



# IMPACT REPORT **2020**

**CONSERVATION  
INTERNATIONAL**



# THANK YOU.

Your investment in conservation is an investment in  
keeping the world safe, resilient and healthy.  
From stopping climate change to preventing pandemics,  
nature is our most powerful ally.

As you read ahead, know that you are a part of  
**every one of these accomplishments.**



M. Sanjayan, Chief Executive Officer, Conservation International. © Georgina Goodwin

**Thank you for all you do. Our planet, our nature, our health, our future depend on you.**

If ever there were a year to recognize our dependence on nature, 2020 is it.

In these challenging times, we've adapted, and where possible we have seized emerging opportunities to advance our mission. As the pandemic emerged, we took precautions to protect our team, our partners and the local communities and Indigenous peoples with whom we work. Many of you helped us deliver emergency supplies and humanitarian aid to those in desperate need.

To avert the next pandemic, our scientists have shown that tropical forest conservation is one of the most cost-effective actions we can take. Up to 75 percent of new or emerging diseases are the result of encroachment into natural ecosystems. Healthy forests provide a necessary buffer between humans and disease, preventing future pandemics. And creating policies that support nature will help rural economies recover faster in the wake of this catastrophe.

Amidst the chaos, we seized the opportunity to raise our voice on behalf of people and nature.

We are now witnessing a response to our call for action: our corporate partners are announcing plans to reach zero emissions in our lifetimes. Governments and international institutions are showing new determination to decarbonize the world economy. Country leaders continue to turn to us for guidance on how to develop nature-based economies that provide for communities and protect nature. And, around the world, we are

seeing people advocate for justice and equity for the least protected amongst us, whose lives are often gravely impacted by the destruction of nature.

We've realigned our work to deliver on these opportunities by creating two new centers: a Center for Natural Climate Solutions and a Center for Sustainable Lands and Waters. Alongside the Betty and Gordon Moore Center for Science, the Center for Communities and Conservation and the Center for Oceans, we are poised to deliver on the most pressing challenges of our time.

I have no doubt that the decade ahead will determine our fate. The bad news is that 2020 did not turn out the way any of us hoped or expected.

The good news is that society is truly beginning to recognize what we have long known: saving nature is, ultimately, about saving ourselves.

And while we are never too late to do our part to save nature, for our own sakes, we cannot afford to wait any longer.

Thank you for being with us on this at times joyous, but difficult journey. We couldn't do it without you.

With gratitude,

  
Sanjayan



# Measuring Your Impact

This year, Conservation International extended our in-depth monitoring and evaluation pilot to all our projects. We measure benefits in carbon secured, people benefiting from our work, species impacted and hectares conserved. This sophisticated framework enables us to measure key annual impacts and progress towards our strategic goals, track program performance in every place we work, and make smarter, data-driven investment decisions that maximize our impact. You'll see the results of this work throughout this report.

## CARBON



Securing over  
**920 million metric tons**  
of irrecoverable carbon, with over 253 million metric tons coming from newly conserved areas.

## PEOPLE



More than  
**5.9 million people**  
are benefiting from nature as a result of CI's conservation actions.

## SPECIES



CI's implementation sites conserve habitat that is home to more than  
**1,700 threatened species.**

## HECTARES



Together with partners, CI supported the conservation and improved management of over 32.5 million terrestrial and coastal hectares, with over 4.5 million of those newly conserved this year and  
**more than 270,000 hectares under restoration.**

# PROTECTING NATURE TO STABILIZE **OUR CLIMATE**

Your support conserves forests that absorb and store critical carbon, building resilience to climate change impacts.



Chira Island, Costa Rica. © Conservation International/ photo by Fasdo Azofeifa

## Identifying Ecosystems with “Irrecoverable Carbon”

Conservation International scientists led a groundbreaking global study establishing that specific terrestrial ecosystems contain "irrecoverable carbon." Published in *Nature Climate Change*, the report identifies vast carbon stores that, if lost, cannot be recovered in our lifetime. We've mapped these ecosystems, which include peatlands, mangroves and primary forests. These maps will be used to guide our global advocacy efforts, as well as prioritize geographies that Conservation International will target for protection to secure 20 gigatons of irrecoverable carbon through policy measures and securing international investments.

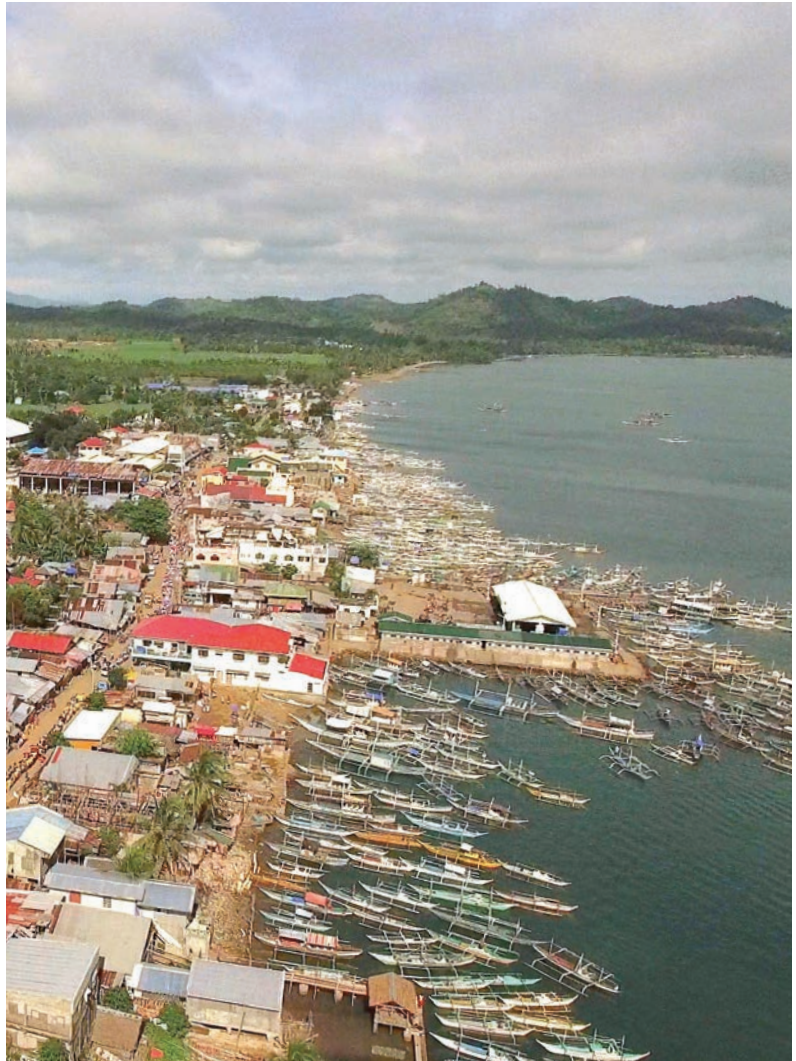
**POSITIONING OUR CARBON FUND TO CAPTURE GROWING CORPORATE DEMAND**

The carbon market saw a ten-fold increase in demand for private-sector investment in natural climate solutions, including companies seeking to offset their emissions, ranging from longtime partners like Disney to new ones such as Gucci. Since 2009, our Carbon Fund secured more than 10 million metric tons of carbon offsets in Conservation International projects in Peru, Colombia and Kenya, **resulting in over \$45 million raised for conservation efforts in these countries.**

This growth is expected to continue, and we are actively developing a strong pipeline of high-quality investable projects to meet demand.

**ADVANCING CLIMATE POLICIES**

Along with partners, Conservation International is supporting countries to include nature-based solutions in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to address climate change. In particular, **we are making tremendous gains working closely with the Liberian government to revise its NDCs** to include agriculture, forestry, fisheries and coastal sectors in addition to clean energy. The NDCs are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and determine how each country will take responsibility for helping to curb climate change.



Concepcion, Philippines. © Conservation International/photo by Tim Noviello

**PROTECTING COASTAL COMMUNITIES**

With Bechtel Engineering, we completed a pilot project in the Philippine city of Concepcion, devastated by Typhoon Haiyan in 2015. **Thanks to the partnership, Concepcion is now protected by mangrove forests, coral reefs and an ecologically friendly seawall.** Combining natural "green" ecosystems with conventional "gray" engineering approaches can generate more benefits and climate resilience for people and nature than either strategy applied alone. The French Facility for Global Environment generously supported this work.

# DRIVING OCEAN CONSERVATION ON AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE

Your investment in Conservation International will double the world's ocean area under protection while innovating sustainable marine fisheries.



*Wallis and Futuna, South Pacific. © robertharding / Alamy Stock Photo*

## Launching the Blue Nature Alliance: Key to Doubling the Amount of Protected Ocean

To protect the largest ecosystem on Earth, the ocean, we developed the Blue Nature Alliance with our partners at the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation, the Minderoo Foundation and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Vulcan is stepping in as a technology partner. Our current pipeline of prospective engagements covers more than 8 million square kilometers of ocean. With a total goal of 18 million square kilometers of effectively managed and protected ocean by 2025, we are proud of our strong start.



## SURFING TO PROTECT OUR OCEAN

Launched last year, this innovative partnership between Conservation International and Save The Waves Coalition is harnessing the surfing community's passion for the ocean and conservation. By the end of 2025, the partnership will **conserve over 10,000 square kilometers** of the world's most intact coral reefs, mangroves, coastlines and coastal forests surrounding high-quality surfing sites. In the first year, we helped to establish ten village-based surf protected areas in Indonesia and began the process to establish a larger protected area covering more than 500 square kilometers of coastline and 30 surf breaks there.



Costa Rica. © Esteban Delgado Photo



Abrolhos, Brazil. © Paul Nicklen

## ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN FISHERIES

Conservation International called attention to human rights abuses taking place at sea and in the processing of seafood around the world. We launched a think tank with the U.N.'s International Labor Organization, the Global Slavery Index and Global Fishing Watch to **research overfishing, human rights abuses and pathways to ending illegality in global fisheries**. We also led the development of the Monterey Framework for Socially Responsible Seafood, a protocol that now has over two dozen commitments from major seafood businesses. Conservation International, industry leaders and partner NGOs are piloting the Monterey Framework in eight seafood supply chains to protect workers globally.

# AMAZON FIRE UPDATE

Last August, as fires raged across the Brazilian Amazon, you responded. With your support, Conservation International and our many partners, such as Nia Tero:



Amapá, Brazil. © Daniel Kieling

Launched a \$25 million public-private partnership with the French government, Our Future Forests – Amazon Verde, to empower Indigenous Peoples and local communities to protect the Amazon rainforest they call home in Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname.



Brazil. © Conservation International/ photo by Inaé Brandão

Incorporated a new planting technique called *muvuca*, a less expensive process than current restoration techniques to restore 120 hectares in the critical Xingu River Basin, home to more than 25,000 Indigenous peoples from 18 ethnic groups.

Pará, Brazil. © Gustavo Basso/NurPhoto



Kayapo woman, Brazil. © Cristina Mittermeier

Supported four Indigenous peoples – the Kayapó, Yawanawa, Ashaninka and Yawalapiti – to implement their community “life plans,” holistic strategies to improve territorial governance while honoring traditions and our mission to protect nature for the benefit of all people.



© Leaflet | Powered by Esri | USGS, NOAA

Created and promoted a free app for forest managers to track and predict fires using NASA satellites.



Xingu National Park, Brazil. © Luana Luna

Prevented deforestation of new areas in the Amazon by working with state governments to promote climate-smart agriculture and drive expansion toward already degraded pasturelands.



Colombia. © Robin Moore/iLCP

Restored 468 hectares of forest and developed agroforestry systems for 621 hectares in the Colombian Amazon in collaboration with 1,538 families.

# PROTECTING PLACES FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

Because of you Conservation International is piloting self-sustaining, conservation-based economies in the most important ecosystems for people and nature.



Liberia. © Conservation International / Photo by Edward Massaquoi

## Moving Toward Sustainable Palm Oil in Liberia

Palm oil production is a boon for developing countries; producing it sustainably and preventing deforestation is our goal. Conservation International facilitated the launch of Liberia's National Oil Palm Steering Committee to unlock the potential of growing sustainable palm oil. The committee consists of the Minister of Finance, Minister of Agriculture and other senior officials. Conservation International is one of only three NGOs invited to join this influential body. This will scale Conservation International's work in Liberia where we have supported the sustainable production of palm oil on more than 310,000 hectares.

## ORPHANED ELEPHANTS REWILDED

In November 2019 and again in May 2020, orphaned elephants were reintroduced to the wild from the community-managed Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya. Since launching in 2017, **ten calves have now graduated from the Reteti Sanctuary** and returned to the wild, proving the Conservation International-sponsored Reteti model's success for rehabilitating orphaned elephants in Africa. This success would not have been possible without the enabling conditions that Conservation International and our partners have established across the northern Kenya landscape, including improved habitat, new ways for communities to benefit from the tourism generated by thriving wildlife and strengthened governance.



Kenya. © Vivian Jebet/NRT



Timor-Leste. © Cristina Mittermeier/sealegacy

**FEEDING A NEW NATION:  
PROTECTING MARINE AREAS IN  
TIMOR-LESTE**

With Conservation International’s support, the 12 marine protected areas of Timor-Leste’s Atauro Island were united into this new country’s first protected area network. In a region with the highest number of reef fish species in the world, Atauro’s local communities created the 1,308-hectare network — a powerful reflection of the citizens’ respect for nature and aspirations for nature-based development.

**IMPROVING LOCAL FISHERY,  
BRINGING RENEWABLE ENERGY TO  
THE COMMUNITY**

In northern Madagascar’s Ambodivahibe Marine Protected Area, Conservation International, with support from the MacArthur Foundation, brought in the renewable energy needed to support the sustainable fishery and local communities’ “green” jobs. With refrigeration, octopus production has increased tenfold in five years. Since the sustainable power plant came online, electricity is now available throughout the village, including the school, where kids have electricity for the first time.

**SURINAME PASSES ITS FIRST COMPREHENSIVE  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION**

With 93% of Suriname’s land cover being intact forest, their parliament passed a landmark Environmental Protection Law. In an eight-year effort, Conservation International supported the government to pass the law, **which mandates development projects to achieve zero net loss of biodiversity.**

The legislation also demands the use of Free Prior and Informed Consent for Indigenous and tribal communities, a Conservation International standard, and mandatory environmental impact assessments for all activities.



Ecuador. © Juan Reece

**PROTECTING COMMUNITIES IN THE EASTERN TROPICAL  
PACIFIC SEASCAPE**

With support from the Global Environment Facility and in partnership with WWF, we successfully concluded our mangrove conservation project along the Pacific coasts of Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador — a stretch of waters we call the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape. Mangroves provide habitat for the local crab and clam fisheries, store large amounts of carbon and buffer communities against storms and coastal erosion. **The \$1.9 million project supported nine communities across the region, reducing mangrove stress and degradation on more than 650,000 hectares.**

# DRIVING INNOVATION IN SCIENCE AND FINANCE

Your giving produces science-based evidence to protect our planet while working to make nature a smart investment.



*San José, Costa Rica. © Conservation International/ photo by Fasdo Azofeifa*

## Driving Financing for Mangrove Restoration

Conservation International has a proud history of pioneering financing mechanisms that pay for conservation. Our Restoration Insurance Service Company for Coastal Risk Reduction (RISCO) was recently selected as one of six finalists by the Global Innovation Lab for Climate Finance, a public-private partnership developed by the U.K., U.S. and Germany to drive private finance for climate mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.

One of 250 entries, RISCO invests in mangrove conservation and restoration by generating insurance-related revenue. Insurance premiums are reduced based upon the property damage risk reduction provided by healthy mangroves. Revenue is generated by the sale of blue carbon credits from the newly restored or protected mangroves.

### **WARNING: CLIMATE-INFLUENCED SHIFTS IN AGRICULTURE HAVE MAJOR CARBON EMISSIONS RISKS**

A Conservation International-led study published in PLOS One found that rising temperatures will drive large-scale geographic shifts in where food is grown, with significant implications for climate, water and biodiversity. By enabling agriculture at higher latitudes, this shift in the “agricultural frontier” could lead to **land conversion that releases 177 gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere** — equivalent to more than a century’s worth of U.S. carbon emissions.

### **COST-EFFECTIVE PANDEMIC PREVENTION**

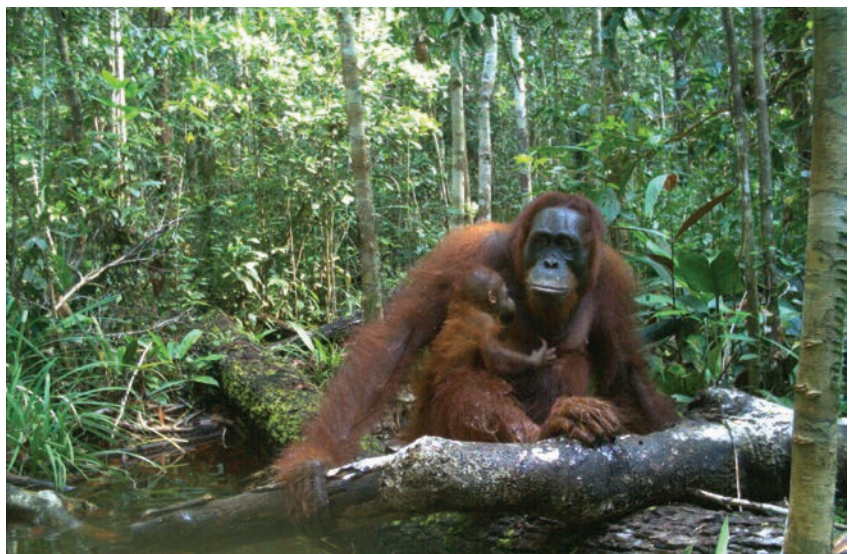
Conservation International scientists and collaborators published a study, “The Ecology and Economics of Pandemic Prevention,” in the journal *Science*, finding that **investing in nature conservation and reducing illegal wildlife contact and sales would cost just 2% of COVID-19’s economic damage while significantly reducing the chance of a future pandemic.** This seminal research provides a framework to guide smart and effective financial commitments for pandemic prevention through conservation.

### **TECHNOLOGY TO PROTECT WILDLIFE**

Camera-trap images are the backbone of much wildlife research. Wildlife Insights, our breakthrough image-sharing, AI-driven platform, has quickly mushroomed into one of the world’s largest “big data” frameworks, currently hosting and sharing 4.5 million images. Wildlife Insights was developed by Conservation International and our partners — including Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund, Yale University, Zoological Society of London, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Smithsonian Institution and Google.



Namibia. © Will Burrard-Lucas / WWF-US



Indonesia. © eMammal, Tuanan Mammal Survey Project



Homa Bay County, Kenya. © Courtesy of Victory Farms

## IMPROVING LIVES, PROTECTING NATURE THROUGH CI VENTURES

- In April, CI Ventures provided financing to Victory Farms, sub-Saharan Africa's fastest-growing sustainable fish farm. With our investment, the company will produce 20 million meals across Kenya this year — at a pivotal time, as imported fish sales were suspended due to the pandemic, highlighting the need for domestic food security. Low-carbon protein supply will be hugely important as Africa's population increases, reducing the need to further transform native ecosystems into pasture for livestock.
- CI Ventures recently funded a U.K. tech company, SafetyNet Technologies, that designs and builds light-emitting devices that enable fishers to significantly reduce bycatch, unwanted fish caught unintentionally. In pre-commercial testing, the company showed its devices reduced bycatch by up to 90% and increased fishing trip revenues by roughly 50%.
- We joined the Green Outcomes Fund, an innovative partnership of the South African government aiming to catalyze investment in sustainable, conservation-focused small- and medium-sized enterprises in South Africa. CI Ventures will make investments in companies that have strong job-creating potential, and get compensated at a pre-determined amount for each job created, enabling us to funnel these additional resources into more local jobs and more impact beyond our initial investment.

## FUNDING CONSERVATION: SEEDING INVESTMENT VEHICLES

As part of our goal to make conservation “investment grade,” we continue to provide seed capital to partners starting new conservation-focused investment funds. We’ve helped launch first-of-their-kind private funds, including those focused on REDD+ (Althelia Climate Fund), oceans (Sustainable Oceans Fund), green credit lines (Eco.business Fund) and others that have raised and deployed over \$250 million in private finance for conservation. **In just the past six months, we have extended working capital loans of \$300,000 to two innovative investment vehicles:**

1. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Finance & Technology Transfer Facility (CRAFT), the first private-sector climate resilience and adaptation investment fund.
2. Clarmondial's Food Securities Fund, focused on providing working capital in sustainable agriculture production in emerging markets.

By extending early financing to these initiatives, Conservation International is able to directly influence their design and environmental impact strategy, thereby achieving huge leverage for a relatively small investment.



# OUR BRAND IS OUR COMMUNITY

— YOU, OUR BOARD, THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, VOLUNTEER LEADERS, FELLOWS, PARTNERS, STAFF AND BEYOND.

Building advocates and motivating conservation behavior.



© Conservation International

## Earth Day Goes Virtual

For the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, we programmed 15 hours of live content for our first-ever Earth Day Instagram Live event. In light of worldwide stay-at-home orders, we quickly shifted plans, virtually convening scientists, celebrities, artists, experts and musicians worldwide to honor nature and support Conservation International. **More than 21,000 people – including many of you – tuned in to watch Conservation International experts and celebrity champions such as Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Lee Pace, Ami Vitale, Joshua Roman, In-Q, and Philippe and Ashlan Cousteau.** The week after Earth Day, the daily traffic to our website from Instagram was eight times the daily average from the previous three months.

### #SAVEOCEANS CAMPAIGN REACHES NEW AUDIENCES

Our #SaveOurOceans campaign with social media company TikTok encouraged users to post short videos on the importance of protecting our oceans. The campaign's nearly 400,000 posts well exceeded our goal of 50,000. **The effort brought in \$100,000 to help protect 3,000 square kilometers of ocean** and helped grow our social media community by more than 65,000 in just two weeks.

### LEADING THE FASHION PACT TO NATURE

A global coalition of companies in the fashion and textile industry — who have pledged to work together to address climate change, restore biodiversity and protect oceans — launched in August 2019 with **56 companies representing more than 250 brands** (equal to 35 percent of the fashion sector by volume). Conservation International was asked to lead the Fashion Pact's biodiversity target due to our expertise in helping extractives companies incorporate biodiversity into their decision making.



# THANK YOU.

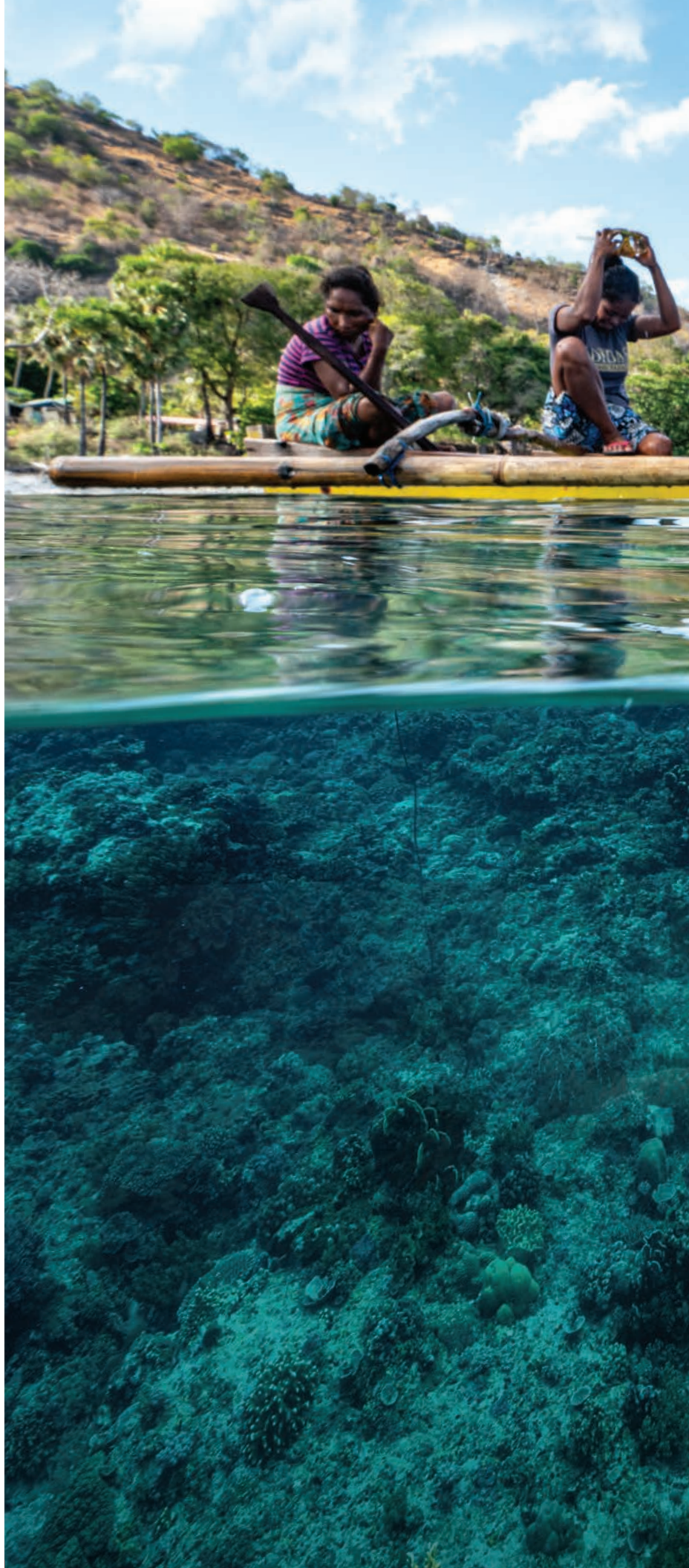
**Thank you for your loyalty, your encouragement and your support. You made 2020 a year in which, despite the tremendous challenges, Conservation International continued to deliver transformative change — demonstrating that human lives are improved when we protect nature.**

The need to act immediately has never been more evident. If we take bold steps now, we can create the future we need to thrive. Conservation International has the plan to create a greener, safer and more prosperous future.

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**When you stand with us, you give us the courage to always look ahead.**

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