainable economies and community partnerships

TNC is working with community partners to co-create customized conservation financing solutions that support lasting and equitable community-based natural resource management.

Introduction to the Voice, Choice and Action Framework

Twenty-five percent of the world's land is managed by or designated for IPLCs. With their territories harboring significant carbon and much of global biodiversity, IPLCs are among the Earth's most important stewards.

Unfortunately, these groups face a number of barriers to making their vision for conservation and healthy communities a reality. Issues surrounding land rights and tenure are probably the most well-known challenges faced by IPLCs, but there is a range of other challenges stemming from power imbalances at local, national and global scales.

TNC is working to address these issues by creating and supporting opportunities for IPLCs to play a stronger role in natural resource decision-making and management. Our approach is called the **Voice, Choice and Action Framework (VCA)**.

Equitable and lasting positive results for people and nature generally require the presence of the VCA Framework's interdependent and mutually reinforcing four pillars and three foundational elements (see image below).

The four pillars of the framework represent the characteristics necessary for successful community-led conservation. The three foundational elements (equity, knowledge and place, and durability) represent enabling conditions critical for enduring community-led conservation.



Key Performance Indicators for Strategy 3

- All Asia Pacific conservation strategies have undergone a social/gender analysis, and teams have begun implementing steps to improve equitable outcomes
- At least 10 TNC partner communities across the region are measurably benefiting from sustainable livelihood initiatives
- At least 60% of initiatives aimed at creating sustainable local economies are either on track or achieved
- Asia Pacific teams have adequate resourcing and expertise to achieve equitable, people-centered conservation goals

CASE STUDY

Equitable Conservation in Action: West Papua, Indonesia

IN THE COASTAL REGION of West Papua, Indonesia, local communities depend on the ocean for their livelihoods. Overfishing can threaten the health of fisheries, especially in and around coral reefs. Of particular concern are lobster and sea cucumbers, which move slowly in the shallow waters and are vulnerable to exploitation.

Over the years, Papuan communities have developed their own systems and approaches to protect and manage these coastal resources. This includes the use of customary law called *sasi*, which involves the temporary closure of fisheries to give marine life time to recover between harvests. TNC's main partner in Indonesia, YKAN, has long worked with provincial governments to recognize and support the use of *sasi*, as well as helped communities to assess and monitor these efforts to ensure they are working.

However, *sasi* is historically managed by men, excluding women from decision-making and management of shared natural

resources, often to the detriment of the community.

In 2010, the women's group Waifuna was granted a *sasi*. At first, Waifuna was unsuccessful with their *sasi* because they didn't have the information they needed to prioritize which areas to close. Previously excluded from leadership roles, the women had little experience in administration or record-keeping. To close this gap, YKAN provided guidance on project management, staffing and record keeping, as well as training on ecological assessments to guide management. Together, they developed *sasi* agreements that include catch limits and size requirements to ensure a healthy, regenerative ecosystem. In 2014, the women began to see both ecological and economic benefits from their work.

Because of Waifuna's success and the resulting financial benefits to the community, their *sasi* area was expanded from 32 hectares in 2008 to 215 hectares in 2019.



“Women must be at the forefront of preserving nature. Another thing that is no less important is instilling the principles of nature conservation in the family environment.”

— Almina Kacili, Head of Waifuna



Alderce holds up a sea cucumber, a key resource of many local fisheries that TNC works to protect—in West Papua and elsewhere in Asia Pacific.
© Awaludinnoer/YKAN

Strategy 4:

PROSPERITY FOR NATURE

THE CONVERSION AND UNSUSTAINABLE USE of Asia Pacific’s natural ecosystems is primarily the result of profit-driven market forces and the policies that enable them. Rising affluence and consumption across and outside of the region will exert even greater pressure on ecosystems over the coming years.

At the same time, many corporations are making impressive commitments to reduce and eliminate the negative environmental impacts of their business activities while finding new ways to prosper from a green transition. This includes commitments to achieve net-zero carbon emissions and to reform supply chains.

Strategy 4 aims to harness these positive trends by working with the private sector to unlock transformational change in institutions, markets and business models. To do that, TNC will identify, test and scale up market solutions that accelerate the development of projects proven to create sustainable development models. We will also use our science to influence sectors that have major impacts on critical ecosystems. And we will work to ensure that economic prosperity is equitable and that the communities closely tied to commerce-impacted natural resources benefit from sustainable development and improved livelihoods.

Outcome 4.1 | Impact finance

TNC has built a pipeline of initiatives that leverage private capital to achieve climate and biodiversity outcomes, including investments in technology and innovation.

Outcome 4.2 | Environmental markets

TNC is supporting emerging markets for carbon and biodiversity, ensuring robust rules are in place to deliver equitable benefits for people and nature.

Outcome 4.3 | Corporate practice and sustainable commodities

Corporate practices in high-impact sectors—such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries and finance—are increasingly aligned with global conservation and climate goals.

Key Performance Indicators for Strategy 4

- Value of impact finance pipeline growing on an annual basis, with at least 60% of initiatives either on track or launched
- At least 10 TNC-supported projects in place by 2030, primarily funded through environmental markets, delivering benefits for people and nature
- At least 10 high-impact corporate engagements in place across Asia Pacific by 2030, delivering tangible and transformational improvements in corporate practices
- Adequately resourced teams in place across Asia Pacific to achieve Prosperity for Nature goals

TNC staff and volunteers help air-dry oysters recycled from restaurants in Hong Kong before being transferred to local waters to foster new oyster reef growth. © Frigatefilms





Offloading yellowfin tuna at port in Palau. TNC provides science, technology and market solutions to improve supply chain sustainability for tuna fisheries across the Pacific. © Jonne Roriz

CASE STUDY

Transforming the Tuna Industry for Sustainability and Prosperity

FROM SANDWICHES TO SASHIMI, tuna is a dietary staple and a vital protein source throughout the world. Sixty percent of tuna comes from the waters of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, where three million metric tons, worth almost US\$7 billion, are hauled each year.

Tuna swim fast and far, adjusting to ocean temperatures and depths. Yet in 2014, 39% of the world's tuna stocks were classified as overfished, threatening both livelihoods and ecosystems. In addition, the effects of unsustainable fishing ripple across the food web as sharks, sea turtles and seabirds often fall victim to bycatch by the longline tuna industry. We must change the way we fish to preserve tuna stocks, marine health and the economic viability of the communities that depend on tuna for their livelihoods.

Together with partners, TNC is taking a big step toward transforming the existing tuna

supply chain by creating a new, vertically integrated and sustainable tuna supply chain company called Pacific Island Tuna. This initiative aims to reduce overfishing and the bycatch of at-risk species while profits support Pacific Island communities and critical conservation in the region.

The project partners directly with local government and communities and embeds rules—such as 24/7 electronic monitoring—into vessel contracts to drive sustainable fishing practices. Digital traceability provides partnering retailers, such as Walmart, with unparalleled levels of transparency. High-quality products can be harvested while ensuring tuna populations stay healthy.

By turning sustainable tuna into good business, we are charting a course toward improved socio-economic returns for Pacific Island nations.

Financing Our Plan

BETWEEN 2015 AND 2020, TNC’s total budget for the Asia Pacific region averaged approximately \$50 million each year. It is estimated that we will need to at least double this annual investment to achieve our 2030 goals while leveraging billions of investments directly into conservation through government programs and the private sector. To achieve a revenue base of at least \$100 million each year, we need to increase our efforts across all sources, including:

- **In-region private fundraising:** We are working with individuals, foundations and corporations across Asia Pacific who share TNC’s passion for conservation.
- **Private fundraising from the US and Europe:** We are continuing to build support for Asia Pacific from funders in the US and Europe who are committed to global efforts to support sustainable development, conserve nature and tackle climate change.
- **Government funders and multilateral partners:** Public sector agencies—including Asia Pacific governments, development banks and others—are investing more into conservation and sustainable development, and TNC is seen as a trusted implementation partner.
- **Membership:** Individual supporters across Asia Pacific are increasingly willing to contribute modest amounts on a monthly or annual basis. Added together, these contributions can make a major difference and help TNC achieve its goals.

Night view of Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, a growing global hub for green finance. TNC recently established a new office in Singapore to support our expanding work in Asia Pacific and elsewhere in the world. © iStock



Clockwise from top left: Gullies formed by rainwater erosion span out like a tree in southwestern China. © Li Ping/TNC Photo Contest 2022 (grand prize); Yunnan golden monkeys, Yunnan province, China. © Qiang Zhang/TNC Photo Contest 2022; Sea fans and soft corals adorn a “coral garden,” Raja Ampat, Indonesia. © Ethan Daniels; Bornean orangutans near the Sekonyer River, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. © Lalith Ekanayake/TNC Photo Contest 2022; Kea, a highly intelligent yet endangered bird endemic to New Zealand. © iStock



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Asia Pacific Council

THE ASIA PACIFIC COUNCIL (APC) provides leadership, guidance, fundraising support and access for TNC's Asia Pacific programs. Members represent a cross-section of public and private sector leaders from the US and Asia Pacific. The APC's mission is to promote policies and actions that enhance economic prosperity through conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Co-Chairs

Fred Zulu Hu *Chairman and Founder, Primavera Capital*
Moses K. Tsang *Chairman, AP Capital Holdings Inc.*

Vice Chairs

Anla Cheng *Founder & CEO, SupChina*
Robert McLean AM *Senior Advisor, McKinsey & Company*
George Tahija *Commissioner & Chairman, PT Austindo Nusantara Jaya Tbk (ANJ)*

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Jonathan Zhu *Managing Director, Bain Capital*

Asia Pacific Leadership Council

THE ASIA PACIFIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (APLC) was established by TNC to harness the entrepreneurship of a new generation of leaders who are passionate about conservation and sustainability, and who are committed to achieving impact through collaboration, innovation and problem-solving. The APLC provides a platform for members to share ideas, co-design solutions and jointly implement conservation projects aligned with TNC's 2030 Goals.

Co-Chairs

Moses K. Tsang *Chairman, AP Capital Holdings Inc.*
Filippo Gori *CEO, Asia Pacific, J.P. Morgan*
Kenny Lam *CEO, Two Sigma Asia Pacific*

Members

Alan Chan *Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Vectr Ventures*
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Bryant Lu *Vice Chairman, Ronald Lu and Partners (RLP)*
Jeffrey Ren *Technology Investor*
Yat Siu *Co-Founder and Chairman, Animoca Brands*

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Edward Game *Lead Scientist & Director of Conservation*
Robyn James *Gender and Equity Director*
Li Zhang *Managing Director, Resource Mobilization & Engagement*

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Zhu Da *China Country Director*
Gala Davaa *Mongolia Program Director*
Herlina Hartanto *Executive Director, YKAN (Indonesia)*
Ruth Konia *Country Director, Papua New Guinea*
Abbie Reynolds *Country Director, Aotearoa New Zealand*
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