

UNLEASHING THE POWERFUL CLIMATE BENEFITS OF INTACT FORESTS

OUR VISION: END ALL INTACT FOREST LOSS BY 2030.

Intact forests play a crucial role in protecting biodiversity, sustaining human communities, and regulating climate. In fact, preserving our planet's last unbroken swaths of healthy, intact forest is one of the most powerful and cost-effective solutions we have to combat the global challenge of climate change. Nature-based solutions, including the conservation of intact forests, can provide 30-50 percent of the action needed by 2050 to keep global temperature rise below 2°C—a critical complement to other climate solutions that focus on electricity and heat production, transportation, and industry.



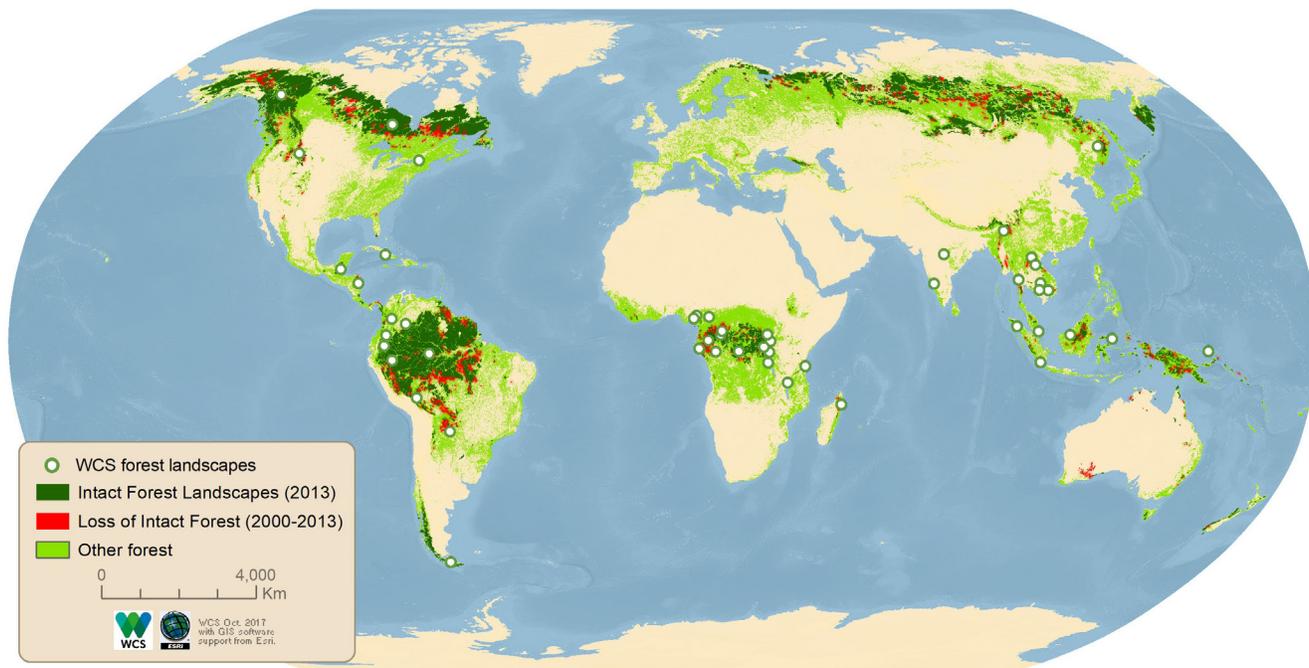
In addition to their role in the carbon cycle, forests writ large—both intact and degraded—provide other critical benefits. They are biodiversity strongholds for two-thirds of all land-based plants and animals—and there may be a link between biodiversity and climate as well, as it appears that mammal-rich forests are more effective at storing carbon. Forests also provide vital water supplies and erosion control, and support the livelihoods of 1.6 billion people, including indigenous peoples. Indigenous people, in turn, protect the forests: deforestation rates in the Amazon are five times greater outside indigenous peoples' territories and conservation units.

THE CHALLENGE: Intact forests are disappearing at twice the rate of forests overall—and global climate commitments have so far failed to recognize the important contribution of intact forests. There are currently no global targets, strategies, or dedicated finance that provide incentives to preserve intact forests. At the national level, countries lack policy and regulatory frameworks that encourage protection of intact forests. And at the forest level, successful conservation efforts are not scaling adequately to meet threats, including industrial logging, agricultural expansion, and infrastructure development. If the destruction continues at this pace, half of what currently remains will be gone by 2100.

WHY WCS? WCS has protected the planet's most critical natural strongholds for over a century, leading with an effective science-driven model that is shaped and championed by communities. WCS is leading the charge to protect forest resources in five landscapes across the Western Amazon and Andes. The success of our community-led model is clear: WCS support to Bolivian national parks and to the Tacana indigenous people resulted in a 94 percent reduction in deforestation between 2005 and 2014. In Bolivia's Greater Madidi Landscape, WCS's scientific guidance, training, and technical assistance helped secure legal tenure over this extensive indigenous land, shaping the management of 1,503 square miles of wild lands. Within this indigenous land, we have supported more than 20 enterprises in managing and marketing natural forest resources.

¹Potapov, P. et al. (2017). The last frontiers of wilderness: Tracking loss of intact forest landscapes from 2000 to 2013. *Science Advances* 2017;3: e1600821

Five Great Forests Intact Forests Worldwide



Largest Intact Forest Landscapes, Ranked by Country

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Brazil ✓ | 5. Peru ✓ | 9. Venezuela |
| 2. Russia ✓ | 6. United States ✓ | 10. Bolivia ✓ |
| 3. Canada ✓ | 7. Indonesia ✓ | |
| 4. Democratic Republic of the Congo ✓ | 8. Colombia ✓ | |

✓ indicates WCS presence

WCS works in 9 of 10 countries with the largest area of intact forest, comprising 84% of the global total.

OUR STRATEGY: WCS seeks to lead the way toward ending all loss of intact forest by 2030. We aim to: (1) strengthen the scientific case for intact forests; (2) build, promote, and win consensus for global policy commitments for valuing and conserving intact forests; and (3) scale up intact forest conservation globally—assisting national governments in securing new protection for the world’s remaining 10 million square kilometers of intact forest.

We are tackling this challenge from a strong foundation: WCS works in 9 of the 10 countries with the greatest geographic coverage of intact forests, and we have close relationships with national governments and other partners. The 36 priority landscapes where we focus our field conservation efforts cover 1.88 million square kilometers of intact forest and hold 74 billion tons of CO₂, equal to nearly two years of global emissions.

Reversing the current trajectory of decline and unlocking the carbon value of intact forests on a global scale is a critical piece of the climate change puzzle.



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