

# GREEN SOLUTIONS

FOR MORE CLIMATE ACTION,  
BIODIVERSITY AND GLOBAL EQUALITY

FORESTS OF  
THE WORLD<sup>ORG</sup>

STRATEGY 2021-2026





*Photo by Otto Mejia, the Indio Maíz Biological Reserve, Nicaragua*

## PROLOGUE

In Forests of the World, our hearts beat for the values of the forest and its diversity of flora, fauna and people living in it all around the world. We have been working for four decades in favour of forest conservation and sustainable development in East Africa, South and Central America, South East Asia, Denmark and globally.

These years, we see climate change aggravating the pressure on the ecosystems and peoples of the forest. These were already suffering due to a vast loss of biodiversity, as well as unfair marginalization.

Research shows that forest conservation is the cost-effective and fast way to slow down climate change, reduce biodiversity loss and create sustainable livelihoods for the poorest people in the world, all at the same time. Nevertheless, deforestation continues apace. Every seven seconds, tropical forest the size of a football pitch vanishes.

Halting this trend calls for green solutions, more climate action, biodiversity and global equality. How? Forests of the World presents a vision to this effect with our strategy for 2021-2026.

On behalf of the Board,

Anders Morten Christoffersen  
Chairman



# FORESTS OF THE WORLD WANTS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Forests of the World's strategy for 2021 to 2026 represents a holistic endeavour conceived in close cooperation between our staff and volunteers. We have set three strategic priorities, which suggest taking green action, strengthening civil society and bringing about political change as a contribution towards overcoming three of the world's most pressing challenges: climate change, biodiversity loss and global inequality. The strong suits of our strategy are that it links together our work in Denmark and internationally, and that it builds on a solid foundation of four decades of experience championing sustainable solutions, strengthening civil society and exerting political pressure. The background to the three strategic priorities is set out below.

## Green action to reduce the footprint of the forests of the world

More environmentally-friendly measures are essential to reduce harmful impacts on all forests. In countries like Denmark, businesses, citizens and institutions must assume responsibility for climate change, biodiversity loss and global inequality by taking action for sustainability. In countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Bolivia and Honduras, forest use and management must help create sustainable value chains, boost resilience to climate change and improve living conditions for forest peoples.

## Political change to chart a new course

Since the forest is a vital part of the solution to counteract climate change, inequality and biodiversity loss, it needs to be on the agenda wherever political decisions are made. In Denmark, the EU and globally, political change is needed towards improving the legal framework, and its enforcement, in favour of forest conservation and forest peoples. In our experience, knowledge of local conditions and strong civil-society voices lay the best foundation for championing the cause of the forest in political work in Denmark and internationally.

## A strong civil society is the key to change

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The three strategic priorities, green action, political change and strong civil society, are illustrated in the circle above.





# Forest conservation fosters sustainable development

*Photo by Berit Rechnagel, Indio Maíz Biological Reserve, Nicaragua*

## **Forest conservation stabilizes the climate**

As of today, about 11% of worldwide CO2 emissions stem from deforestation. By comparison, all EU countries combined emit 8-10%. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded that forest conservation amounts to one third of what is required to solve the global climate crisis. Keeping and restoring forest stabilizes the climate both locally and globally. It will counteract periods of severe drought and heavy rains, reducing flooding, hurricanes, wildfires, failed harvests and migration. In the strategy period ahead, much of our political work will revolve around the global climate agenda, advocating for measures to preserve valuable forest, promote the biological diversity of forests and secure the rights of indigenous peoples.

## **Forest conservation reduces inequality**

1.6 billion people — over 20% of world population — depend on the resources of the forest. Indigenous peoples and communities making a living from the forest are among the poorest and most vulnerable in the world. They fight for a life with dignity, food on the table, and the right to the land that they and their ancestors have lived on for generations. In many cases, they also fight for democracy, peace, legal protections and freedom of speech, often risking their lives. Human rights and the space for civil society are under massive pressure. This is compounded when trees are cut down, whereas forest conservation can help remedy the problems. A healthy forest reduces poverty, provides access to resources and ensures cultural diversity. Moreover, compliance with human rights, international agreements and national environmental legislation help preserve the forest. Thus, forest conservation is part and parcel of efforts to address the global inequality crisis.

## **Forest conservations protects biodiversity**

The world is losing biodiversity at breakneck speed. According to the IUCN, this may lead to 2 million species, 25% of all in existence, to become extinct in as little as 50 years. This is why saving the forests of the world is an important part of halting the biodiversity crisis. Forests of the World fights for the endangered biodiversity on Earth to rise on the political agenda in Denmark, the EU and globally. In all our projects in Denmark and abroad, biodiversity is a key word. We work for sustainable and future-proof utilization of the forests of the world and for protection of the most important and richest areas of nature.





*Photo by Otto Mejia, Indio Maíz Biological Reserve, Nicaragua*

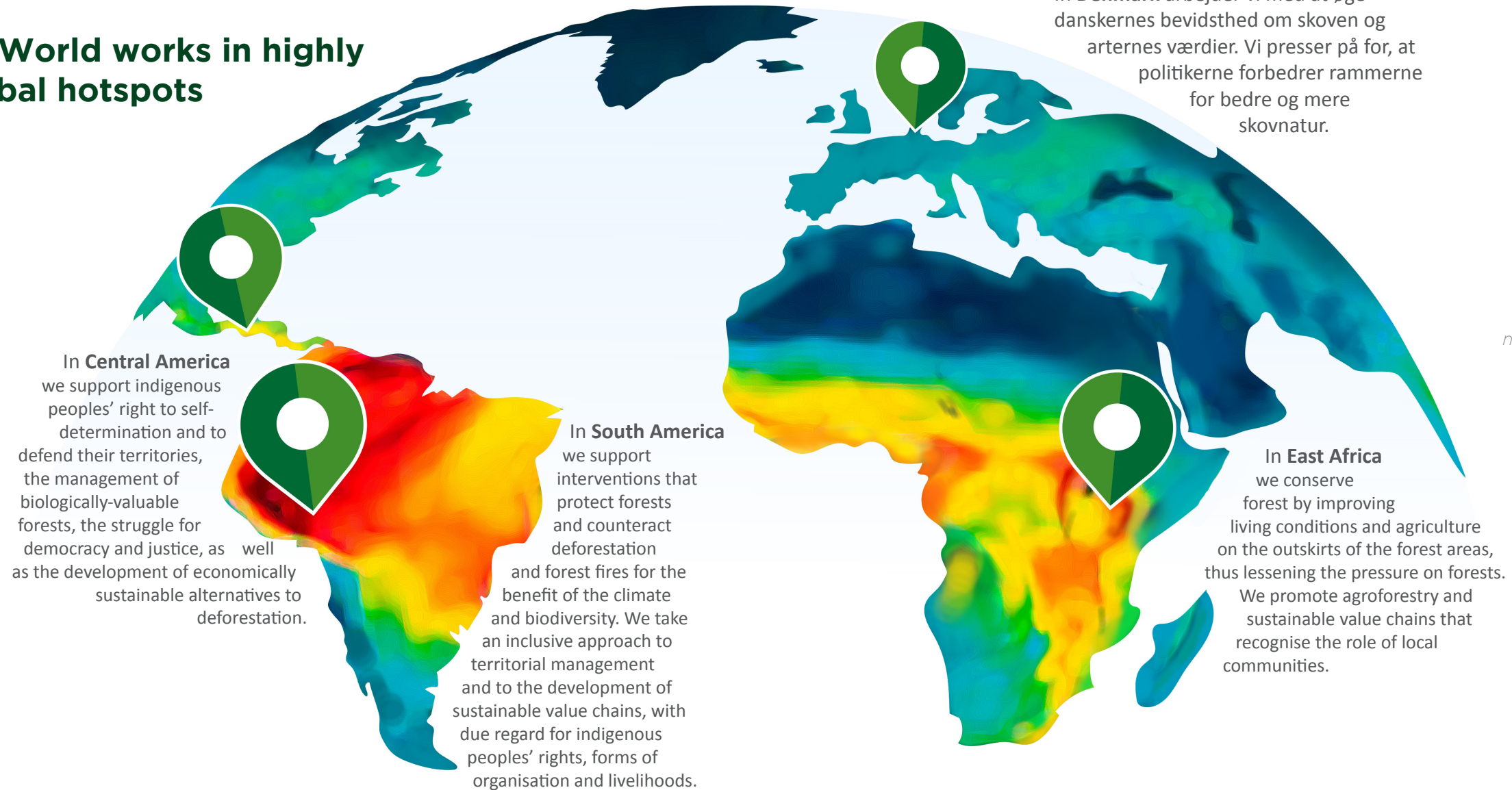
# Forests of the World fights for a world with a rich forest nature

- **We conserve, restore and enjoy species-rich and wild forest landscapes.**
- **We support indigenous peoples and engage people in the struggle for democracy, rights and a dignified life in the forest.**
- **We contribute towards resolving the global crises regarding climate change, inequality and biodiversity loss for the benefit of the forests of the world.**



# FORESTS OF THE WORLD AROUND THE WORLD

Forests of the World works in highly  
biodiverse global hotspots



HIGH SPECIES  
DIVERSITY



LOW SPECIES  
DIVERSITY

*The infographic is inspired  
by maps and data regarding  
mammal species diversity from  
biodiversitymapping.org*





# RESULT STORIES FOR 2015-2021

In the next pages, we present some of the achievements of Forests of the World during the last strategy period.

*Photo by Pedro Helder Pinheiro, Pantanal*



# GLOBALLY

## Campaign highlights Denmark's responsibility for forest fires in the Amazon

In recent years, forest fires and deforestation have posed a growing threat to local populations and to biodiversity in the forests in South America. The disappearing forest cover traces back to Denmark and Europe due to our import of produce such as soy, beef and biofuel. In 2020, Forests of the World launched a campaign to put political pressure on South American as well as Danish decision makers. The effort included the collection of over 9,000 signatures demanding political action and drawing attention to the link between consumption in Denmark and natural-habitat destruction globally.

*Forest fires in South America have a ►  
clear causal connection to Europe and  
Denmark due to our import of produce  
like soy, beef and biofuel.*



*Photo by Pedarilhos, Amazon Rainforest, Brazil*



# Denmark

## Wild horses bring more diversity to Tirsbæk Hills

Forests of the World has wild konik horses roaming Tirsbæk Hills, which is almost 20 hectares of nature close to the town of Vejle. The horses' feeding habits and rummaging around serve to let in light and bring variation to the vegetation, creating habitats for many species. Since the horses arrived in 2017, biologists have observed a growing number of rare animals, fungi and plants. Apart from enhancing the local nature, it offers unique wildlife experiences to nearby residents. Indeed, some people have moved there to enjoy the pristine environment and the horses. The project is undertaken in cooperation with the Municipality of Vejle and the owner of the land.

◀ *The wild konik horses improve local biodiversity. Areas that used to be taken up by stinging nettle and grass have been freed up after grazing. Inside the brush and thicket, the horses create paths and small clearings, while in the fields, they stomp little holes in the ground.*



# East Africa

## The introduction of agroforestry helps farmers both adapt to and mitigate climate change

Over the past hundred years, the forest cover in Ethiopia has been reduced to a critical level of about 4% of the total area. The deforestation stems from the combined effect of high population growth and climate change. Forests of the World has been working since 2018 in the Bale Mountains and the Kafa Biosphere Reserve, extending agroforestry-based coffee cultivation among the communities inhabiting the outskirts of the woodland. Agroforestry contributes to climate adaptation, since the higher number of trees retain water and soil that would otherwise be at high risk of eroding in the dry landscape. Furthermore, over time, it permits farmers to access their own firewood, which makes it a great and sustainable alternative to logging.

*Coffee is a source of national pride and of major export earnings in Ethiopia. It is an ideal crop for an agroforestry system, since the plant needs about 60% shade.* ►

Photo by Mette Vinqvist, Ethiopia







## South America

### Innovative climate project led to forest conservation and job creation

In 2017, Forests of the World launched an initiative to improve sustainable forest management and resilience to climate change in the Bolivian Chiquitanía region. The project focused on the development of local value chains, such as plant oils, timber and coffee, as well as on local job creation, especially for women. The project has succeeded in avoiding the deforestation of 1,497 hectares in the autonomous indigenous territory of Monte Verde. This is the equivalent of not emitting 491,034 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Moreover, women gained opportunities for greater economic freedom and decision-making powers in their families and communities by participating in developing and marketing new socially and environmentally responsible products from the forest.

◀ *Many forest projects sponsored by Forests of the World also promote the rights of girls and women. These are young women from Bolivia.*



# Central America

## The Tolupan people have inched closer to legal recognition of their territory in Honduras

Indigenous peoples in Honduras are faced with massive pressure on their rights in general, and on the right to their land and natural resources in particular. The Tolupan people from El Zapotal territory, an important area in the southern part of Pico Bonito National Park, have struggled for more than 150 years for the right to their territory, which was originally allotted to them in 1864. In recent years, Forests of the World has been supporting efforts to get this recognised by the legal system in Honduras. This has required lengthy field expeditions, new land surveys, interviews, testimonies and reports. Now they have inched closer to an official recognition of their right to the land that they have always lived on. In February 2021, the authorities registered the results of the latest land survey in favour of the Tolupan people in El Zapotal, proving their ownership of 3,507 hectares. Now we are awaiting the judgement on what should happen with the part of the territory that has been invaded by settlers. A positive outcome in this case will make a great impact, as it will set a precedent for other indigenous peoples in the country.

*Forests of the World support Central American indigenous peoples' struggle for rights to their land and natural resources, including here in El Zapotal in Honduras.* ►



*Photo by Andrea Zúñiga and Eduardo Rosales, El Zapotal Territory, Honduras*



# Denmark

## Forest certificates sold to finance the rewilding of Frejlev and Lerbjerg Forest

In cooperation with the Danish Nature Fund, Forests of the World has purchased Lerbjerg Forest of 120 hectares, as well as Frejlev Forest of 20 hectares, which can now be set aside as untouched. This is because many native species are under pressure, especially those that live in the forest. Most Danish forestry is intensive, which leaves no room for old, dying or dead trees, or for wetland that is not drained. Accordingly, research has concluded that what is most needed is more untouched forest, in which biodiversity, rather than humans, has primacy. This is why Forests of the World is helping to buy up selected species-rich forests in order to protect them for the future.

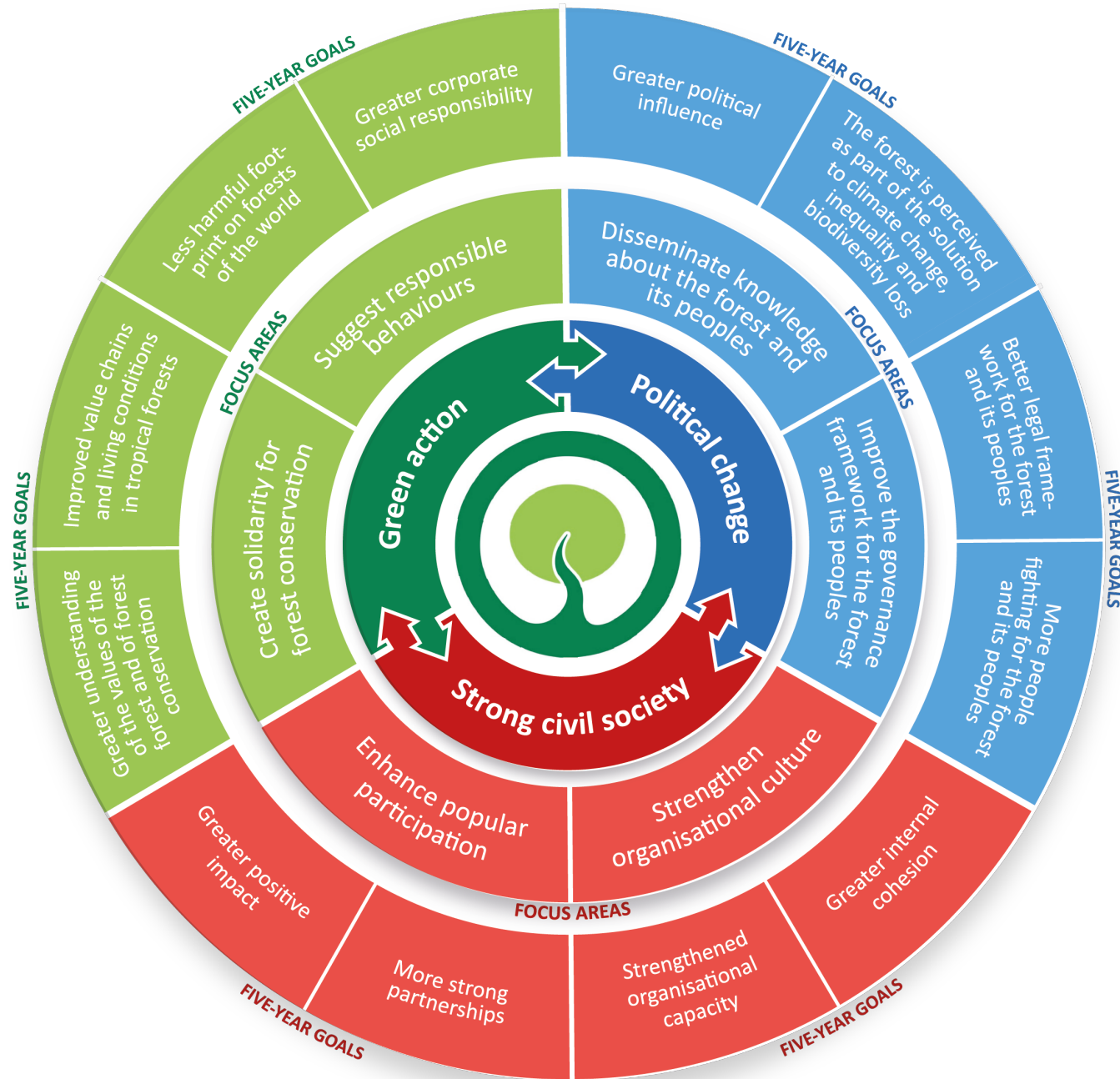
◀ *Thousands of Danes bought a forest certificate for Lerbjerg Forest and took part in securing the forest for the benefit of endangered hazel dormice, rare butterflies and many other animals and plants.*

*Photo by Jesper Edvardsen, Lerbjerg Forest*



# FORESTS OF THE WORLD – STRATEGY FOR 2021-2026

GREEN SOLUTIONS FOR MORE CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY AND GLOBAL EQUALITY



The strategic priorities of Forests of the World for the period 2021-2026 are inextricably linked. Green solutions for more climate action, biodiversity and global equality demand that we mobilize civil society and create political goodwill. The stronger the civil society, the more pressure for responsible behaviours can be put on politicians, businesses and the population at large. This gives rise to positive feedback between efforts within the three strategic priorities in the course of the strategy period, with change spreading out like ripples in the water. The focus areas and goals for each of the three strategic priorities are set out below.

## Promoting green action

We want to make the values of the forest relatable and understandable, and to enhance national and international cooperation for sustainable forest use. We will engage citizens, business and public institutions in a commitment to behave responsibly.

Our goals for 2026 are:

- By means of positive experiences in the forest, people have gained greater understanding of the values of the forest and of the need to promote forest conservation.
- Sustainable use of forest resources has been increased by developing responsible value chains that improve production and living conditions in tropical forests.
- Consumers, businesses and public institutions have stepped up their green action and have come to be actively minimizing their harmful impact on the forest and its peoples.
- An increase in strong partnerships with businesses leads to the adoption of deforestation-free and socially-responsible business models.

## Bringing about political change

We want to secure better conditions for wild forest landscapes, biodiversity protection and for compliance with the rights of people, particularly indigenous peoples. This is to take place by spreading knowledge of the forest and those who live there, thus pushing for political action and change in favour of forest conservation and indigenous peoples' rights.

Our goals for 2026 are:

- Greater political influence on important agendas through campaigning.
- Greater popular understanding of how the forest plays an important role in solving the three global crises, namely climate change, inequality and biodiversity loss.
- An improved legal framework, and enforcement thereof, for the benefit of forest conservation and the rights of forest peoples.
- More and stronger voices among partners, civil society and indigenous peoples with greater capacity to defend the forest and the rights of its peoples.

## Engaging a strong civil society

We wish to strengthen popular participation, establishing strong partnerships that expand the space for civil society and for indigenous peoples. Such activity might unfold, for instance, under the auspices of Forests of the World, which must hence remain a credible and attractive organisation. We will strengthen the organisational culture so that Forests of the World continues to be characterized by diversity, mutual respect and a good climate of cooperation with a short distance from idea to action.

Our goals for 2026 are:

- Forests of the World has strengthened its mobilization capacity and impact, thus attracting more members and boosting the effect of their voluntary work.
- The space for civil society has been expanded through strong alliances and partnerships within Danish and global civil society, as well as among indigenous peoples.
- Forests of the World has increased and streamlined its capacity across the organisation.
- Forests of the World has strengthened its internal organisational cohesion through cooperation between departments as well as transparent and inclusive leadership that sets clear priorities.

Forests of the World will contribute towards 13 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals for a more just and sustainable world, and in particular goals 10, 13 and 15.



# FORESTS OF THE WORLD.ORG

PASS THEM ON

Forests of the World works for forest conservation in biodiversity hotspots in East Africa, South America and Central America. We take on challenges in the forest and cooperate on conserving the forest with those whose livelihoods depend on it. Together with them, we ensure that the resources of the forest are managed in a socially, environmentally and economically responsible manner for the benefit and enjoyment of life on Earth.

In Denmark, we work for an expansion of wild nature and rewilding. Through our political work locally, nationally and globally, we link together those three levels. We inform on how our choices and consumption in countries like Denmark have an effect on our global climate, biodiversity, indigenous peoples and other forest communities, and which solutions and alternatives are available so as to make our impact into a positive one. Forests of the World contributes towards sustainable development in the forests of the world by creating scope for sustainable action, mobilizing civil society and exerting political pressure.



Read more at:  
[www.forests-of-the-world.org](http://www.forests-of-the-world.org)