

2022/2023

# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Rainforest  
Conservation  
Foundation

RAINFOREST  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION



# CONTENTS

**Chairman's Message**  
**Page 01**

**Climate Change: Why we need to work together**  
**Page 03**

**Carbon Reduction Targets: What you need to  
know**  
**Page 05**

**Looking Back over the Year: Our achievements**  
**Page 07**

**Looking To The Future**  
**Page 11**

**The Daintree: Why it's worth protecting**  
**Page 15**

**Financials**  
**Page 17**

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

**Anthony Gellert**

2023 so far has seen the World begin to accept what is fast becoming the "new normal" in changes to our climate worldwide.

According to NASA, the summer of 2023 was Earth's hottest since global records began in 1880. With debilitating temperatures throughout the Northern Hemisphere contributing to ocean storms, wildfires, flooding and droughts, these events are resulting in dire real-world consequences. And our Aussie Summer is yet to begin.

The devastation of these weather events continues to bring the impact of Climate Change and what can be done about it into everyday mainstream media and dinner-table conversations.

Positively, the global accounting framework, for publicly listed companies, to transparently account for their actions and claims towards achieving their Carbon Reduction targets, is becoming more rigid and enforceable.

This will undoubtedly lead to a significant investment of corporate dollars into practical and effective carbon offsetting activities. And it is in light of these changes and investments that the Board was delighted to welcome our newest member, Simon Pelletier in November 2022.

With more than 20 years of consulting experience, Simon's commercial acumen and active involvement in corporate Australia has resulted in the development of a broad range of skills and insights which are vital for RCF as we embark on a new focus to engage corporate Australia.

The challenge that lies ahead is to effectively articulate all the positive reasons for Corporate Australia (and beyond) to invest in the large-scale restoration projects that RCF is committed to delivering.

We are excited to be working with many key stakeholders to ensure the best possible outcomes can be delivered, with the best return for the investment being achieved.

There are many benefits to carbon offsetting and not just simply the planting and protection of native trees. Large scale reforestation projects, like those that RCF plans to deliver throughout the Wet Tropics region of FNQ, contribute vital far reaching additional core benefits, which include :

- Connectivity – by connecting the patchwork of existing National Parks and other protected areas, these projects will provide a Cassowary Corridor for all the unique wildlife that calls this region home.
- Ecological Added Benefits – beyond the safe-haven for the abundant, unique wildlife that lives within the region, this land also provides a natural protection for the World Heritage listed (and threatened) Great Barrier Reef.
- Community Added Benefits – paramount to any large-scale restoration of native lands, these benefits must flow to the communities that rely on this land. RCF understand, and have much to learn from, our Indigenous communities with regards to love and care for country. RCF is committed to ensuring that co-benefits to rightful Landowners are at the centre of any projects we undertake.

We're excited to be embarking on this new venture, partnering with Corporate Australia to help reduce carbon emissions and support large scale reforestation efforts throughout Far North Queensland.

RCF is committed to continue to work tirelessly to do what we can to restore, protect and preserve this unique and critical ecosystem that is the Daintree rainforest and all rainforests in Far North Queensland.

But we haven't done it alone. We are grateful for the support to date from the Australian Government (both Federal and State) and we welcome the opportunity to embrace Corporate Australia in our journey forward.

We also thank each and every one of our valued donors, volunteers and community supporters for your generous support and we pledge to continue working hard to achieve as much as possible to further conservation outcomes for the benefit of our planet and our future generations. Thank You!

**Anthony Gellert,**  
on behalf of the Board and  
Staff of Rainforest Conservation Foundation.

**November 2023**



## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Why we need to work together

There is no denying the impact climate change is having around the world. From devastating wildfires to destructive floods and droughts. Each year a climate record is broken somewhere and rarely in a good way.

In September 2023, NASA released the **Summer 2023 Record High Global Temperatures** report. Wherein data showed that the summer of 2023 was Earth's hottest since global records began back in 1880. June, July, and August combined were 0.23 degrees (Celsius) warmer than any other summer in NASA's record.

This undeniable change in global temperature contributed to the fatal wildfires in Canada and Hawaii, where 121 people lost their lives, the record heatwaves in South America, Japan, Europe and the US, and the increased rainfall in Italy, Greece, and Central Europe.

**NASA Administrator Bill Nelson explains "The impacts of climate change are a threat to our planet and future generations..."**



Australia is not to be forgotten, with our summer just around the corner, the Australian Institute Climate of the Nation 2023 report outlines the top three climate impacts of concerns for Australia, being droughts and flooding affecting crop production, an increase in bushfires and the extinction of animal and plant species.

However, there is still hope for a better future and Rainforest Conservation Foundation is committed to our mission which is to restore rainforests in Far North Queensland.

The impact rainforests have on our climate is paramount in the fight against climate change. Trees, plants, and other organisms that are found in rainforests, like the Daintree, absorb carbon from the atmosphere, through their leaves, stems, and roots and through their photosynthesis process, release oxygen back into the atmosphere.

Trees truly are the lungs of the Earth, and it is estimated that the **Daintree Rainforest absorbs more than 107,330,400 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> each and every year.**

This is why we must continue to work together to carry out large-scale reforestation projects. Restoring our precious rainforests back to their pristine condition and protecting them for future generations.

Together we can make changes now that will ensure the long-term protection of rainforests throughout the wet tropics region of Far North Queensland and curb the impact of climate change.

**“The impacts of climate change are a threat to our planet and future generations...”**

# CARBON REDUCTION TARGETS

## What you need to know

What are Carbon Reduction Targets and why are they so important? Great questions, let us explain.

Essentially, carbon reduction targets are goals set by governments, companies or even individuals to decrease the amount of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), that they release into the atmosphere.

These gases are responsible for global warming and climate change, which is wreaking havoc on our planet.

In a nutshell, a carbon reduction target is a commitment to reducing your carbon footprint.

Here are just a few reasons why we think Carbon Reduction Targets are important:

### Protecting the Environment

Climate change affects every element on Earth, from ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources.

By reducing carbon emissions, we help protect forests, oceans, and wildlife from the negative impacts of a changing climate.

### Fighting Climate Change

Greenhouse gases, like CO<sub>2</sub>, trap heat from the sun, which causes the Earth's temperature to rise.

This leads to more frequent and severe weather events, just like the ones seen around the world in 2023, events like storms, heatwaves, and floods.

By setting targets to reduce carbon emissions, we are taking action to slow down climate change.

### Economic Benefits

Transitioning to a low-carbon economy can create new jobs and industries, stimulate innovation, and reduce long-term economic risks associated with climate change.

### Improving Air Quality

Unfortunately, many of the activities that produce carbon emissions also release air pollutants that are harmful to the health of humans, flora and even fauna.

When we work to reduce carbon emissions, we often make the air cleaner and healthier to breathe.

### Sustainable Energy

Setting carbon reduction targets encourages the development of cleaner and more sustainable energy sources, such as wind, solar, and hydroelectric power.

These sources produce less carbon emissions compared to burning fossil fuels like coal and oil.

Carbon reduction targets play a key role in the fight against climate change, they help us address the ever-present dangers of climate change, protect the environment, improve our health and wellbeing, and contribute to a more sustainable future for generations to come. These targets are the first steps in a long journey toward a cleaner Planet.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation is excited to embark on new partnerships with Corporates around Australia to help them achieve their carbon reduction targets.

These partnerships will not only support the large-scale reforestation projects we are undertaking, but also provide organisations with real and practical methods to meet their carbon reduction targets.

If you would like to know more about this program, please reach out to us at [hello@rainforestconservationfoundation.org](mailto:hello@rainforestconservationfoundation.org)



## **LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEAR**

### **Our 2022/2023 achievements**

In addition to preparing for our large-scale reforestation projects and corporate partnerships, the team and Board have continued to work hard, fulfilling our conservation mission, to safeguard and preserve for posterity the critically endangered flora and fauna of our precious rainforests.

**Key milestones for 2022/2023 include:**

**Rebuilding one of  
our rainforest  
cabins which had  
been damaged by  
fire**

**Welcoming 307  
students as part of  
our Student  
Engagement  
Program**

**Propagating more  
than 7677  
seedlings**

**Commencing  
building of our  
second nursery**



# LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEAR

## Cabin rebuild

In 21 April 2021 our conservation headquarters in the Daintree was affected by a fire, and sadly, one of our onsite cabins was damaged.

Surrounded by natural rainforest, these cabins are tranquil spaces, where our visitors can use for short stays and connect with the rainforest.

But not to be discouraged, our team, and with the help of local volunteers, gathered and together rebuilt the damaged cabin, restoring it back to its former glory and it was officially reopened in November 2022..





# LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEAR

## Student Engagement Program

Our student engagement program is going from strength to strength with more young people visiting each year. So far, in 2023, we have had **307** students visit our conservation headquarters.

A **fully immersive program**, our student engagement program gives students the opportunity to get their hands dirty (literally) and contribute to our conservation efforts in and around the Daintree in real and practical ways.

Students help our resident Conservation Officer, Golly, collect seeds from the rainforest, repot seedlings and plant trees. All while learning about the rainforest, its importance and why we need to restore and protect it.





## LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEAR

### Seeding Update

Each year our Conservation Officer, Golly, works tirelessly sourcing, cultivating, and propagating seeds for native plants which are suitable for reforestation.

Reforestation of a rainforest is not just about planting trees, it's about planting the right type of trees. Trees that are conditioned for the environment, trees that can support other plant species and wildlife with food, shelter, and nutrients.

It's our seed cultivation process which sets Rainforest Conservation Foundation apart from other conservation organisations. We take the time to understand the land, the environment and the wildlife and ensure any trees planted are suitable for that region.

**Excitedly, we have successfully propagated more than 7677 seedlings throughout 2023 with more to come.**





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

### Building our second nursery

This year we put the call out to our amazing supporters to raise much needed funds which would go toward the building of a second nursery at our conservation headquarters, and we're excited to share news that building has commenced and we expect to have **our new nursery up and running early 2024!**

Each year we cultivate and **propagate more than 20,000 seedlings**. These seedlings are grown, nurtured, and hardened by the elements until they are ready to be relocated to their forever forest home.

With our new nursery, we will be able to **increase seed propagation to 40,000 seedlings starting in 2024.**

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to get regular updates on the progress of our nursery and seedling updates.





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

### Saving the Musa Jackeyi

Rainforest Conservation Foundation is partnering with the Cairns Botanical Garden to save threatened plant species.

Once considered a reasonably common species, the native banana palm *Musa Jackeyi* is close to being declared extinct in the wild.

Thankfully our Conservation Officer, Golly Watson, found a population of these endangered plants in the wild and has begun the slow process of propagating them in our nursery, sparking a species-specific conservation project in an effort to save these plants.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation will continue to provide these plants with a home while they grow and harden to the elements before they are shared with the Cairns Botanical Gardens, whereupon they will be able to continue propagation in their own nurseries.

The goal is to increase the genetic diversity of these plants in captive population and one day start to re-establish them in the wild.





## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

### Website redesign: watch this space...

We have been hard at work redesigning our website, making it more accessible and up to date with the latest information about Rainforest Conservation Foundation and the vital conservation work we are doing in the wet tropic regions of Far North Queensland.

We live in a digital age and a website acts as the virtual gateway for everything about Rainforest Conservation Foundation, our mission, and our achievements.

Our current website has served us well for many years; however, it has been in need of a revamp to capture the full scope of our conservation efforts and provide more information.

The transformation of our website has been on the focus of 5 key elements.

#### Enhanced Accessibility

The website will improve accessibility, ensuring that everyone can easily access and navigate our content.



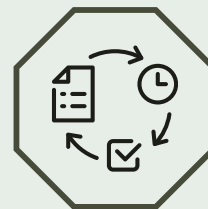
#### Transparency

We understand the importance of maintaining transparent communication. The updated website will feature comprehensive information about our mission, vision, and values, ensuring that our core principles are clear and readily available.



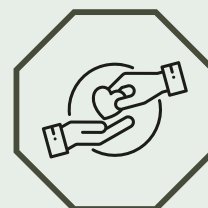
### Project Summaries

The new website will include detailed project summaries, showcasing our successes and the impact of our supporters' and volunteers' contributions.



### Streamlined Donation Process

We understand the significance of financial support for our mission. We are including new and exciting ways individuals, organisations and landowners can support the cause of Rainforest Conservation Foundation and further our efforts.



### Awareness and Educational Resources

Knowledge is key and our new website will evolve to include dynamic educational and awareness materials, offering valuable information about the importance of rainforest conservation, environmental challenges, and the role we can all play in making a difference.



Our new website will better reflect the full scope of our organisation and the ever-evolving landscape of rainforest conservation. There will be information available for all our stakeholders, including organisations, landowners, donors and volunteers.

The site will allow us to provide real-time updates on our projects, news and events, keeping everyone informed and engaged with our latest efforts.

The website upgrade is not just a technical enhancement, but rather a strategic step toward a more connected, and engaged community. It will help us reinforce our commitment to saving, restoring, and protecting rainforests and effectively communicate the importance of our mission.

# THE DAINTREE RAINFOREST

## Why it's worth protecting

The Daintree Rainforest is one of the most ancient and ecologically diverse rainforests in the world. It is home to an array of flora and fauna found nowhere else on Earth. The unique ecosystem encompasses an expansive range of habitats, including lush tropical rainforests, diverse wetlands and pristine coastal areas.

The richness and diversity of the Daintree and surrounding areas is crucial to the health of our planet and the well-being of humankind.

The significance of preserving and restoring this natural wonder cannot be overstated. Here's why we believe it's worth protecting:

### **Biodiversity Hotspot:**

The Daintree Rainforest is a UNESCO World Heritage-listed site and is renowned for its exceptional biodiversity. It is home to a vast array of plant and animal species, including rare and endangered ones. Protecting this habitat is crucial for the survival of these unique species.



### **Ecosystem Services:**

The Daintree ecosystem provides a wide range of ecosystem services, including clean air, fresh water, carbon sequestration, and soil stability. Preserving the Daintree helps maintain these vital services, benefiting both local and global environments.

### **Cultural Significance:**

The Daintree holds immense cultural significance for Indigenous communities, serving as a repository of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and spiritual connection. Protecting the rainforest is vital for maintaining these cultural legacies.

**Climate Resilience:**

The preservation of the Daintree Rainforest aids in climate resilience by acting as a carbon sink and preserving natural processes that regulate climate patterns. Healthy ecosystems contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

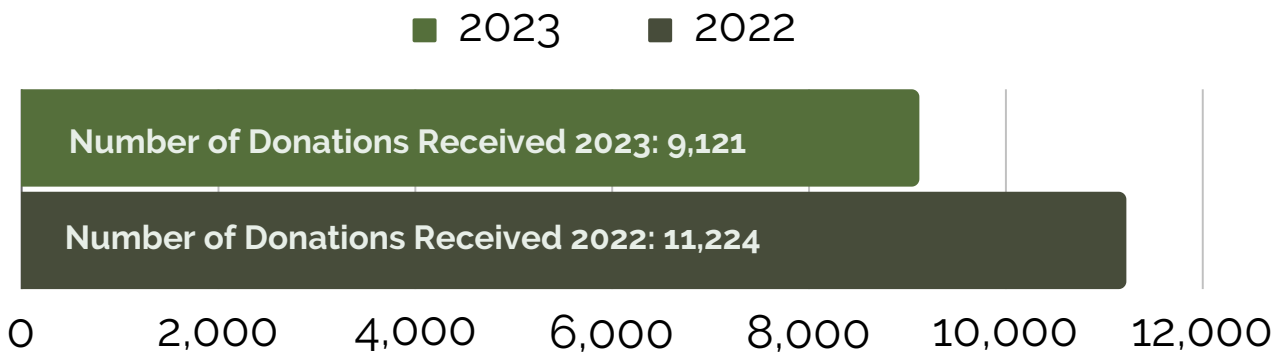
Rainforest Conservation Foundation believes that by safeguarding and restoring the Daintree Rainforest and the surrounding regions, we are not only protecting a world treasure of biodiversity but also ensuring a healthier planet for future generations.



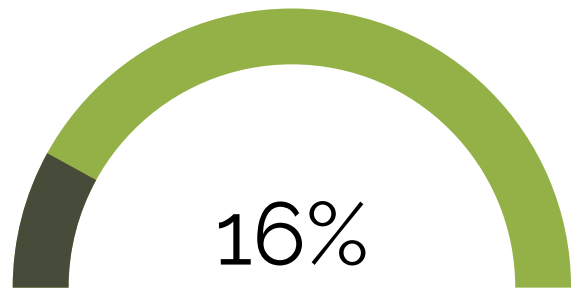
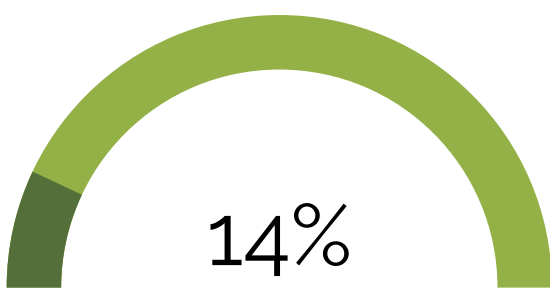
# FINANCIALS

## 2022/2023

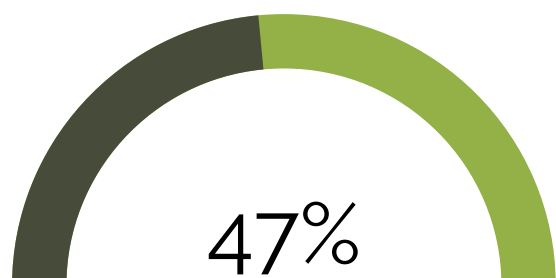
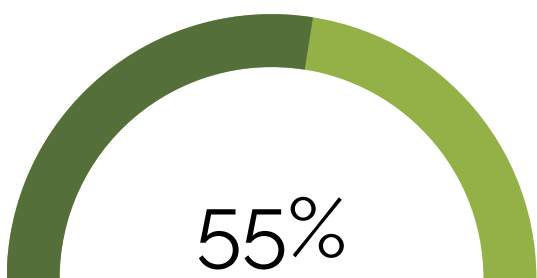
### No. Donations Received At a Glance



### Cost of Fundraising %



### Funds Spent on Conservation %





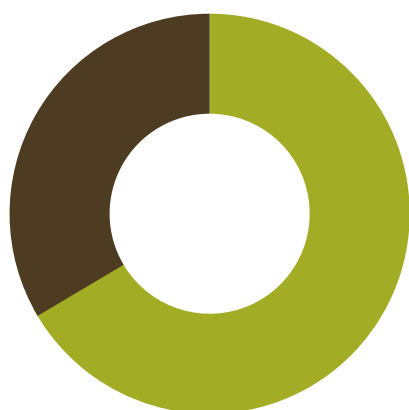
With the help of our amazing donors and supporters, Rainforest Conservation Foundation has continued to invest into conservation programs in the wet tropics regions of Far North Queensland.

## Conservation Program Expenditure



- Benella Rainforest Reserve Education Centre: \$56,196
- Tree propagation and planting: \$82,813
- Creating a Cassowary Corridor: \$38,974
- Community Education: \$193,111

## Administration/Fundraising Expenditure



- Administration Expenditure
- Fundraising Expenditure

## Gross Income From Fundraising Appeals

Supporters	\$33,923
Fundraising Agency	\$622,821
Major Gifts	\$0.00
Corporate Fundraising	\$20,961
<b>Total Gross Proceeds from Fundraising Appeals</b>	<b>\$677,705</b>
Other Income	\$508
<b>Total Charitable Income and Fundraising</b>	<b>\$678,213</b>

RAINFOREST  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION

**Thank you for your ongoing  
support of our conservation  
programs throughout  
2022/2023**



**Rainforest Conservation Foundation**

PO BOX 201

West Burleigh QLD 4219

1300 590835

[www.rainforestconservationfoundation.org](http://www.rainforestconservationfoundation.org)

[hello@rainforestconservationfoundation.org](mailto:hello@rainforestconservationfoundation.org)