

# Our Strategy 2019 - 2023





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A photograph of a female Cao Vit gibbon hanging from a tree branch. She has long, thick, orange-brown fur and a black face with a white patch around her eyes. A small baby gibbon is clinging to her belly. The background is filled with green leaves and branches.

# Introduction

## AN URGENT CALL FOR ACTION

We are living at a turning point for nature as we know it. Accelerating extinctions, dramatic losses in key biomes – particularly tropical forests and coral reefs – the rapid decline in the abundance of wildlife with which we share our planet and the increasing likelihood of dangerous climate change in coming decades are loudly signalling an urgent need for action at all levels.

Given this outlook, and the vital role that nature plays in regulating our climate and underpinning our economy, there has never been a greater need for the work that Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and our partner organisations do.



“I am proud to have been a member of Fauna & Flora International since the late 1950s. This admirable organisation has kept its objectives clear and focused, and has achieved marvellous things for conservation throughout its history.”

*Sir David Attenborough*

FFI will be 120 years old at the close of this five-year strategy period. Looking back, we are proud of the huge difference we have made at every stage of our long and distinguished history, from our early days of wild animal conservation (during which time we helped establish much of the conservation infrastructure that underpins our sector today) to our current portfolio of programmes and projects, which – in collaboration with our partner organisations – are achieving real conservation impact across land and seascapes in more than 40 countries.

In this strategy for 2019-2023, we outline how we will build on this legacy and set out our ambitious priorities for FFI's impact over these five years and beyond.

The strategy also presents a clear picture of where we want to be, along with how we will get there and how we will measure our progress and impact. Last but not least, it clarifies the organisational change required for us to deliver our mission over the longer term.



Species of passion flower in Guyana. Credit: Evan Bowen-Jones



# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS STRATEGY AND THE PREVIOUS ONE?

Those who are familiar with our 2014-2018 Strategy will recognise many themes re-emerging here. Our new strategy builds on the previous one, taking account of the current environmental and operational context within

which we are working, and details how we will achieve our aims to safeguard species and habitats, empower conservation leaders, shape decisions to benefit biodiversity, and build FFI's own effectiveness.

In line with these aims, this strategy sets out seven ambitions:

CONSERVING THREATENED HABITATS AND SPECIES:

**1 AMBITION ONE: THRIVING SPECIES**

**2 AMBITION TWO: RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS**

EMPOWERING ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO LEAD INNOVATIVE CONSERVATION ACTION:

**3 AMBITION THREE: LOCALLY LED CONSERVATION**

SHAPING DECISIONS WITHIN SOCIETY TO BENEFIT BIODIVERSITY:

**4 AMBITION FOUR: INFLUENCING OTHERS**

INVESTING IN FFI'S EFFECTIVENESS:

**5 AMBITION FIVE: INCREASING VISIBILITY**

**6 AMBITION SIX: INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE**

**7 AMBITION SEVEN: SECURING THE RESOURCES WE NEED**

This new strategy also sets out what success will look like for FFI in 2023 in relation to these seven ambitions, providing clarity and helping us to focus our efforts.

In particular, the new strategy places significant emphasis on **consolidated growth** (depth

over breadth) and on continuing to build **demonstrable and lasting impact**.

This recognises the importance of not spreading ourselves too thinly, and of achieving tangible results that we can celebrate and build on.

## REVIEW OF PROGRESS 2014-2018

We have made good progress towards the aims set out in our 2014-18 Strategy, as these snapshots illustrate:

Under Aim 1 (delivering effective conservation of species and habitats) we planned to expand our work in the coastal-marine realm while continuing to focus on governance, livelihoods and policy angles.

*PROGRESS REPORT:* Over the past five years our coastal and marine work has expanded significantly such that we have now helped to establish 20 new marine protected areas and improved the management of a further 35 worldwide. Our portfolio currently includes projects in 13 countries across all four of our focal regions, with a strong emphasis on locally managed marine areas that conserve important marine life while supporting associated livelihoods. A number of our projects have been so successful that they are now influencing conservation outcomes across much larger seascapes. We have also significantly increased our engagement at the political level with a clear focus on marine plastic pollution, particularly in the UK, and have kick-started the development of a suite of new projects to tackle the threat of plastic pollution in key sites across our portfolio.



Juan Pablo Moreira/FFI

Tim Bergman/FFI



Under Aim 2 (shaping decisions within society to benefit biodiversity) we committed to expand our work on agricultural landscapes in light of the growing, and potentially conflicting, demands on productive lands.

*PROGRESS REPORT:* Over the past five years we have supported agricultural work across seven landscapes in Africa and Central America. A priority focus has been on the Ziama forest landscape, a key component of the Upper Guinean rainforest, which straddles the border between Liberia and Guinea. Here, we have provided in-depth training for hundreds of smallholder farmers across the landscape, introducing new methods of conservation agriculture to help reduce deforestation.



Under Aim 3 (empowering organisations and individuals to lead innovative conservation action) we said we would enhance the application of new technologies to conservation challenges.

*PROGRESS REPORT:* Our use of the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (also known as SMART) for field monitoring has expanded to 57 sites across 19 countries and we have led the way globally in the use of SMART for marine monitoring. We have also helped to establish a ground-breaking conservation technology lab on Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya that is trialling innovative technology solutions to a range of conservation challenges faced by the conservancy and surrounding communities. More widely, our coordination of the WILDLABS community of conservationists and technology experts, established in 2015, connects over 3,200 registered members worldwide, allowing them to share ideas, challenges and successes.



Under Aim 4 (investing in FFI's effectiveness) we pledged to strengthen FFI's global management systems.

*PROGRESS REPORT:* Over the past five years we have invested significantly in strengthening financial management, information systems, legal capacity, and risk management. We have fostered a culture of learning and knowledge-sharing, most notably through the roll-out of project planning and reporting based on clear theories of change and impact pathways. At an organisational level we are now able to create comprehensive annual snapshots of the scale and impact of our work, together with a synthesis of lessons learned from across our portfolio. Our myFFI intranet platform enables all staff to access project and organisational information as well as learning resources.

During this period we also significantly increased FFI's unrestricted reserves thanks to our successful Capital Campaign; in turn, this allowed us to invest in the capacity of the organisation to support future growth.

To learn more about our progress against the aims of our 2014-2018 Strategy, you can read our annual Conservation Reports on our website.





# The basis for our new strategy



# BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF WHO WE ARE

The 2019-2023 Strategy builds on the foundations of who we are:

## Vision

Our vision is a sustainable future for the planet, where biodiversity is effectively conserved by the people who live closest to it, supported by the global community.

Our mission is to conserve threatened species and ecosystems worldwide.

## Mission

To achieve our mission, FFI works with partners to deliver local solutions that are scientifically robust and enhance human well-being. We are part of a global conservation movement, yet we are distinct in the way that we tackle the conservation challenge.

Our distinguishing factors characterise our unique offering:



### **FFI is responsive to conservation need.**

*“FFI either seeks out or responds to requests where it considers there are opportunities for important long-term conservation gains and where local partners with potential can be identified.” †*



### **FFI partners actively and meaningfully on the ground.**

*“Key to FFI’s success has been its genuine commitment to work supportively with local partners.” †*



### **FFI is deeply committed to supporting others, both individuals and organisations, to become effective conservation leaders who can achieve real conservation impact.**

*“FFI has been a genuine collaborator in these relationships, respecting their partners’ own goals even while pushing for progress...Few other NGOs can match FFI in the quality of their work with local partners.” †*



### **FFI stands firm, often working in difficult places (including post-conflict situations), and persists when times become challenging.**

*“FFI has worked at some important conservation sites over impressively long periods, in some cases persisting in the face of formidable obstacles and challenges.” †*

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† Extract from Wells et al., Independent Review of Fauna & Flora International’s Halcyon Land & Sea and Halcyon Marine Initiatives for the Arcadia Fund, 2016. This report was the result of an intensive review of FFI’s Arcadia-funded projects carried out by a team of independent evaluators.

Our approach intertwines the activities of our staff in country with empowerment of local partners and stakeholders. The majority of our work is focused on this local-level, site-based conservation. At the same time we recognise the value of expanding our influence more widely, and we include that selectively within our activities.

Rationale for our approach:

We work on the ground to deliver conservation impact because policy-level debate alone is not enough, and by digging in and getting our hands dirty we can demonstrate the actions that are needed on the ground to tackle the loss of nature and its wider societal implications.

We champion locally led conservation, investing in partner organisations including community groups, because this approach is more likely to be appropriate to the situation, to elicit local support and to ensure long-term effectiveness.

We engage in policy processes locally because, without them, our projects risk not achieving positive, equitable outcomes for conservation; we engage in wider policy and decision-making processes, including corporate decision-making, where we feel we have something to add and the opportunity to influence where others cannot, or where we can add value by aligning with others.

Our efforts, and our results, have grown over the past five years. As a snapshot:



In 2018 we were delivering over 130 projects, contributing directly to the conservation of around eight million hectares of habitat across 216 sites in 49 countries.



We are able to track progress and impact in our projects, and over the year demonstrated conservation gains in half of these sites, and positive outcomes for almost three-quarters of the populations of the 82 priority species on which we currently focus as well as at least 146 other species.



We helped over 220 organisations develop their skills, knowledge and resources, while over 4,800 individuals benefited from training and support.



We also influenced 22 laws, regulations and national plans.

*“Funds have been used strategically and consistently by FFI to achieve impressive gains in (a) areas protected for conservation, both terrestrial and marine, (b) capacities of local partners, and (c) influence over wider conservation debates, priorities and policies.” †*



## TAKING ACCOUNT OF A CHANGING WORLD AROUND US

The Anthropocene (the 'age of humans') is a period of increasing transformation of the planet by people. Yet we remain a part of nature and are dependent upon healthy ecosystems, as these are the foundation on which all life depends and on which human development is built.

At FFI, we believe that conservation cannot be about separating people from nature, but rather is about effective custodianship of nature by, and for, people. While we believe that nature has value irrespective of its utility to us, we also recognise that conservation and economic development must be compatible for either to be sustainable. This is all the more so in the increasingly polarised, pressurised and rapidly changing world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Never before has nature been so threatened, and yet never before has there been so much awareness of the integral role that nature in all its variety plays in our daily lives – safeguarding our soils and food supplies, supplying fresh water and clean air, helping us to combat and adapt to climate change and providing us with recreational space and cultural heritage. In this, the Anthropocene, we are seeing potentially catastrophic rates of species extinctions coupled with declines in species abundance in everything from large mammals and trees to birds, fish, tiny insects and lichens – each loss contributing to the unravelling of the planet's life-support system, on which we and future generations depend.

The failure of governments and the private sector, both individually and collectively, to tackle the causes of climate change has created a crisis on a planetary scale, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change laying out clearly the risks of remaining on a path to exceeding the maximum safe temperature increase of 1.5°C. The role of healthy ecosystems in mitigating and adapting to climate change is largely ignored, despite evidence showing that escalating deforestation and intensifying forest fires are major contributors to global emissions. Schemes to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation, meanwhile, are still only viable through limited voluntary carbon markets and the scope for nature-based adaptation remains relatively unexplored.

It is clear that the continued growth in global consumption is not sustainable given the planet's resource boundaries. For example, providing food for a growing global human population presents one of the biggest threats to our natural world unless we can find more sustainable ways of catering for this need. Yet this also creates an opportunity to transform agricultural systems and accelerate conservation agriculture techniques that produce more food from the same land with fewer negative impacts.



Nevertheless, reducing consumption levels, particularly in wealthier countries and emerging economies, is critical. Population size, as well as per capita consumption, is a key driver of our demand for resources. Alongside technology and behavioural transitions, efforts to promote reproductive choice, good health care and access to education are becoming recognised as part of the solution.

The push for new economic models and corporate behaviour is creating opportunities for forward-thinking businesses and finance institutions. The annual World Economic Forum Global Risks Report now identifies global environmental risks as the biggest threat to future business success, and sees opportunities for a new industrial revolution in terms of 'clean' growth, new technologies and idea-based jobs. Even within the oil and gas sector we have seen examples of a self-declared path towards decarbonisation, though the timeframe is not yet sufficiently ambitious.

At the same time, there are growing concerns about the failure to tackle escalating wealth inequalities and populist nationalism. The persistent scourge of corruption has led to unacceptable environmental and social risk-taking by some corporations, including examples of dam failures in Brazil, and there is an urgent need to strengthen environmental standards and their enforcement. This is also true with regard to planned investment in new infrastructure globally. It is clear that infrastructure is needed for economic and social development in many parts of the world, but it is imperative that this does not come at the expense of healthy ecosystems, which also underpin people's health and well-being.

We are seeing an encouraging growth in global awareness of nature-related issues. We hope to see this strengthen over the coming period, with governments and companies alike translating this into action on a range of issues such as with marine plastics. Among millennials and Generation Z (particularly in more economically developed countries) there is increasing concern about consumptive use of species, especially trophy hunting, and a growing move towards plant-based diets.

Across our portfolio we will be taking account of these significant trends and finding ways to respond to them. Moreover, FFI is working to make sure that 2019-2023 is a period during which governments strike a new deal for nature – notably in 2020, a watershed year for international environmental agreements. We will bring our partnerships, impact and experience to the fore in engaging with national and international policy processes to ensure that species and ecosystems are conserved and there is greater recognition that the interests of people and the needs of nature are intertwined and interdependent.



Flat lizard (*Platysaurus intermedius*), Chimanimani, Mozambique. Credit: Mille Kerr/FFI



## THE COMPETITIVE AND COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE OPERATE

FFI has a long and successful history of building effective partnerships with individual organisations, from large corporates and national government agencies to local NGOs around the world. FFI also has a great deal of experience building successful multi-stakeholder collaborations – such as the long-standing global Conservation Leadership Programme, and the International Gorilla Conservation Programme, which is achieving remarkable successes for mountain gorillas, whose population has tripled in size to more than a thousand individuals since our work first began more than 40 years ago.

More recently, FFI was a driving force behind, and founder member of, the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI), a unique collaboration between the University of Cambridge and leading internationally focused biodiversity conservation organisations based at a dedicated campus in Cambridge, UK.

CCI comprises the largest cluster of conservation organisations in the world, its members sharing ideas and working together to transform the way we tackle the global environmental crisis.

Yet international conservation is an increasingly crowded, competitive space. Notwithstanding many genuine and successful efforts to partner and collaborate with our conservation peers, the breadth of our remit means that there is often healthy competition for funding, staff and profile - not only with other large and medium-sized international NGOs but also with increasing numbers of smaller or more targeted global, regional or national organisations. Nevertheless, our strategy remains one of collaboration, prioritising activity in areas where local partners have requested FFI engagement, or where we can see a need that is not being addressed by other organisations and where we can have real impact.





# Our ambitions for 2019 – 2023





Focusing on where we want to be in five years' time, our ambitions for 2019-2023 emerge directly from the four strategic aims of the previous plan: conserving threatened species and habitats, empowering conservation leaders, shaping decisions to benefit biodiversity, and investing in FFI's effectiveness. These ambitions build on the essence of who we are and what we do well, motivated by a desire to achieve greater demonstrable and lasting impact.

Our ambitions are mutually supportive and intertwined, and achieving our conservation goals will require progress towards each of them.





# AMBITION ONE: THRIVING SPECIES

Since its inception in 1903, FFI has been concerned with the preservation of wild species. While we recognise the vital importance of protecting wild places in order for nature as a whole to thrive, many species require special attention. FFI's focus on priority species around the world, including some of the most threatened, has undeniably halted – and in many cases reversed – their decline. Often this has also helped to conserve the ecosystems in which they live and other species therein.

Species conservation will remain a pillar of our work. We believe that human-caused extinction can and should be avoided, and we will demonstrate this through a growing portfolio of successful species-focused projects.

Our long-term ambition is to ensure the recovery and persistence of key species, particularly those at risk of extinction. By 2023, we aim to have created the conditions for more than *100 priority focal species* to thrive, thereby reducing their risk of extinction.

## **Our species priorities over the course of this strategy will include:**

- Highly threatened species and subspecies, including those belonging to iconic groups such as great apes and other primates, rhinos, turtles, big cats and other large carnivores.
- Neglected species, both on land and in the water, including pollinators and small island endemics.
- Species threatened by illegal or unsustainable wildlife trade.
- Threatened plants, including trees, recognising that these are important species in their own right and not simply part of the wider ecosystem.

# AMBITION TWO: RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS

Area-based conservation, both terrestrial and marine, has always been a major pillar of our work, not only in terms of securing habitats for species, but also maintaining ecosystem health and mitigating climate change.

If we are to maintain the vital role that healthy ecosystems play in combating and adapting to climate change and ensure the resilience of nature in the face of this accelerating threat, and if we are to resolve competing demands for land and resources, then we need to ensure we have conservation areas that are bigger, better, and more effectively and fairly managed.

That, in turn, means working in the right places – across private, state- and community-managed areas, making sure these are sufficient to meet today's conservation needs and the challenges of future ecological, climatic, political and economic change.

Our long-term ambition is to ensure the recovery and persistence of healthy, resilient ecosystems in which both wildlife and people thrive and society benefits. By 2023, we aim to have improved the status, condition and resilience of at least *30 priority large-scale terrestrial and marine ecosystems*, thereby ensuring the survival of the many thousands of species within them.

*“FFI has selected its priority sites well, then stayed engaged and persevered over significant time periods in situations that have thrown up unexpected challenges as well as opportunities.” †*

## **Our ecosystem priorities over the course of this strategy will include:**

- Our existing major area-based initiatives, and any logical extensions to those in the countries and regions where we work.
- Neglected places, including karst landscapes, wildflower meadows, freshwater ecosystems and seagrass beds.
- Filling important gaps in existing protected area networks.
- Connecting conservation across boundaries (including privately and community-managed areas as well as transboundary initiatives).

# 3

## AMBITION THREE: LOCALLY LED CONSERVATION

The more organisations and individuals around the world that can be empowered to achieve their own conservation goals, the greater the chance of FFI's vision of locally driven conservation being realised. To this end, we champion local partners and conservation leaders across all of our work.

We support partner organisations over the long term, adapting the support we give to meet their changing needs over time and remaining in touch when they no longer need us on a daily basis.

Our long-term ambition is to enable a growing network of local organisations and conservation leaders who are conserving and restoring species and ecosystems effectively. By 2023, we aim to have enhanced the capability, resilience and impact of our principal local partner/s in each of our major area-based and species projects.

### **Our capacity-building priorities over the course of this strategy will include support for:**

- Long-standing local NGO partners who may not need our help for much longer, focusing on enabling their sustainability and impact.
- Other partners in the places where we work, including community groups and civil society organisations, companies and government bodies.
- Local communities as partners in area-based conservation work, ensuring that conservation initiatives respect human rights and promote social and gender equity.
- Building conservation leaders through the Conservation Leadership Programme and the Cambridge MPhil in Conservation Leadership.



# AMBITION FOUR: INFLUENCING OTHERS

The fate of species and ecosystems is influenced not only by those living closest to them, but also by the decisions of people further afield. Government policy and planning, corporate activity and consumer choice all have an effect, whether on the species or places that we prioritise or more broadly.

If we are to sustain the results of our work locally then the choices made by those

more distant must be supportive rather than contradictory. In essence, we need conservation champions everywhere.

Our long-term ambition is to make wildlife loss socially and politically unacceptable. By 2023, we aim to have influenced, positively, the decisions, policies and actions of those with a broader impact on the survival of species and ecosystems.

## **Our priorities for influencing others over the course of this strategy include:**

- Working with governments in the countries where we operate to strengthen the policy, regulatory and enforcement frameworks needed for successful species and ecosystem conservation, as a foundation for climate resilience and sustainable development.
- Engaging with big businesses and their investors, particularly those in the mining and energy, infrastructure development and food/agriculture sectors, whose footprints and supply chains affect the places where we work.
- Pushing for action on global issues, including putting nature at the heart of global decision-making on climate change and addressing specific challenges such as marine plastic pollution.



# AMBITION FIVE: INCREASING VISIBILITY

FFI has not invested heavily in external communication and, as a result, our public visibility is comparatively slight. Yet we have a strong reputation among those who know us. To grow our influence and impact, we need more people choosing to listen to us and more people choosing to support us. That in turn requires us to be more vocal about our achievements and bolder in our messaging, while still supporting and showcasing the work of our local partners.

Our long-term ambition is to be recognised by decision-makers and donors for our expertise, our approach and the results we achieve. By 2023, we aim to have increased our profile and visibility among key audiences in ways that help to increase our influence, income and impact while preserving our integrity.

**Our communications priorities over the course of this strategy will include:**

- Raising FFI's profile and reputation among high-net-worth & statutory donors.
- Boosting FFI's reputation among key decision-makers.
- Supporting unrestricted income growth while maintaining the credibility of FFI's brand.
- Ensuring FFI's communications are globally aligned and maximise the impact of programme communications activities.



# AMBITION SIX: INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

FFI currently employs almost 400 people around the world. They are our most valuable assets. Attracting, nurturing and retaining high-performing and motivated people, who are empowered to fulfil their potential, is key to achieving our mission. By ensuring our people strategy is integrated into (and fully enables) our organisational strategy, we will collectively achieve greater conservation impact.

Our long-term ambition is to sustain a motivated, talented, committed and secure workforce, collectively achieving greater conservation impact. By 2023, we aim to have implemented our new people strategy to support and enhance the capability, performance and wellbeing of our staff.

**Our priorities over the course of this strategy will be to continue to strengthen:**

- Development and promotion of FFI's global values to further promote a 'One FFI' culture.
- Transparent and fair recruitment and reward.
- Training, development and career progression.
- Equality and a safe, welcoming and inclusive working environment.
- People management.
- Improved employee well-being.
- Succession planning.
- Robust global HR compliance, management and administration.





# AMBITION SEVEN: SECURING THE RESOURCES WE NEED

Achieving greater impact requires greater resources. Our long-term ambition is to secure sufficient resources to deliver our mission and achieve our vision, scaling up our impact while retaining the feel and responsiveness that is characteristic of FFI.

Over the period of this strategy, we aim to have increased our income by 10% each year, achieving an annual turnover of over £30 million by 2023.

*“FFI appears to combine some of the best characteristics of being large – it has convening power and access to decision makers, at least on a moderate scale – with those of being small – being effective at local levels and operating flexibly and effectively with a relatively simple management structure... Our sense is that FFI could expand further while maintaining the dual gains from being both large and small. The results of this review suggest that an expanded FFI could achieve even greater impacts.” †*

## **Our fundraising priorities over the course of this strategy will include:**

- Increasing the share of unrestricted funds to at least 18% of total income.
- Steady growth in funding from individuals, trusts and foundations in key markets, particularly in the US and Europe.
- Sustainable growth in funding from statutory sources.
- Growing flexible in-house funding mechanisms like the Species Fund and Halcyon Land & Sea.
- Ensuring a timely and sufficient flow of resources to our major long-term projects.

# ACHIEVING GREATER, DEMONSTRABLE AND LASTING IMPACT

Achieving greater, demonstrable and lasting impact on the conservation of species and ecosystems and the people and organisations we support and influence is at the heart of our strategy and the foundation for our seven ambitions – but what does this mean and how do we get there?

## GREATER IMPACT

This means achieving more, both by ourselves and through others. We strive for bigger and better results because conservation impact worldwide is not yet sufficient to stem loss of species and ecosystems caused by human activities. Our ambitions are all about achieving greater impact. This requires four interconnected things:

- Investment (to be the best we can be).
- Growth (to enable us to do more).
- Visibility (to be more widely seen and recognised).
- Influence (to be more widely listened to).

## DEMONSTRABLE IMPACT

This means being able to show that results are being achieved, and that progress towards conservation goals is being made. This requires us to have clear goals for each of our projects and an understanding of what is needed to reach these goals, coupled with a clear plan and appropriate monitoring, evaluation and sharing of results and lessons. Our aspiration is that, by 2023, each of our major, longer-term initiatives that form the core of our portfolio will be demonstrating positive impact and progressing towards their long-term conservation goals.

## LASTING IMPACT

This means delivering results that will persist over the longer term. This requires us to have considered likely future shocks and trends that might affect our work, such as those brought on by climate change, and have identified ways to limit their effects or ensure adaptability to change. It also requires local ownership and partners that can operate independently of FFI into the future. It requires sustained and sustainable financing through enterprise and other means. Our aspiration is that, by 2023, all of our major projects will have sustainability plans. We will also have demonstrable examples of both partner independence and improved long-term conservation finance mechanisms.

*“The long-term financial sustainability of conservation programmes is an enduring challenge... In practice this means redoubling efforts to establish sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity-friendly businesses and private sector income generation mechanisms that support or at least are consistent with conservation. There are sufficient promising examples in [FFI’s portfolio] to demonstrate the value of increasing investments in this area.” †*

A photograph of a mangrove tree on Pate Island, Kenya. The tree is a Rhizophora species, characterized by its large, green, pointed leaves and a thick, woody trunk. It stands in shallow, calm water, which perfectly reflects the tree and the clear blue sky above. In the background, other mangrove trees are visible, creating a dense forest. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

# What does success look like in 2023?





**In 2023 we will be bigger and more impactful, with a steadily growing volume of resources invested in our conservation work.**

We aim for total consolidated global growth to average 10% per annum, up from the 6% per annum average growth during the previous planning period, resulting in at least £30 million annual income by 2023.

The majority of that will focus on a core portfolio of priority species-focused, site-based and thematic projects across our four target regions. In each of these we will be able to monitor progress towards clear, ambitious yet achievable conservation goals. Across our portfolio we will be working to conserve at least 100 priority\* focal species and at least 30 large-scale priority ecosystems.

We will have helped create a larger and more effective conservation constituency in the places we work and elsewhere. Thousands of women and men worldwide will be benefiting each year from conservation training and support, and putting that into practice.

Communities where we work, as local custodians of nature, will have more secure rights to sustainably manage and conserve their natural resources, while key in-country partner organisations for each major project across our portfolio will be demonstrating marked improvements in their capability and conservation achievements. For some of our long-standing partnerships, success will be illustrated by a reduced need for FFI support, in some cases – where lasting impact can be sustained by the partner without any further help from us – enabling FFI to step away.

We will have much greater influence over wider decision-making and actions by governments and commercial entities. In the countries where we operate, governments will be engaging with us more and requesting our input, leading to tangible examples of policy change (including in relation to protected areas, infrastructure development, agriculture and fisheries, marine plastics and illegal wildlife trade). We will have also driven complementary shifts in policy and behaviour on these issues within relevant business sectors internationally through our work.

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\* Those species where the main focus of the project in which they feature is species conservation. This can be for a particular population of the species, or in some cases, for the entire global population.

We will be as responsive and innovative as we are today. We will have supported that by growing the number and size of our flexible in-house funding mechanisms\* to a minimum of £6 million per year. At the same time, the proportion of our income that is unrestricted will have increased to at least 18%. Our unrestricted reserves will have continued to grow to provide resilience against financial volatility, unforeseen risks and sudden changes in funding. We will have maintained our agility in responding to external opportunities and will have sustained an evolving suite of innovative, experimental, smaller-scale and higher-risk initiatives within our portfolio alongside our longer-term, larger-scale projects.

We will have built a more efficient, effective, capable and fulfilled team to carry out our conservation mission. Our Cambridge-based workforce will remain at or near its current size, with modest growth in numbers of technical and operations staff deployed elsewhere across our four regions. Staff will benefit from improved access to training and professional development globally, and we will have developed fair and transparent reward and recruitment policies, and invested in orderly succession planning. Staff satisfaction (as measured by a globally distributed staff survey) will exceed 80%.

More people will be aware of FFI (and the value and uniqueness of the work we do) and will be engaging with us as a result. FFI's contribution will be consistently recognised alongside higher-profile organisations in external media and third-party communications. Our stories, opinions and thought leadership will be solicited and shared through multiple media outlets as well as both public and professional events. Our membership base will have grown five-fold to 10,000. Visibility and recognition in our target donor markets and requests for assistance, advice or collaboration from potential partners and influencers will both have risen significantly. Across all of our locations worldwide, our support and engagement will be inspiring an emerging generation to make their own contribution to a sustainable future.

\* Existing Halcyon, Arcadia Marine and Species funds complemented by at least one other focused on supporting in-country partner capacity.



Agama lizard on tree trunk in Chimanimani, Mozambique. Credit: Mille Ker/FFI



# Delivering the plan



## FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS

This strategy provides a framework to guide our efforts, ensuring that we remain focused but also adaptive and responsive to the rapidly changing context for biodiversity conservation globally. Annual work plans and budgets will be developed as usual throughout this plan period, shaped by this overarching strategy.

Our focus of growth will be on depth rather than breadth. Overall we expect the balance of effort to be geared towards consolidated, programmatic commitment in our existing geographies and priority themes (see page

31). This does not mean forfeiting our responsiveness and ability to flex, innovate or experiment. This agility, opportunism and creativity remains a core part of who we are. Where novel or exceptional opportunities arise, they will be assessed against a set of criteria within our existing project cycle process. Yet we do not want to stretch ourselves too thinly – it is important to retain the ability to evaluate opportunities and, where appropriate, choose not to engage.



## PRIORITY THEMES

To enable us to concentrate our efforts in delivering our ambitions, we have identified a number of priority themes on which we will be focusing over the course of this strategy.

### LEARNING & COLLABORATING:

We will invest more in pre-project research and planning (including the use of theories of change), and will monitor and evaluate our progress, learning and sharing knowledge from both successes and failures. We will invest in strategic collaborations within the conservation sector, notably as part of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, on topics including: endangered landscape restoration, natural capital and high-level political and economic engagement. We will also develop more cross-sector strategic alliances with those who have complementary expertise and networks. Where relevant, we will draw on new technological tools and innovation to support our work and that of our partners.

### WELL-BEING & SOCIAL EQUITY:

We will apply international human rights standards to our work to ensure that our pursuit of conservation goals also enhances human well-being. The maintenance of healthy ecosystems underpins the livelihoods and well-being of people living in or directly dependent upon those ecosystems. At the same time, secure tenure, meaningful participation in decision-making, and equitable sharing of the risks, costs and benefits of conservation, can enable more effective environmental stewardship.

We will future-proof our efforts in a range of ways to ensure lasting conservation impact, with a focus on:

### CAPACITY BUILDING:

We will enhance our work on institutional support and strengthening, particularly for our local NGO partners.

### SUSTAINABLE FINANCE:

We will build a broad platform of enterprise support including tourism, focus more on payments for ecosystem services (especially carbon-related) and explore innovative financing mechanisms such as bonds.

### CLIMATE CHANGE:

We will seek to (i) climate-proof our projects, choosing solutions that will ensure our results are sustained in the face of climate change, (ii) demonstrate the contribution that our conservation work makes to climate mitigation and adaptation, such as carbon sequestration, flood attenuation and (iii) take responsibility in minimising our organisational climate footprint, and encourage our partners to do the same, since tackling climate change requires everyone to act.

In addition, we will expand our work to tackle other major threats to nature:

### **EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE:**

We will engage with selected private-sector partners to ensure good business and operating practices and sound application of standards and safeguards, including active pursuit of ambitious decarbonising strategies. We will work to encourage far better performance on the part of the private sector on this issue.

### **UNSUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRACTICES:**

We will strengthen the sustainability of supply chains for key agricultural commodities and natural products (including cocoa, coffee and palm oil), work with partners to support nature-friendly agricultural practices (including those that foster soil health and pollinators), and enhance the well-being of local communities who are pursuing agricultural livelihoods.

### **ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE:**

We will focus on preventing illegal wildlife trade at source, strengthening legislation, enforcement and prosecution success, and influencing governments, consumers and corporations to take action on reducing unsustainable wildlife use.

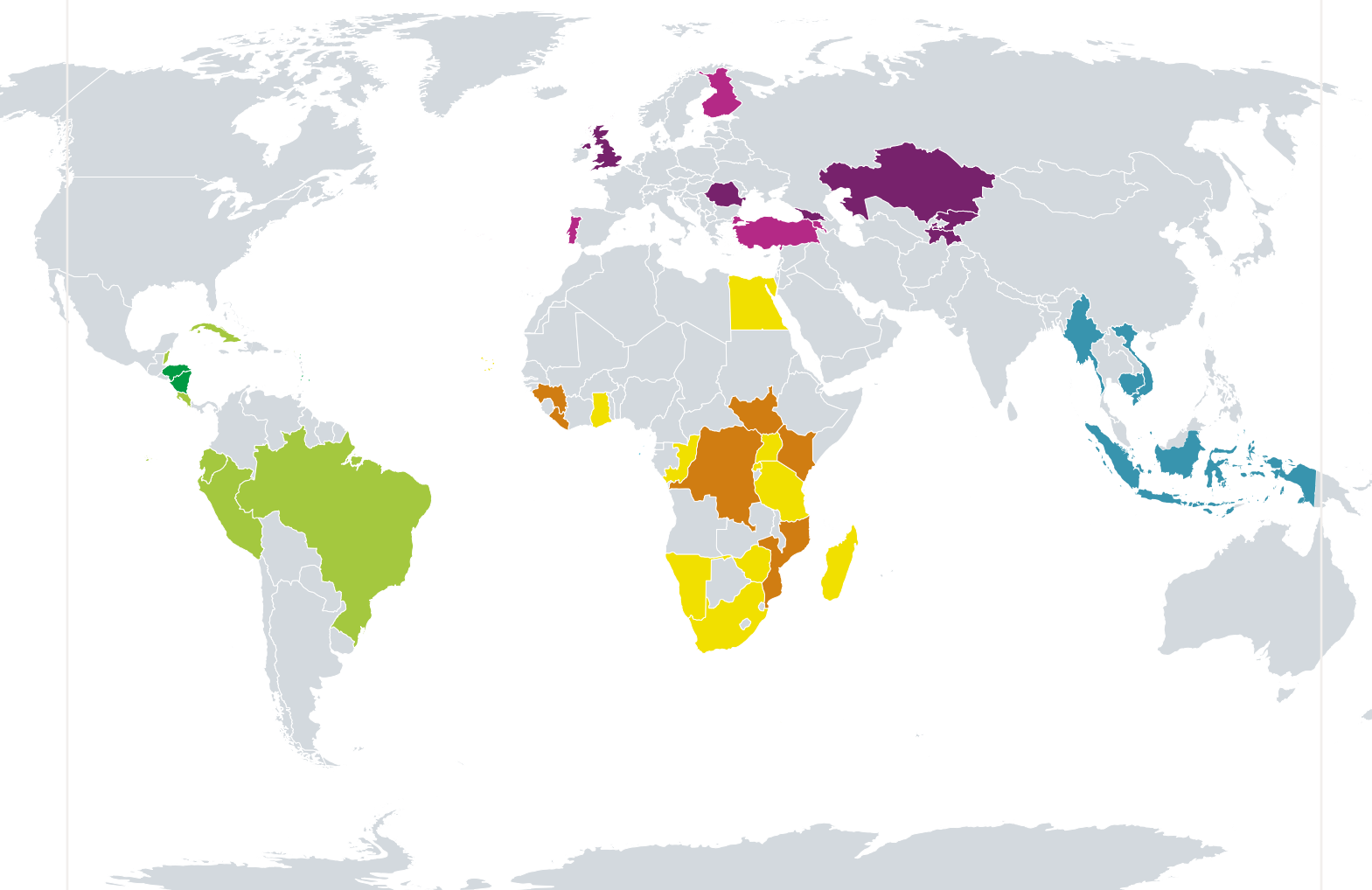
### **MARINE AND COASTAL THREATS:**

We will extend our successful work to tackle marine plastic pollution in the UK to other parts of the world, recognising the threat this poses to the marine environment across our portfolio. We will also look to consolidate our work to make inshore fisheries sustainable and minimise the destructive impacts of overfishing.



# KEY GEOGRAPHIES

While remaining responsive to emerging needs and opportunities, we will focus our consolidated growth and expansion in and around our existing geographical areas of activity. The following pages illustrate some of the places where we expect that focus to be.

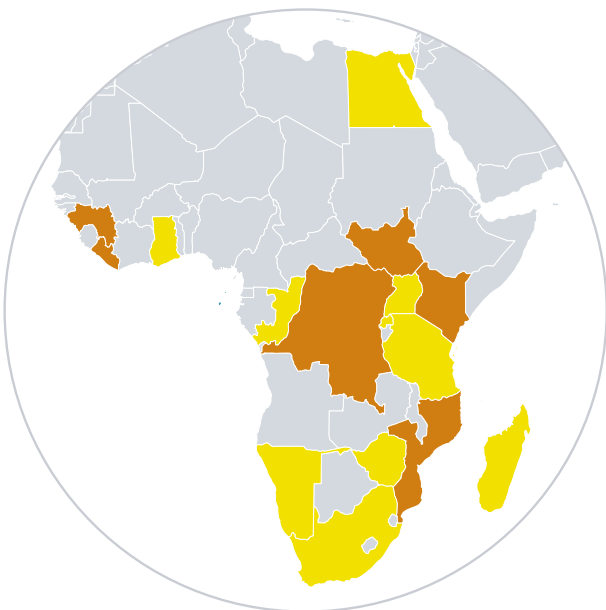


## ASIA-PACIFIC



- In Indonesia, we will continue to focus on forests in Sumatra, while extending our work eastwards to West Kalimantan, Sulawesi and West Papua. We will also expand our marine initiatives in Aceh and Raja Ampat.
- In Vietnam, primate landscapes will remain a priority, with additional attention on large or transboundary forests as well as habitat connectivity. We will also explore marine opportunities.
- In Myanmar, we will maintain our focus on major landscapes in the north (Indawgyi) and south (Tanintharyi, including coastal/archipelago and transboundary collaboration) alongside threatened primate landscapes and karst systems.
- In Cambodia, we will consolidate our work in the Cardamom Mountains and in important coastal and marine areas while exploring new opportunities elsewhere.

## AFRICA

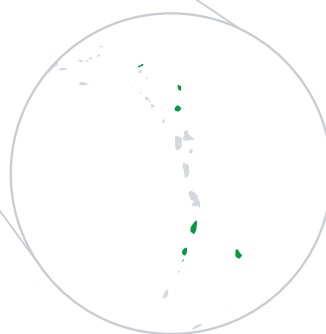


- In West Africa, we will broaden our remit within the Upper Guinean forest landscapes. Offshore meanwhile, we will continue to work in two archipelago nations: Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, where we will build on our marine management work (including iconic marine species and community fisheries) while exploring terrestrial opportunities to conserve highly diverse forests.
- In Central Africa, we will expand our focus on great ape landscapes in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on conservation support for protected areas in South Sudan.
- In East Africa, we will build on our long-standing work to conserve and connect large landscapes across private and community-based conservancies. We will also focus on black rhino recovery and on expanding East African coastal and marine initiatives.
- In Southern Africa, we will grow our work in Mozambique and explore relevant or connected opportunities elsewhere.

## AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN



- In Central America, we will continue to develop our existing programme in Nicaragua while exploring other opportunities elsewhere, particularly marine and coastal.
- In the eastern Caribbean, we will scale up our small island restoration and invasive species eradication work, and explore conservation opportunities on larger islands and in associated marine areas.



## EURASIA



- In Central Asia and the Caucasus, saiga antelope, sturgeon and threatened fruit-and-nut forests will remain key priorities for us, but our work will expand to incorporate other species affected by unsustainable trade as well as grassland management (including wild flower landscapes).
- In Eastern Europe, we will continue to focus on Romania's Carpathian Mountains, and on coastal and marine management, while exploring opportunities for wider landscape restoration and connectivity (including in karst landscapes).
- In the UK, we will maintain our support for community-based conservation in Scotland.



## SHAPING THE ORGANISATION: 'ONE FFI' GLOBALLY

This five-year strategy is the strategy for all of FFI, and delivering it requires the various parts of the organisation to work seamlessly together – none of it is the responsibility of one team alone. While different teams have different roles to play, each of our ambitions outlined in this plan will require collective, joined-up effort.

Within the context of a 'One FFI' approach – working together to create the change we aspire to achieve – we will retain the current programmatic structure on which FFI's success has been built. We will develop our staffing and partnership structure to align with our scope, shape and ambition. We intend to continue delivering our conservation activities through a mix of regional programmes and cross-cutting initiatives, working with and supported by dedicated operations, communications and fundraising teams.

Through our various teams, we will invest in FFI effectiveness, developing the skills, processes and policies we need to achieve our conservation aims by allowing us to access funds, meet the expectations of donors and regulators, manage risk, and safeguard FFI's assets and reputation.

Our people strategy is integral to our overall success and will ensure that we attract and retain high-performing and motivated people through transparent and fair recruitment and reward, improved employee wellbeing, and development and promotion of global values – all supported by robust global HR compliance and management.



Students preparing herbarium specimen, Chimanimani, Mozambique. Credit: Milie Kerr/FFI





# Monitoring progress





**On pages 27 and 28 we set out what success will look like in 2023, but how will we track progress?**

The answer is that the success of our overall portfolio will continue to be tracked by aggregating the progress made by individual projects towards meeting their conservation goals; this will be communicated through our annual Conservation Report. Project-level goals will be aligned with our overall FFI strategic ambitions through our rigorous project selection and approval process, and by challenging teams to demonstrate a clear link and logic between conservation activities within projects and their stated conservation outcome. Each year, projects will collect evidence of interim progress, to show that their project is on track along their defined impact pathways.

*“We were impressed by the relative sophistication of FFI’s project monitoring and performance reporting systems, mechanisms for institutional learning and commitment to the publication of conservation stories and lessons...we came away with an impression of an organisation that had invested sensibly and productively in adopting new operational and programme management systems that could provide a solid foundation for future expansion.” †*



Measures of success will vary from project to project; nevertheless, we will continue to review and enhance our ability to aggregate key measures used by project teams to track progress over time, especially those that reflect the ambitions of the wider organisation. Such measures will include some of the following:

1

**AMBITION ONE - THRIVING SPECIES:**

Evidence of threat reduction (such as reduced poaching mortality, reduced competition from invasive species), evidence that this leads to species stabilisation and recovery (as determined by indicators of population size, reproductive rate or increasing range) and that, in turn, this leads to longer-term reduced extinction risk.

2

**AMBITION TWO - RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS:**

Evidence of management in place, evidence of threat reduction and longer-term evidence of improved habitat quality, connectivity or restoration.

3

**AMBITION THREE - LOCALLY LED CONSERVATION:**

Measures of skills developed and applied, and organisational systems and governance improved, measures of independence (reduced need for FFI), evidence of increased effectiveness and implementation of improved biodiversity management.

4

**AMBITION FOUR - INFLUENCING OTHERS:**

Evidence that we are influencing policy, evidence that policies are being implemented and having an impact on the ground.

Organisationally, we will also develop means to track progress against our ambitions regarding our visibility, our people and our resources. These might include:

5

**AMBITION FIVE - INCREASING VISIBILITY:**

Measures including media mentions, third-party acknowledgements, references to our work and unsolicited requests and approaches, evidence of this leading to engagement with government, business and thought leaders, evidence of impact on decision-making and funding.

6

**AMBITION SIX - INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE:**

Measures including employee engagement survey results, turnover statistics, recruitment success.

7

**AMBITION SEVEN - SECURING THE RESOURCES WE NEED:**

Financial measures including annual revenue growth, proportion of unrestricted income, balance between statutory and philanthropic funding.



# Managing risks

## A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PORTFOLIO RISK

At FFI we take a pragmatic view of risk across our portfolio. We recognise that conservation is inherently risky. It can be challenging, uncertain and context-specific, with solutions often only found by trial and error. As an organisation we regularly find ourselves working in difficult situations and having to respond rapidly to local needs, including disasters or emergencies. We also believe strongly in the value of innovation. In such circumstances, the risk of failure can be relatively high. Rather than shy away from this, we prefer to accept a level of considered risk within our portfolio and to embrace both success and failure as learning opportunities.

This does not mean we will adopt a cavalier attitude to project risk or a high tolerance of failure. On the contrary; we expect our projects to be carefully planned and executed, with our

staff and partners learning and adapting as they progress. We will encourage the application and testing of new ideas and approaches wherever possible and we will work to ensure sufficient appetite for risk within our donor mix to enable us to continue to innovate and to respond even where success is far from certain.

The previous plan saw significant focus on operational risk management across FFI, with the development of new systems and processes and the establishment of key risk-management functions within the organisation. We will keep under review high-level strategic issues that could present obstacles to achieving our goals. In addition, operationally, we will focus on managing the following areas of risk, each with a coordinating focal point.

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## OPERATIONAL, HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY RISK

Some of the countries in which FFI operates conservation programmes are politically fragile, due to incipient or chronic internal conflicts, externally influenced instability, or recent emergence from long periods of conflict. Sustaining FFI's local presence and support to partners in these contexts can bring great rewards for biodiversity and local communities. However, the associated risks for FFI staff and partners need continuous monitoring and review. Similarly the risk of project failure is higher where governance and institutions are weak.

We will mitigate and manage the risks that our people and programmes face when working in, and travelling to, insecure and hazardous locations by means of robust health, safety and security protocols and procedures across our global operations. We will mitigate wider organisational risks by maintaining effective risk-management systems and ensuring appropriate global insurance cover.



## FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE RISK

Donor and statutory requirements are increasing in complexity. We will reduce legal and compliance risk throughout the organisation through our in-house financial and legal specialists working together with the conservation teams to put in place appropriate contracts and legal compliance measures, using templates and replicable processes to

enhance efficiency, and where appropriate using law as a positive tool for conservation. We will continue to strengthen FFI systems and processes and embed them globally, focusing on due diligence, fraud prevention and promoting best-practice financial management throughout the organisation.

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## IT RISK

We will continue to develop and harmonise our use of information and communications technology and strengthen the security of FFI's data globally and protect FFI against cyber-risks.

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## REPUTATIONAL RISK

FFI's excellent reputation is dependent on continuing to demonstrate significant conservation added value and integrity in everything we do, which requires all internal decision-making systems from programme design to monitoring and evaluation to be functioning well. Increased investment in sound governance and control processes within FFI is prudent, as is further investment in building financial reserves. We will strengthen our global monitoring, evaluation and learning systems to ensure that FFI conservation impacts are tracked and learning is fed back into effectively tackling threats.

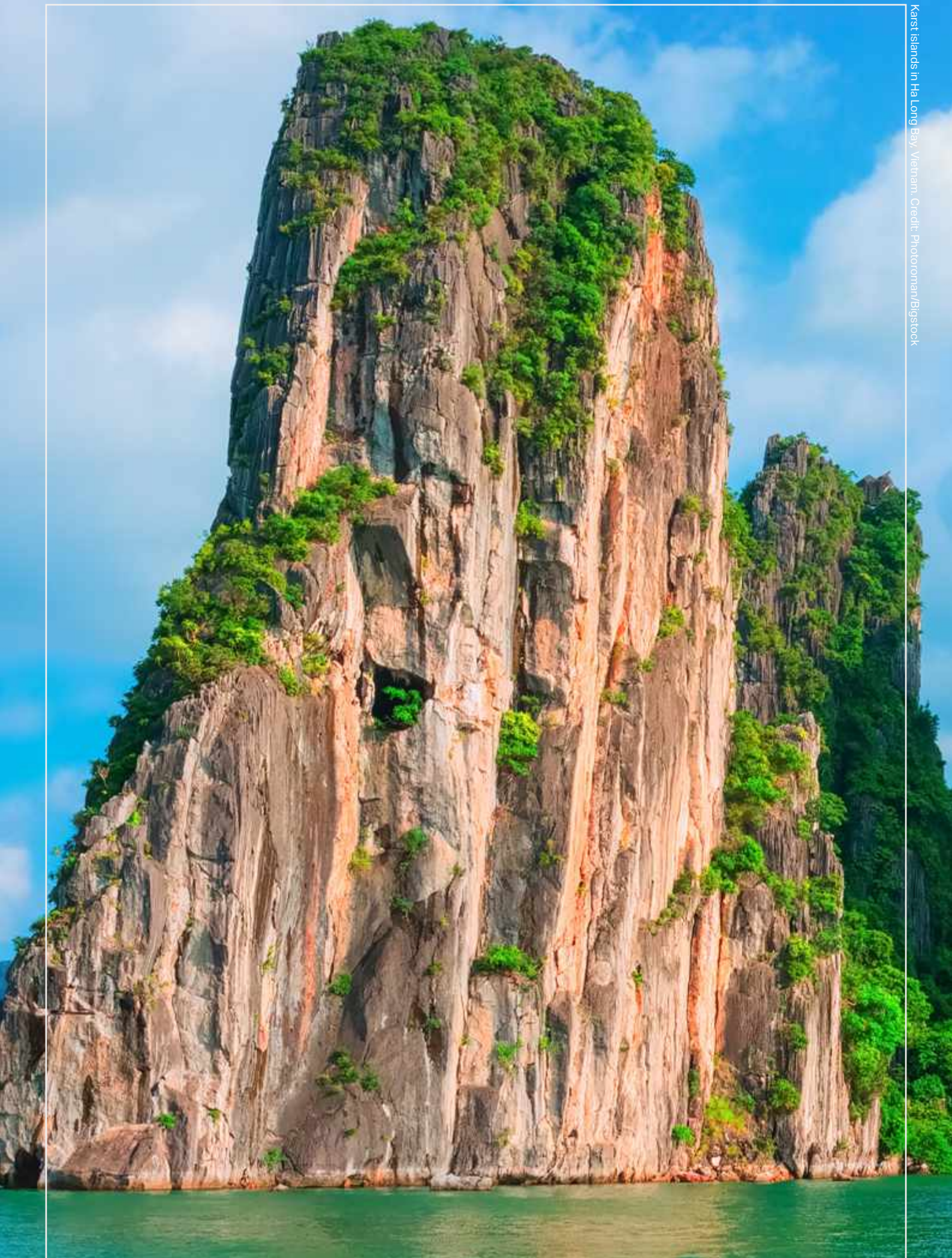
We will conduct robust due diligence of our institutional relationships, with a particular emphasis on careful selection of partners.

We will resource internal and external communications sufficiently to ensure internal cohesion and external recognition of the local and global value of our work and the rewards of effective partnerships with FFI.

We will continue to ensure transparency and clarity with regard to local stakeholder participation in and management of conservation. It will be important to apply sufficient time and skills in this arena, in order to establish viable and robust local frameworks.

We will also adopt a solid plan and processes to deal with the reputational risks associated with greater external profile and potential media interest. This will include enhanced training for relevant staff.







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