

RAINFOREST TRUST®



VOL. IX: 2018

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE AMAZON

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Back Top: Nick Fox
Back: Avigator Thailand

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RAINFOREST
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We purchase and protect threatened tropical habitats to save endangered wildlife through local partnerships and community engagement.

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

A journey to the Amazon Rainforest, for many, is a dream. A dream where they get to experience the beauty of a place teeming with life – the plants and animals, immense rivers and canopies, communities of people rich in a culture tied to the land – the sheer wildness of it. Even if a trip is not possible, simply knowing the Amazon is there keeps a love of nature and therefore that dream alive.

The Amazon Rainforest has a lure like no other place.

Since beginning our work 30 years ago, with your support, we have made tremendous strides to save the Amazon and tropical places like it around the world.

But I am especially proud of our efforts in Peru, where together with our partners we have permanently protected 9.2 million acres of land in the Amazon. What's better, we are working on preserving another 8.5 million acres in the coming years. Combined, this will mean through your support, we will have saved an area in the Peruvian Amazon the size of South Carolina!

Undoubtedly, you are questioning our cover – a rainforest growing atop a lump of coal. Rainforests, like the Peruvian Amazon, store incredible amounts of carbon while releasing oxygen, hence they are the "lungs of our planet." When rainforests are destroyed, this stored carbon is released into the atmosphere with negative impact on our climate. With nearly 70,000 acres of rainforest destroyed every day, the carbon released through deforestation annually equals the total emissions from transportation globally!

So even if as individuals we only ever dream of experiencing the Amazon, its presence, purpose and protection are critical to our shared reality.

In the pages that follow, you will read about and see the beauty of the Amazon, the people and species who call it home. You will learn about our efforts to help indigenous people access their rights by gaining title to their ancestral lands. By empowering these communities, we will protect and preserve the land against the growing forces that try to destroy it every day.

Working with local communities and conservationists underpins all that we do. It is a critical factor in our success thus far and will continue to be paramount into the future, because of our mutual passion for the rainforest.

You too share this passion, this dream. And with this magazine issue, we hope to connect you with our partners in Peru. Together, we can do great things to protect the vast Peruvian Amazon, and all the rainforests around the world.

For the rainforests,

Dr. Paul Salaman




SPECIES CREDITS

Jaguar
Capped Heron
Black Caiman
Silver Arowana
Red-backed Poison Frog
Lowland Tapir



DR. PAUL SALAMAN, CEO

At the age of eight, Paul met Sir David Attenborough and became enthralled by international wildlife conservation. As a teenager, he managed a nature reserve in London and traveled across the tropics visiting rainforests. A graduate of Oxford University, Paul has discovered four bird species new to science over the last 25 years. Paul joined Rainforest Trust in 2008.

An aerial photograph showing a wide, muddy-brown river winding through a vast, dense green rainforest. The river has several large meanders and oxbow-like curves. The forest is a deep, uniform green, covering the entire landscape except for the river and some lighter-colored sandy banks. The sky is visible at the top, showing some clouds.

While floating down one of the many tributaries of the Amazon River in Peru, it can be hard to imagine how anything could possibly exist beyond the rainforest.

The Amazon Rainforest — whose borders stretch from the Andes in Peru, Ecuador and Colombia through the corner of Venezuela before curving southward at the vast plains of Brazil and back westward through Bolivia — is so dense, it makes the thickets of Appalachia and the pine-scented mountains of the Pacific Northwest seem sparse.

But it's not monotypic either — within the world's largest rainforest are wetlands, rivers, palm stands, sandy forests, massive old growth trees, tall grasses and mountains. And these diverse landscapes are thick with life.

On the ground, lizards and frogs in endless shapes, colors and sizes scuttle in the grass and ring a chorus in the night. Capybaras and tapirs plod from river to riverbank, tinamous and Hoatzins cling under and on top of low shrubs and Jaguars hide, silent in the surrounding cacophony.

Up in the air, parrots never stop chirping, including the occasional macaws who soar overhead in pairs and break the din every few moments with a piercing squawk. Bats cling to fruit and hunt the countless insects that rise and fall with and against the sun.

And under the water, fish ranging from colorful tetras to massive, brown Arapaima live in the muddy depths while caiman peek their reflective eyes above the surface.



While watching those crocodilians act so calm, it's tempting to think the Amazon is a place of easy access to food, water and shelter. But despite its overwhelming abundance, the jungle makes its inhabitants work for it all.

The macaws who alight on the tallest trees are often in search of nutrients to sustain their diets. The heron may rest for a time but soon enough will need a fish to maintain its avian metabolism. The jaguar will fail often on the hunt.

But the Amazon is not alone in this. Earth does not provide life — it provides the opportunity for life and the wonder of evolution provides the momentum life needs to succeed.

For no species is this more true than for the human.



TOP LEFT: GARY WHYTE; TOP RIGHT: ANDRES TRPTE; BOTTOM LEFT: LIVINGPITTY

TOP RIGHT: CEDIA; MIDDLE LEFT: CEDIA



In human communities, our daily challenges are a multitude.

We need not only to stay fed, healthy and sheltered. We need to make sure our families and neighbors have the same. We need to work for today and tomorrow. We worry about education for our children and economic well-being for our towns.

People in the Amazon face these challenges in that great, thick forest. But, just as in the grasslands, metropolises, islands, suburbs, farmlands, tundra and deserts, we humans find a way to make it work.

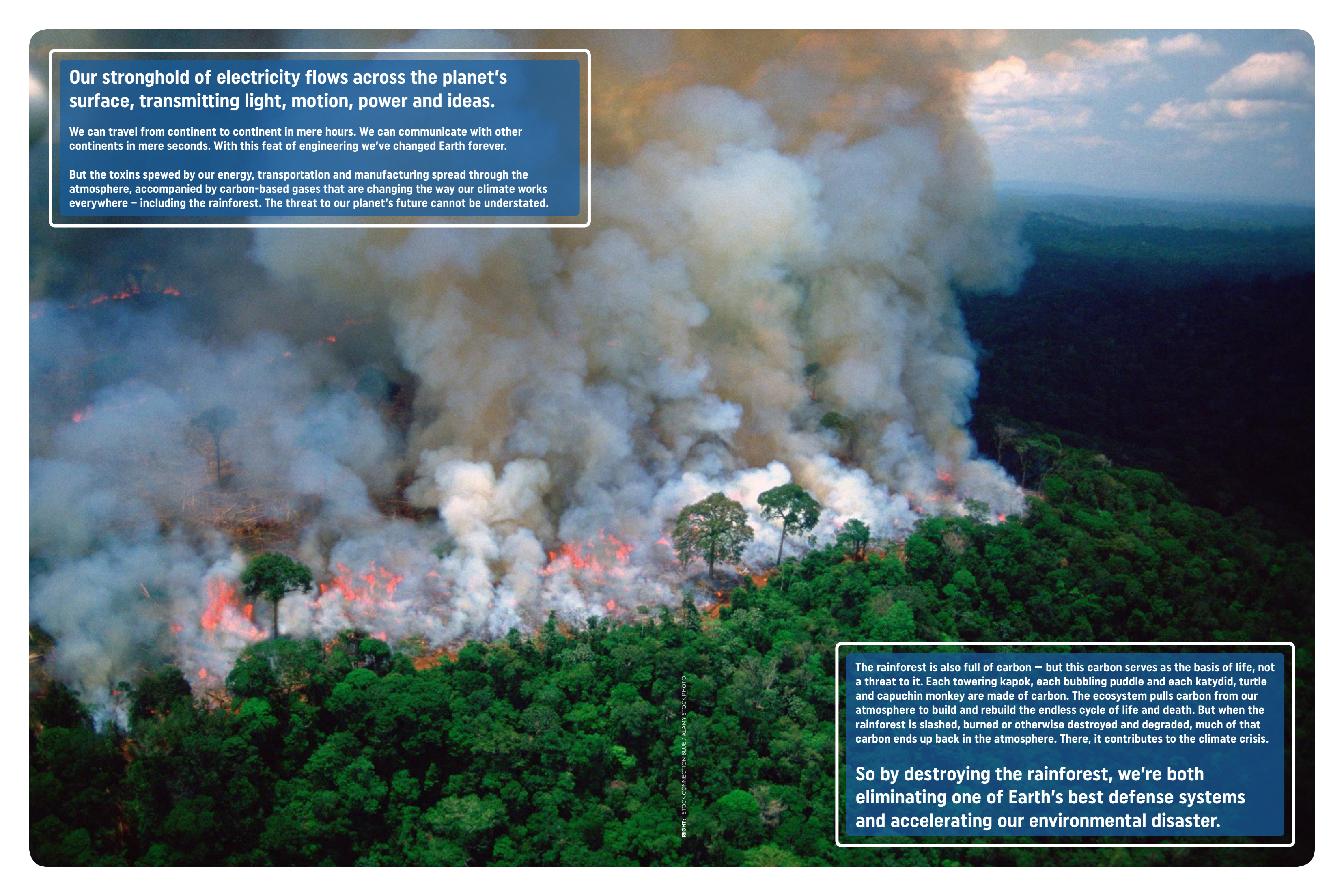
And when a community is so thick with life, joy, love and friendship, its hard to imagine how anything could possibly exist beyond it, much like the rainforest itself.



But outside each community, outside the forest, outside the Amazon, is the rest of the world. Outside the Amazon, people go to work in office buildings or in fields unaware of the forest's cycle of rainy and dry seasons. People laugh and weep without a thought to the fishing communities of the Amazon's tributaries. Children grow old and die without having ever seen the emerald wings of the Amazon Kingfisher splash into water.

This is the nature of our existence.

But while we may not always be thinking of places far away, we are always affecting those places.



Our stronghold of electricity flows across the planet's surface, transmitting light, motion, power and ideas.

We can travel from continent to continent in mere hours. We can communicate with other continents in mere seconds. With this feat of engineering we've changed Earth forever.

But the toxins spewed by our energy, transportation and manufacturing spread through the atmosphere, accompanied by carbon-based gases that are changing the way our climate works everywhere – including the rainforest. The threat to our planet's future cannot be understated.

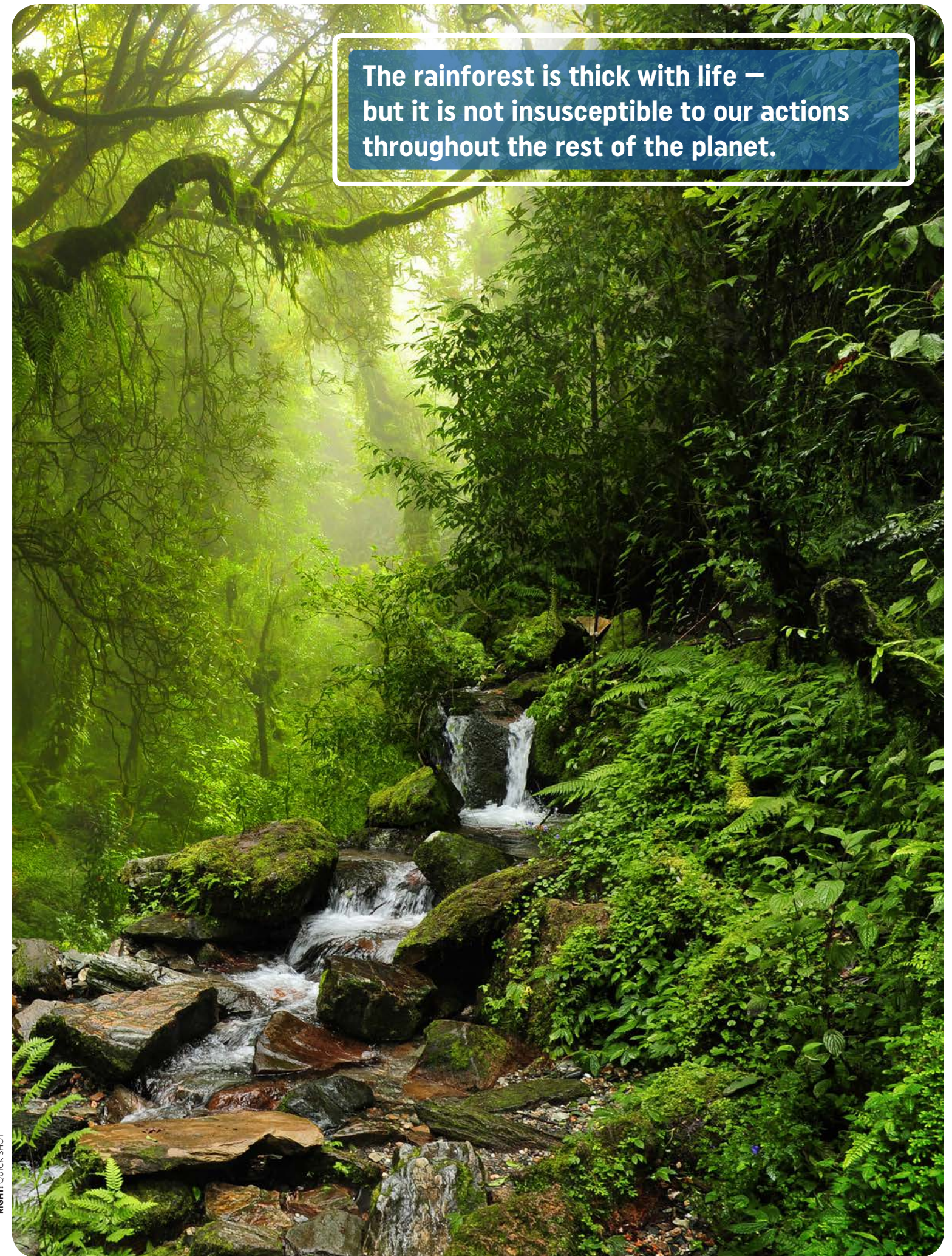
RIGHT: STOCK CONNECTION BLUE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

The rainforest is also full of carbon — but this carbon serves as the basis of life, not a threat to it. Each towering kapok, each bubbling puddle and each katydid, turtle and capuchin monkey are made of carbon. The ecosystem pulls carbon from our atmosphere to build and rebuild the endless cycle of life and death. But when the rainforest is slashed, burned or otherwise destroyed and degraded, much of that carbon ends up back in the atmosphere. There, it contributes to the climate crisis.


So by destroying the rainforest, we're both eliminating one of Earth's best defense systems and accelerating our environmental disaster.



Many indigenous communities of the Amazon, though reliant on the ecosystem around them, also rely on larger governments and organizations outside the rainforest for support. But many communities do not have land titles — meaning there's little way for them to receive resources or have their voices heard. In addition, without land titles, their space is at risk of becoming land for logging and mining corporations. But to receive these land titles, communities need an excess of time, resources and money on hand. So for most communities, legal recognition seems outside the realm of possibility.



The rainforest is thick with life — but it is not insusceptible to our actions throughout the rest of the planet.



Here at Rainforest Trust, we've always looked for innovative, bottom-up solutions to our planetary crises.

That's why our work in Peru has always centered around supporting indigenous communities.

For decades, we've worked hand-in-hand with the Center for the Development of an Indigenous Amazon (CEDIA), a leading Peruvian NGO. By helping indigenous communities with land titling, our projects help put these communities on the map — literally. With a land title, communities can seek more resources in health care, education and communication.

But along with these land titles, our projects help these communities develop "Life Plans" to sustainably manage their resources for generations to come. Those plans cover everything from fish, trees and farmland to social and cultural traditions.

By supporting communities in land titling, we're protecting the ecosystems around them as well. The lands are now protected from logging and mining and communities keep the forest intact. Now, biodiversity can thrive and all that carbon remains in the ground, not the atmosphere.

That's why we've worked to title millions of acres of community lands in the Peruvian Amazon. And that's why we're now embarking on our most ambitious project to title lands ever. We're working with CEDIA to title nearly seven million more acres of community lands in the north Peruvian Amazon — filling in the gaps for scores of communities and protecting forests across a wide ecosystem.

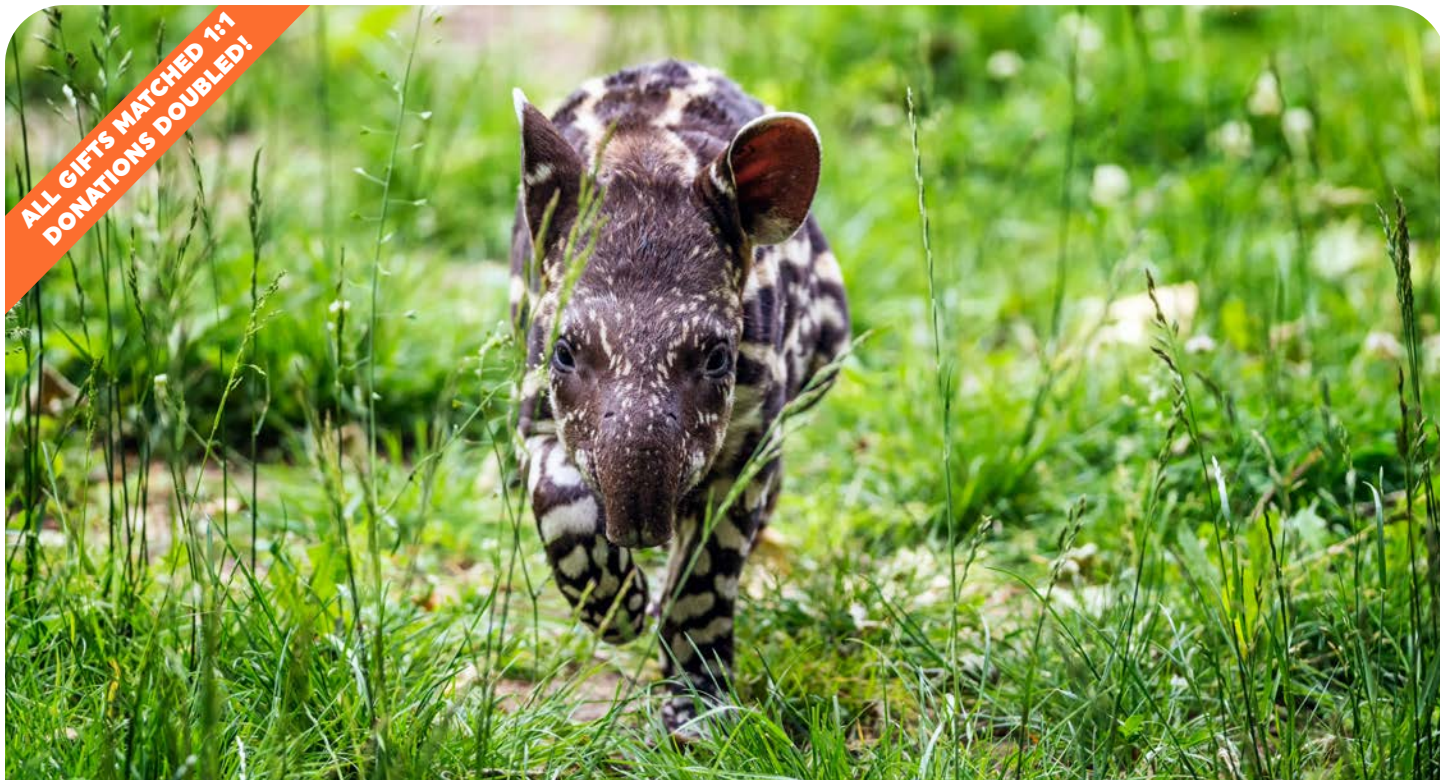
Right now, one can float down a tributary of the Amazon River and wonder how anything could possibly exist beyond the rainforest. But we want to make sure that feeling remains forever. So we'll keep fighting for every species, every community and our entire planet.

UrgentProtection

Support the conservation work of
Rainforest Trust around the world.

CONSERVATION ACTION FUND (CAF)

ALL GIFTS MATCHED 1:1
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\$1.98 - AVERAGE COST TO PROTECT AN ACRE OF TROPICAL HABITAT

Every day, precious acres of rainforest are lost forever. Critically endangered species lose their habitat. Communities lose their sustaining forests. Water sources and weather systems are disrupted. Our planet is impacted when stored carbon is released by deforestation and degradation.

Rainforest Trust believes that the simple solution of stopping rainforest destruction will positively impact species, communities and the planet.

A gift to our Conservation Action Fund (CAF) supports our most urgent work around the world.

Our conservation work makes a tangible difference. Whether it is preserving the Amazon and the way of life for indigenous people or purchasing rainforest in Borneo to create an urgently needed corridor for Bornean Pygmy Elephants, with your support we preserve critical areas for life on Earth.

Visit RainforestTrust.org/donate to make a donation.

