

# Climate Position Paper

How the Rainforest Alliance is promoting locally-led and nature-based climate action across farms, forests, rural landscapes, and supply chains

Author: Celia A. Harvey

Contributors: Sabrina Kerin, Flaam Hardy, Sarah Lupberger, Hannah Ward, Madiha Nawaz, Emmanuelle Berenger, Leila Yassine, Samantha Morrissey, Alba Leon, Sophie Persey, Marie Valle, Kerry Daroci, Alejandro Santos, Amy Mullen, Maria Ghiso, Yuritzin Flores, Kaitlyn Sephton, and Barbara Cruz.

The Rainforest Alliance is creating a more sustainable world by using social and market forces to protect nature and improve the lives of farmers and forest communities.



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# INTRODUCTION

This is the decisive decade for climate action. To limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C and avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change, the world must halve greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030—and reduce them to zero by 2050.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, we must take urgent action to build the resilience of vulnerable communities and help them adapt to the climate change impacts that are already threatening their livelihoods.

The agriculture, forest, and land use sector in which the Rainforest Alliance works has a vital and outsized role to play in global climate mitigation efforts as it is responsible for an estimated 13 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year, or roughly 22 percent of global GHG emissions.<sup>2</sup> To significantly reduce emissions from farms, forests, and rural landscapes, we must quickly end deforestation, prevent further forest and land degradation, reduce emissions from fertilizers, agrochemicals, and fossil fuel use in farming and forest systems, and accelerate the implementation of climate-smart practices (such as agroforestry or regenerative agriculture) which sequester and store carbon in soils and plants, thereby removing it from the atmosphere. If implemented at scale, these nature-based solutions could deliver cost-effective emissions reductions and removals of up to 11.3 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (Gt-CO<sub>2</sub>e) per year by 2030 and provide up to 37 percent of the mitigation needed by 2030 to keep temperature increase below dangerous thresholds.<sup>3</sup>

Transforming agricultural and forest production is also critical for global adaptation efforts. Climate change has a disproportionate impact on agricultural and forest communities worldwide, especially marginalized groups such as smallholder farmers, women, Indigenous Peoples, and youth. Rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events are affecting crop and forest growth, causing pest and disease outbreaks, disrupting pollination, accelerating land degradation, causing water scarcity, and reducing crop and forest yields. These impacts, in turn, negatively influence food security, livelihoods and income, exacerbate poverty and social inequalities, and lead to outmigration from rural communities. Climate change also poses a significant risk to agricultural and forestry supply chains, disrupting production, negatively impacting business operations, and undermining local and national economies. These economic, social, and ecological impacts will continue to intensify and affect an ever-greater number of people and regions unless urgent action is taken to transform agricultural and forest production systems to more climate-resilient and low-emission systems, as well as to help farmers and rural communities adapt to both current and future climate impacts.



Photo: Kyagalanyi Coffee Ltd

## OUR CLIMATE ACTION

At the Rainforest Alliance, we are committed to accelerating climate action across farms, forests, rural landscapes, and supply chains to build a more sustainable and resilient world in which people and nature can thrive together. Alongside our diverse alliance of partners, we are creating climate solutions with farming and forest communities to address the climate crisis while improving livelihoods, advancing human rights, and conserving forests and biodiversity.

### The Rainforest Alliance's climate goals

1. **Significantly reduce GHG emissions** from the agriculture, forestry, and land use sector and capture and store more carbon in agricultural and forest production systems.
2. **Develop and deploy solutions** to help producers and rural communities build resilience and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Rainforest Alliance has a unique role to play in delivering climate action across the agriculture, forestry, and land use sector. For more than 35 years, we have brought together producers, rural and forest communities, market actors, governments, civil society, donors, and other partners in strategic alliances to collectively drive rapid change at scale. With more than four million farmers and farmworkers across 58 countries, 600+ companies, 80 civil society organizations, and a growing portfolio of integrated landscape initiatives in our network, we have the potential to catalyze meaningful climate action across the key commodities (coffee, tea, cocoa, bananas, and fruit), rural landscapes, and regions where we work.

Our strong track record of working with producers and local communities on issues of agricultural sustainability, farmer livelihoods, human rights, forest and biodiversity conservation, responsible supply chains, and market innovation ensures that our climate initiatives will deliver not only climate benefits but also a holistic set of environmental, social, and economic benefits that lead to a more resilient world.

This white paper provides a high-level overview of how the Rainforest Alliance is working to build climate resilience and reduce emissions across farms, forests, and rural landscapes around the world. It is organized into three sections:

1. **Nature-based and locally-led climate action**
2. **The three pillars of our climate strategy**
3. **How to join our alliance to tackle climate change and build a more inclusive, nature-positive world**

## OUR APPROACH: LOCALLY-LED AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

In order to achieve impactful and meaningful climate action across farms, forests, and rural landscapes, the Rainforest Alliance promotes the use of **locally-led** and **nature-based** solutions.

### What are locally-led and nature-based solutions?

#### Locally-led

By "locally-led," we mean that our climate initiatives are designed, implemented, and led by farming and forest communities, and other local partners who understand the reality on the ground and can tailor solutions to the local economic, ecological, and social context. Locally-led climate action makes it possible to respond to the specific needs and aspirations of farmers and rural communities and helps facilitate a just and equitable transition to a climate-resilient future. Our experience working with our rural community partners also suggests that locally-led action is more likely to lead to sustained action over the long-term.

#### Nature-based

By "nature-based solutions," we refer to actions that protect, manage, and restore nature in order to reduce emissions, sequester carbon, and build climate resilience. These solutions include regenerative and climate-smart agriculture<sup>4</sup>, forest conservation and restoration, Integrated Community Forest Management, deforestation-free supply chains, and Integrated Landscape Management.<sup>5</sup> These actions can help mitigate climate change by reducing emissions from deforestation, degradation, or unsustainable land management, and by removing carbon from the atmosphere and sequestering carbon in plant biomass and soil. Nature-based solutions also build the resilience of communities and enable adaptation to climate change by ensuring the continued provision of ecosystem services (such as water regulation, pollination, or soil retention) and by lessening the impacts of climate hazards (such as droughts, floods, or severe storms) on producers and their communities.

At the Rainforest Alliance, we recognize that people are at the heart of climate action which is why we take a holistic approach that respects human rights, fosters inclusion and equity, and provides greater access to resources to those who are most vulnerable (including women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples). We also ensure that our climate work is science- and evidence-based and closely aligned with national and global policies.

## THE THREE PILLARS OF OUR CLIMATE STRATEGY

Our climate strategy is organized around three main pillars:

- 1. Building the resilience of producers and rural communities** to climate change, while also helping them reduce emissions
- 2. Supporting companies to significantly reduce GHG emissions** and build the resilience of agricultural and forestry supply chains
- 3. Advancing policies, programs, and investments** that support locally-led and nature-based climate action by international organizations, national governments, consumers, and other stakeholders

In the following section, we take a closer look at each pillar.

### 1. Building the resilience of producers and rural communities to climate change

The first pillar of our climate work involves working with farmers and forest communities to build production systems, livelihoods, and rural landscapes that are more resilient to climate change, while also reducing emissions from agriculture and land use. At the Rainforest Alliance, many of the farmers we work with are smallholder farmers who are marginalized and highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and are already seeing their livelihoods undermined. We are committed to helping these producers implement a wide range of locally-led, nature-based solutions by:

#### Certifying climate-smart and resilient agricultural production

The Rainforest Alliance's 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard<sup>6</sup> promotes the use of agricultural practices that enhance the sustainability and resilience of farming systems. It promotes climate resilience and adaptation for farms and farming communities by ensuring that certificate holders are protecting native ecosystems and biodiversity, avoiding deforestation, maintaining healthy soils, sustaining water resources, and using climate-smart farming practices such as agroforestry.<sup>7</sup> The standard includes optional tools and criteria that allow farmers to assess their level of exposure to climate risks and measure the carbon footprint of their farming operations. These self-selected criteria in the standard provide opportunities for farmers to identify options for addressing climate risks, building resilience, and reducing GHG emissions. Worldwide, more than four million producers have already been certified under the Rainforest Alliance Standard, delivering climate action at scale.

#### Promoting Integrated Community Forest Management (ICFM) to reduce deforestation and build resilient forest communities

Throughout our 35-year history, the Rainforest Alliance has supported the use of ICFM to stop forest degradation and deforestation, secure the livelihoods and rights of forest-dependent communities, foster strong social governance and inclusion, conserve biodiversity, and contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation.<sup>8</sup> The implementation of ICFM

enhances forest biodiversity, which means that forests are less affected by pests, diseases, and fires and recover more quickly from extreme weather events and climate shocks. Diverse and more intact forests provide a wide array of products to local forest-dependent communities (such as fruits, timber, tourism, and other non-timber products), increase soil stability, and regulate water cycles, which can help secure rural livelihoods in the face of climate change. In addition, intact and healthy forests can protect forest and rural communities from the risks of climate-induced flooding, landslides, and fires.



*Aerial view of the Maya Biosphere Reserve.  
Photo: Sergio Izquierdo*

### The power of Integrated Community Forest Management in critical forest ecosystems

Our work in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve<sup>9</sup> is a particularly inspiring example of how community forestry can build ecological, social, and economic resilience. For more than twenty years, we have worked with nine community concessions to protect 353,000 hectares of forest and maintain a near-zero deforestation rate while creating regenerative local economies for local forest communities.

Our ICFM initiatives in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico are similarly building the resilience of forest-dependent communities to climate change while conserving critical stocks of forest carbon.

## Strengthening the capacity of farmers and forest communities to adapt to climate change

Another way in which we help producers transition to more climate-resilient farming systems is by strengthening the capacity of farmers, rural communities, and local partners to engage in, design, implement, and monitor climate initiatives. Capacity-strengthening needs are carefully defined with local partners. For example, in West Africa, we have created training manuals on climate-smart cocoa production with the World Cocoa Foundation, CIAT, and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture to provide farmers and technicians with information on best practices for cocoa production in a changing climate. The climate-smart cocoa manuals have been used in trainings with farmers, technicians, and local partners across the region. In our capacity-strengthening activities, we pay particular attention to fostering the engagement of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups, as these groups are often the most vulnerable to climate change impacts and disproportionately affected. Take our work in Calakmul, Mexico, for instance, where we are working to build the technical and leadership skills of youth—supporting the future professionals, community leaders, and forest guardians who can spearhead climate and sustainability action within their communities.

## Creating climate-resilient landscapes

The Rainforest Alliance has a diverse and expanding portfolio of Integrated Landscape Management Programs<sup>10</sup> that are designed to coordinate cross-sectoral action between farmers, forest enterprises, local leaders, companies, and governments. Together, these partners tackle complex and often interconnected landscape challenges (such as climate change and environmental degradation) that cannot be addressed solely through farm or supply chain action. In our landscape programs, we work with the different stakeholders in a landscape to promote resilient and more sustainable production systems, conserve and restore forests, and improve local livelihoods and foster social inclusion. Collectively, these landscape-level efforts help farmers and communities adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts by reducing emissions from deforestation, degradation, and unsustainable land use practices.

## Developing innovative tools, methods, and programs to guide nature-based and locally-led climate action

At the Rainforest Alliance, we understand that creating change at scale requires the right technology and support. That's why we are developing a broad suite of tools, methods, and frameworks that can be used to guide the design, implementation, and monitoring of climate adaptation efforts on the ground. Three examples include:

### Climate risk assessment tool

We are currently piloting the development of a climate risk assessment tool<sup>13</sup> in the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard that enables certificate holders at the farm level to better understand the climate risks they face and highlights areas where they can improve their adaptive capacity to address those

## Transforming rural ecosystems and landscapes through Integrated Landscape Management

With support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), our RESTORE project<sup>11</sup> in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana seeks to stop forest loss that is threatening cocoa production—a critical source of income for smallholder farmers. To address this complex challenge, we are working with farmers, communities, and local partners to restore tree cover, improve tree and land tenure, support participatory governance for natural resource management, and promote and strengthen livelihood diversification for women, youth, and other marginalized groups. We are also promoting the use of climate-smart and resilient cocoa production by improving farmers' capacities, knowledge, and resources and by facilitating access to funding and inputs. Together, these efforts will contribute to reducing emissions from deforestation and unsustainable land use, while also helping build the resilience of cocoa farmers to climate change.

Another example of a landscape-level project that is helping producers adapt to climate change is our initiative in the Eastern and Western Ghats of India.<sup>12</sup> Funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented in partnership with the United National Environment Programme, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and Indian partners Rythu Sadhikara Samstha and the Foundation for Ecological Security, amongst others, the project is helping restore and protect biodiversity through sustainable and climate-smart agriculture. To reduce deforestation that threatens the region's rich biodiversity, we are working with farmers, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and communities to adopt more sustainable land use practices, restore degraded lands on and off-farm, and protect forests. Our work focuses on training farmers and FPOs on sustainable agriculture, facilitating participatory land use planning and management, and building new markets along the value chain for climate-smart products—all of which we expect to generate a wide array of climate, livelihood, and biodiversity benefits.



risks. This tool can be used to guide farm management decisions and investments to improve resilience and encourage adaptation.

### **Climate adaptation web platform**

With our partner, the Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT, we are co-developing a web-based climate adaptation platform which will provide site-specific adaptation advice for cocoa, coffee, and tea production in Africa, including site-specific climate change risk assessments and corresponding portfolios of priority adaptation practices. The platform will be available and freely accessible to the public for the following countries and crops: Côte d'Ivoire (cocoa), Ghana (cocoa), Nigeria (cocoa), Cameroon (cocoa), Kenya (coffee and tea), and Uganda (coffee and tea). The Rainforest Alliance and the Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT are also co-developing a training module and guide for the platform that will provide agricultural extension agents and farmers with relevant background information so that they can make best use of the platform to inform climate adaptation in their communities.

### **Community Listening Program**

We are also supporting the identification of climate risk and adaptation needs through our Community Listening Program.<sup>14</sup> In addition to gathering general information about the challenges and opportunities that farmers face, this innovative program is identifying which climate hazards pose the greatest risks to farmers and forest communities, documenting the impacts of climate change on farm and forest productivity and rural livelihoods, and identifying options for minimizing these risks. The program gathers direct feedback from community members through workshops, questionnaires, and interviews and is already being implemented in Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico, Côte d'Ivoire, and Kenya, with plans to scale it to other regions where the Rainforest Alliance is working. These tools and programs, which have been co-designed and piloted with key stakeholders, will enable us to tailor adaptation solutions to the specific climate risks and needs of the smallholder farmers and forest communities we work with, with special consideration for the needs of marginalized groups such as women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples.

## **2. Supporting companies and market actors to reduce GHG emissions and invest in the resilience of their supply chains**

The second pillar of the Rainforest Alliance's climate strategy is our work with companies, industry groups, and other market actors to catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation action across agricultural and forest supply chains. Many of the companies, market actors, and industry groups we work with are setting rigorous, science-based emissions reduction goals and are interested in finding ways to avoid, reduce, and remove emissions within their supply chains. Additionally, these companies are increasingly interested in exploring ways of building the resilience of their agricultural and forestry supply chains and minimizing climate-related risk to their supply chains and stakeholders.

At the Rainforest Alliance, we encourage and support these efforts by partnering with the corporate sector to reduce their GHG emissions and increase the speed and scale of climate action.

We do this several ways:

### **Ensuring agricultural commodities are deforestation-free**

Deforestation and degradation are responsible for an estimated 11 percent of global GHG emissions,<sup>15</sup> which is why ending agricultural-driven deforestation is critical for global climate mitigation efforts. Many companies face difficulties in navigating deforestation regulations, such as the recent European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), or lack the data needed to assess sourcing risks. These challenges often hold them back from setting and pursuing ambitious deforestation-free commitments. Our 2020 Certification Program helps companies sourcing certified products reduce emissions within their supply chains by requiring that certified farmers have not deforested any land since 2014. This cutoff date is aligned with international regulations, such as the EUDR and frameworks like the Accountability Framework.<sup>16</sup> Through our unique and data-driven approach to risk analysis, we have also developed customized maps that allow us to more accurately pinpoint areas at risk for deforestation in a specific sector or country. Combined with our certification program, this innovative risk mapping supports companies in carrying out their due diligence related to deforestation risks in their supply chain.

### **Providing tailored climate mitigation support to corporate actors**

Through our Climate Mitigation Services, the Rainforest Alliance supports corporate partners to develop ambitious and robust strategies for reducing GHG emissions within their agricultural supply chains. We start by helping companies measure the carbon footprints of their agricultural supply chains and analyze the main sources of emissions. We then support them in identifying opportunities to reduce emissions through the adoption of locally-led, nature-based solutions and provide advice on the development of ambitious and scientifically-robust climate mitigation strategies. To date, we have worked with corporate partners (such as Nescafe, Nespresso, and Costa Coffee) to calculate the carbon footprints of over 2,000 farms in 14 countries.

In another study, we calculated the carbon footprints of 114 Rainforest Alliance Certified tea farms in Kenya to better understand the emissions related to tea production. We identified several opportunities for reducing emissions and enhancing carbon removals, such as reducing the use of inorganic fertilizers and enhancing on-farm tree cover.

Through our Climate Mitigation Services, we are also exploring developing landscape-level carbon initiatives that could generate carbon offsets to help companies meet their emissions reduction targets. At the same time, these initiatives could generate additional livelihood opportunities for local communities. For example, we are currently

## Costa Coffee's pathway to lowering emissions through regenerative agriculture

In our engagement with Costa Coffee, we calculated the carbon footprints of 266 coffee farms in Brazil, Colombia, and Honduras. Using this field data, we quantified carbon emissions from coffee production and processing, identified emissions hotspots, and designed potential reduction pathways through the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices within Costa's supply chain.

Together, Costa Coffee and the Rainforest Alliance will use the results of this study to design effective interventions that provide farmers with the inputs, agronomic advisory, and programmatic support needed to help reduce GHG emissions on coffee farms. Potential interventions to reduce farm emissions include transitioning to organic fertilizers to minimize the use of synthetic fertilizers, implementing improved organic residue management, and replacing emissions-intensive energy sources with coffee husks, biofuels, and other forms of renewable energy. Options for increasing carbon storage include increasing shade trees within coffee farms and planting trees along farm borders.

exploring the feasibility of increasing the density and diversity of shade trees in tea agroforestry systems in Assam, India, which could generate carbon credits and income for local communities.

### Developing tools, frameworks, and methods that support corporate climate mitigation action

We also help companies meet their climate targets is by developing tools and frameworks that support their mitigation goals. For example, together with our partners, we have developed the Accountability Framework initiative (AFI)<sup>17</sup> that helps companies translate their supply chain commitments into demonstrated outcomes. Using the Accountability Framework, companies can follow a roadmap to ensure that agricultural and forestry supply chains are free of deforestation and conversion of other natural ecosystems (thereby reducing emissions), as well as free of human rights abuses. The Framework aims to support all companies that produce or source agricultural or forestry commodities in target setting, risk assessment, traceability, supplier management, monitoring, and reporting to achieve these goals. It is already being used by more than 229 companies worldwide (of which 182 companies have used the Framework to improve their practices and policies), thereby helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions at scale.

We are also supporting the development of carbon footprint tools for different agricultural commodities. For example, we are currently collaborating with the Cool Farm Tool Alliance<sup>18</sup> to develop a module that will help companies more accurately measure the GHG emissions from

perennial cropping systems (such as coffee and cocoa). The new perennial platform will be launched at the end of 2023, and we look forward to leveraging this new platform with companies through our Climate Mitigation Services.

### Working with companies to support community mitigation and conservation projects through Forest Allies

Another way in which we help companies contribute to climate mitigation efforts is through our Forest Allies initiative.<sup>19</sup> Forest Allies is a local-to-global community of practice that brings together companies, regional civil society organizations, and forest communities for targeted projects that protect, restore, and enable the responsible management of tropical forests around the world. Through membership in Forest Allies, business partners support the Rainforest Alliance's model of Integrated Community Forest Management, which focuses on both protecting natural forests and partnering with communities to build thriving local economies. Kingfisher Plc and Proctor and Gamble are our founding members. Together, we are investing in six projects across five countries covering 190,000 hectares of community managed areas, including improved forest or agroforestry practices across 66,000 hectares and 727 hectares undergoing restoration.<sup>20</sup> These conservation, restoration, and sustainable management activities are making important contributions to climate mitigation efforts while building thriving local economies.

We also support companies to build climate-resilient supply chains. We do this by:

### Promoting the implementation of regenerative agriculture in supply chains

The Rainforest Alliance is working with a growing number of companies in the coffee, cocoa, palm, and tea sectors to promote the transition of farmers to regenerative agriculture, which will provide an array of livelihood, biodiversity, and climate benefits. While there is no universally accepted definition of regenerative agriculture, we consider it to comprise a broad set of principles and practices that fall under the umbrella of climate-smart agriculture—because in order to reach a point where farms are truly regenerative, the ever-increasing impacts of climate change must be addressed. Taking an agroecological and integrated system management approach, regenerative agriculture aims to not just reduce harm to landscapes but also to restore them by increasing biodiversity, enhancing ecosystem services, contributing to climate mitigation, and increasing agroecosystem resilience—all factors which also contribute to resilient and healthy livelihoods. In order to help companies transition their supply chains from conventional to regenerative agriculture, we are developing practice-based regenerative “scorecards” that enable companies to track their progress towards regenerative agriculture. We have already developed and piloted a regenerative agriculture scorecard for coffee and are working on similar scorecards for the cocoa, palm, and tea sectors.



## Developing tools that facilitate resilient landscape initiatives

The Rainforest Alliance is developing tools that can help users in a landscape collaborate to create more resilient landscapes and economies that benefit people and nature. One such tool is LandScale, which we are co-leading the implementation of alongside Conservation International. LandScale provides a practical system to assess, validate, and report trends in ecosystem health, human wellbeing, governance, and production at the landscape scale. It provides landscape stakeholders and decision-makers with a holistic picture of the key challenges and opportunities in a given landscape, including the status of climate mitigation and adaptation measures, and can help enable better land-use decisions across a large area. LandScale can serve as an important tool for measuring, managing, and improving ecosystem health and human wellbeing and can serve as a catalyst for cross-sectoral action to create more resilient landscapes.

The tool is currently being used in 25 landscapes, covering an area of more than 21 million hectares across 20 different countries. In the Sikasso and Koulikoro region of Southern Mali—a landscape where the impacts of climate change are already being acutely felt—the global development organization SNV, on behalf of the Dutch Fund for Climate and Development, has recently completed a LandScale assessment. Conducting this baseline ahead of investment will enable credible assessment and reporting to demonstrate whether the core objective of the fund to deliver impact at the landscape scale, particularly regarding climate adaptation and mitigation, is achieved.



Photo: Matt Ehnes

### A first for regenerative agriculture: coffee and tea scorecards

We are already implementing the Rainforest Alliance Regenerative Coffee Scorecard<sup>21</sup> on Nespresso AAA farms. The scorecard provides a framework for evaluating a range of criteria across soils, ecosystems, crop management, and financial management to determine the current status (bronze, silver, or gold) of individual farms. By 2025, Nespresso aims for 80 percent of their green coffee volumes to be rated bronze on the Regenerative Coffee Scorecard.<sup>22</sup>

We are also working with Kirin Beverages to develop the Regenerative Tea Scorecard that can help companies in the tea sector on their journey from sustainable to regenerative agriculture, and, in the process, deliver significant climate, environment, and livelihood benefits.

## Providing insights and data on the climate risks to agricultural supply chains

Another way we support companies with their climate action is to provide them with insights on the climate risks affecting their business portfolios. We do this by producing resources and reports, such as our “Coffee Snapshot” series<sup>23</sup>, which provide localized overviews of the key sustainability challenges in different crop and producing origins. This research summarizes the environmental issues and climate threats facing major commodities like coffee and provides recommended interventions for stakeholders to improve their resilience.

Through our Tailored Supply Chain Services,<sup>24</sup> we also offer customizable climate risk reporting and analysis for companies. Using our in-depth climate risk assessment tool<sup>25</sup> developed for the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, we inform company partners of the climate risks of individual farmers in their supply chain. The tool provides an overview of a farmer’s vulnerability level and adaptive capacity to current climate change impacts as well as the expected impacts of climate change on their major crops. This information can help companies better understand the climate risks affecting their supply chains and inform decisions about how to address and mitigate those risks.

### 3. Advancing policies, programs, and investments that support locally-led and nature-based climate action by international organizations, national governments, consumers, and other stakeholders

The third and final pillar of the Rainforest Alliance’s climate strategy is to advance policies, programs, and investments from multilateral and international organizations, national governments, consumers, and other stakeholders that support nature-based and locally-led climate action across farms, forests, landscapes, and agricultural supply chains.

Examples of this advocacy work include:

#### Supporting the implementation of national and regional regulations to reduce deforestation and degradation

A key goal of our advocacy work is to support national and international efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation. In recent years, we have focused on supporting the development and adoption of the EUDR,<sup>26</sup> a law which aims to protect the world’s forests and reduce GHG emissions by preventing the sale of products grown on deforested land. This ambitious regulation is expected to reduce GHG emissions by at least 31.9 million metric tons of carbon every year. Now that the regulation is in force and soon to be implemented, the Rainforest Alliance and its partners are working to support implementation of the regulation and ensure that smallholder farmers and forest communities are able to produce EU-compliant products and continue being included in EU supply chains.

## Engaging in international climate policy discussions to promote nature-based and locally-led action

The Rainforest Alliance plays an important role in advocating for climate action within the agriculture, forestry, and land use sector at global policy platforms such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Through these platforms, we raise awareness of how nature-based and locally-led climate action can reduce emissions, enhance carbon sequestration, and improve climate resilience. We also showcase successful examples of our work and share ideas for catalyzing greater climate action with policymakers, decision-makers, business leaders, and a wide representation of other stakeholders and donors. Additionally, we work closely with key partners to influence relevant policy discussions. Two prominent examples of this include the Sharm El Sheikh Joint Work on Implementing Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SSJWA)—the only negotiation stream to focus on agriculture and food security under the UNFCCC—and the Global Stocktake, a process that is monitoring global progress on reducing GHG emissions, building resilience to climate impacts, and securing financial support for climate action. By highlighting our projects, services, and ideas in these forums, and by facilitating collaboration with partners, the Rainforest Alliance provides leadership and facilitates advocacy efforts with key decision makers at the governmental and corporate level, as well as with actors that influence them, including civil society and NGOs. Our advocacy pushes for more ambitious and comprehensive climate action that addresses ecosystem integrity and regeneration through a locally-led and human rights-based approach in order to reduce emissions and sequester carbon, while providing tangible and meaningful benefits and ensuring a just and equitable transition to a climate-resilient future for local communities, small-holder farmers, and Indigenous Peoples. We also advocate for greater financing of climate action on farms and rural landscapes by multilateral organizations, climate and environmental funds, and the corporate sector.

## Supporting national-level climate action

In many countries, we are actively working with national and local governments to support climate action. For example, in Guatemala, we supported the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) to conduct Guatemala's first-ever climate change vulnerability assessment through the Green Climate Fund project "Strengthening National Adaptation Planning Processes."<sup>27</sup> In addition, the Rainforest Alliance and MARN conducted multiple local participatory assessments with diverse stakeholder groups to identify major adaptation priorities for different sectors, including the agriculture, livestock, forest, and land use sectors. This work culminated in the development of 22 departmental climate change adaptation plans that prioritized key productive sectors (coffee, forestry, basic grains) and areas with the highest climate vulnerability levels. The Rainforest Alliance also worked with the national government to extend the community-managed forests within the Maya Biosphere Reserve,<sup>28</sup> thereby helping protect critical stocks of forest carbon and reduce emissions associated with deforestation under Guatemala's Nationally Determined Contribution.<sup>29</sup>

## Directing greater climate finance towards locally-led and nature-based solutions

A final way in which the Rainforest Alliance is driving greater climate action is by working with partners to channel money from multilateral organizations, climate and environmental funds, and the private sector to on-the-ground climate action happening across farms, forests, and rural landscapes.



## Channeling global investment into local climate action

### Developing innovative financing to support communities in critical deforestation hotspots

In the USAID-funded Business Case for Collective Landscape Action project<sup>30</sup>, we are working alongside CDP, Clarmondial, and Conservation International (CI) to unlock international finance for sustainable production, invest it in well-planned landscapes, and ultimately stabilize critical deforestation frontiers. The Rainforest Alliance and CI will facilitate the formation of landscape partnerships with locally defined action plans in Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, and Peru. These landscapes will then work with Clarmondial to develop innovative financing mechanisms, including the design of a new fund that will mobilize large-scale investments in critical landscapes in these countries. The project is expected to reduce 12.1 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, improve natural resource management of 1.8 million hectares, and improve the livelihoods of more than 12,000 people through economic benefits.

### Making landscapes investment-ready

In addition, through the EU-funded "Landscapes and Environmental Agility across the Nation (LEAN)" program in Ghana<sup>31</sup> (as well as through many of our Integrated Landscape Management programs), we are working with a diverse range of stakeholders in the landscape to design investment-ready participatory landscape management plans. We then work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to identify and develop long-term sustainable funding mechanisms as well as to identify and introduce potential investors to local landscape management boards.

## JOIN US IN ACCELERATING CLIMATE ACTION ACROSS FARMS, FORESTS, AND RURAL LANDSCAPES

We are in a critical decade for humanity, with no time to waste in scaling up collective climate action. At the Rainforest Alliance, we are committed to accelerating climate action across farms, forests, and landscapes using an approach that puts rural communities and nature at the heart of the solution. We are working hard to drive transformation in the agriculture, forest, and land use sector by supporting initiatives both on the ground and in the boardroom and by advocating for ambitious local and international climate policies and programs. However, we need your help to spur the rapid and ambitious changes needed in agricultural and forest landscapes around the world to deliver climate adaptation and mitigation impact at scale.

*We urge you to join us in this mission.*

There are several ways you can start accelerating climate action today:

### Join the alliance

Partner with the Rainforest Alliance through our certification program or Tailored Supply Chain Services to promote deforestation- and degradation-free agricultural commodities and initiatives and to scale up the use of climate-smart and regenerative agriculture. By doing so, you will be supporting resilience-building and adaptation measures for producers and rural communities, especially for marginalized groups such as women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, while also helping mitigate climate change. As a part of our alliance, you also will help ensure that the most vulnerable communities are actively engaged in the design and implementation of climate solutions and receive tangible and equitable benefits from them.

### Promote locally-led and nature-based solutions

Support the use of nature-based and locally-led climate solutions, such as climate-smart agriculture, regenerative agriculture, forest conservation and restoration, Integrated Community Forest Management, and Integrated Landscape Management. Encourage consumers to put their purchasing power behind accredited, third-party certification seals that support climate-smart agricultural and forest practices.

### Scale up corporate action

Urge the corporate sector to take more ambitious and rapid action to reduce emissions within their agricultural and forestry supply chains as well as to adopt science-based emissions reduction targets. Beyond reductions, companies should also support and finance farmers in the transition to climate-smart and regenerative agriculture to help them build resilience and adapt to climate impacts.

### Advocate—at all levels

More than ever, advocacy—with governments, companies, donors, local and international civil society organizations, and others—is a crucial part of achieving urgent climate action by all sectors of society. Use your influence to support the integration of nature-based and locally-led adaptation measures for producers and rural communities into government strategies, programs, and policies—and push for greater implementation and financing for these solutions across both the public and private sectors. Additionally, promote and support integrated landscape-level initiatives that deliver a broad suite of climate adaptation, climate mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood benefits.

While achieving change at scale requires action on many fronts and levels, we know that, if we work in partnership, we can boldly rise to meet the scope of the climate challenge and deliver a world in which both people and nature thrive.



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