

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Building the next generation of global conservation leaders











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# EXECUTIVE MANAGER'S MESSAGE

This year we have a lot to celebrate and look forward to as we reflect back on everything that has been achieved.

At the same time, we prepare for a year of transition, from sourcing new donors and collaborators to embedding new staff members into the programme, allowing us to take CLP to the next stage in its development.

One of my personal highlights of 2023 was the Conservation Management and Leadership course in Mexico, where I was able to spend time with our current awardees and learn more about their ambitions and vision for conservation in their countries. I am delighted to see the diversity of project activities arising from our 2023 Team Awards, ranging from engaging stakeholders in the conservation of the Javan slow loris in Indonesia, to protecting key grassland habitats for endangered birds in Kenya, to fostering local community action to save a threatened endemic lizard in Argentina.

We brought 16 CLP alumni together at the International Congress for Conservation Biology 2023 in Rwanda, which was another stand out moment for myself and the team. Our alumni brought their experiences and knowledge from nine different countries to share and develop as conservation leaders. Seeing them take part in training, networking and relationship building was remarkable and will no doubt result in increased collaboration and conservation impact.

The Learning Exchange between two CLP alumni, Mauro Lucherini (Argentina) and Paola Nogales Ascarrunz (Bolivia), was also another personal highlight from 2023. Bringing these wildcat conservationists together has resulted in the sharing of new skills in specialist techniques including radiotelemetry

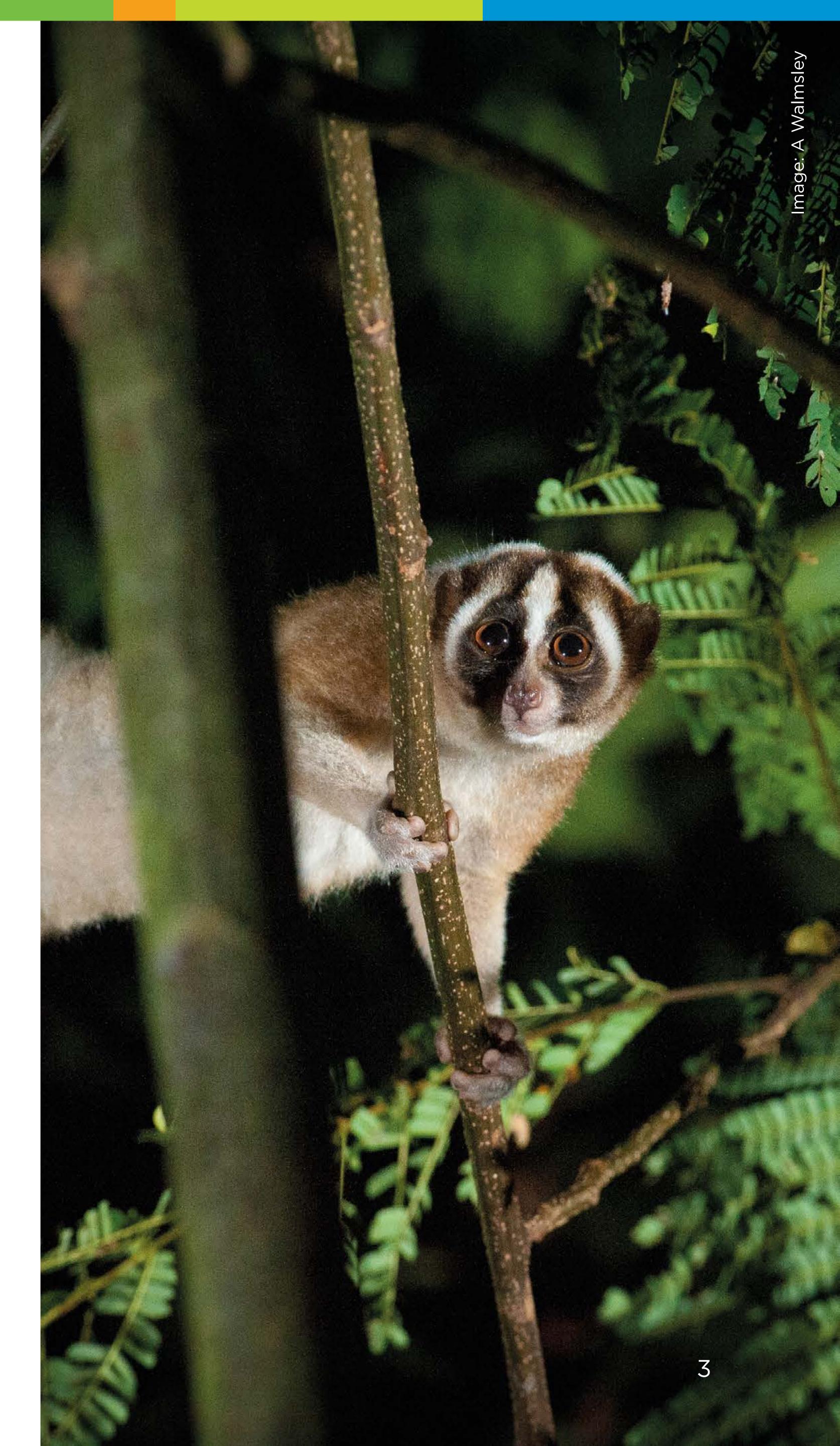
and camera-trapping, and forged new connections between wildcat conservation groups and specialists across South America. I'm excited to see how Paola applies her new skills and network to reduce human-wildcat conflict in Bolivia going forward.

With our new programmatic strategy and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework in place we look forward to another successful year delivering CLP's objectives. We will be implementing an improved methodology to measure our impact on both global biodiversity and the career development of CLP alumni.

We are grateful to our donors, the March Conservation Fund and Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin – for generously supporting our successful partnership and for helping on-the-ground conservationists around the world achieve tangible, long-lasting change for irreplaceable nature. Their commitment to conservation provides a legacy that I have no doubt will impact and inspire many generations to come.

OLIVIA COUCHMAN

CLP Executive Manager





# WHO WE ARE

The Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) is a partnership of three world-renowned conservation organisations – BirdLife International, Fauna & Flora and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) – working to identify, support and develop conservation leaders worldwide.

Established in 1985, CLP is the longest running conservation training programme. It remains the sole programme offering a combination of **funding, training, mentorship** and **continuous alumni support** to early career conservationists with a vast global network and proven record of success.

## Our vision

CLP envisions a world driven by diverse and capable conservation leaders with the experience and skills to address the urgent and complex challenges facing our planet.

## Our mission

To equip early career conservationists with essential leadership skills, support and resources needed to conserve biodiversity and promote sustainable development locally but at a global scale.

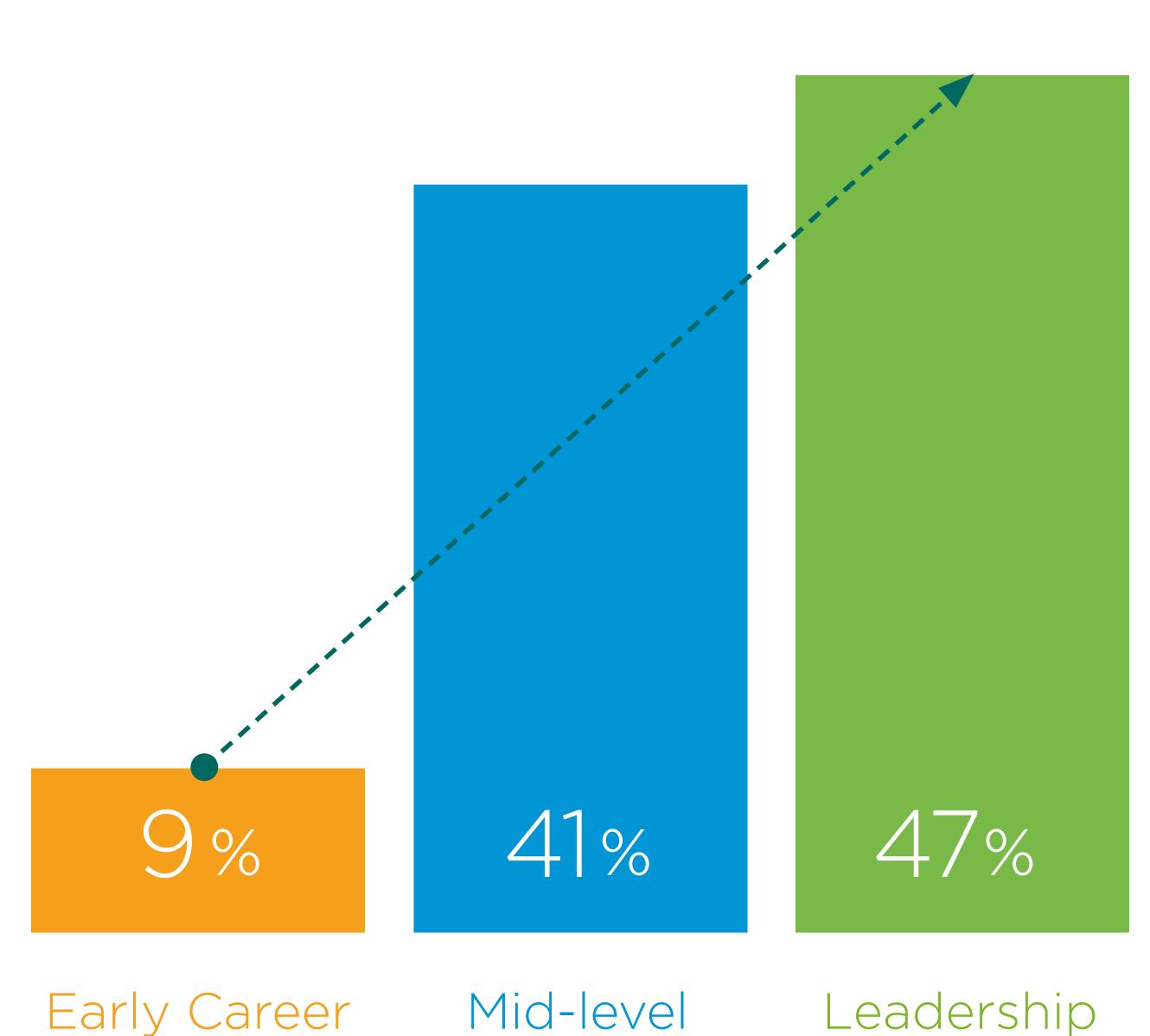
# Our values

At CLP, we act with integrity to foster a collaborative and inclusive global community to nurture and support the next generation of innovative conservation leaders capable of driving sustainable positive impact.

# OURIMPACT

Since 1985, CLP has kickstarted the careers of approximately 4,400 individuals representing nearly 110 nationalities, who are early in their conservation career and are aiming to address global conservation priorities at a local level.

#### ALUMNI CAREER PROGRESSION



#### Early Career

Alumni have remained in early career positions 10 years following their selection by CLP.

#### Mid-level

Alumni have

established

themselves

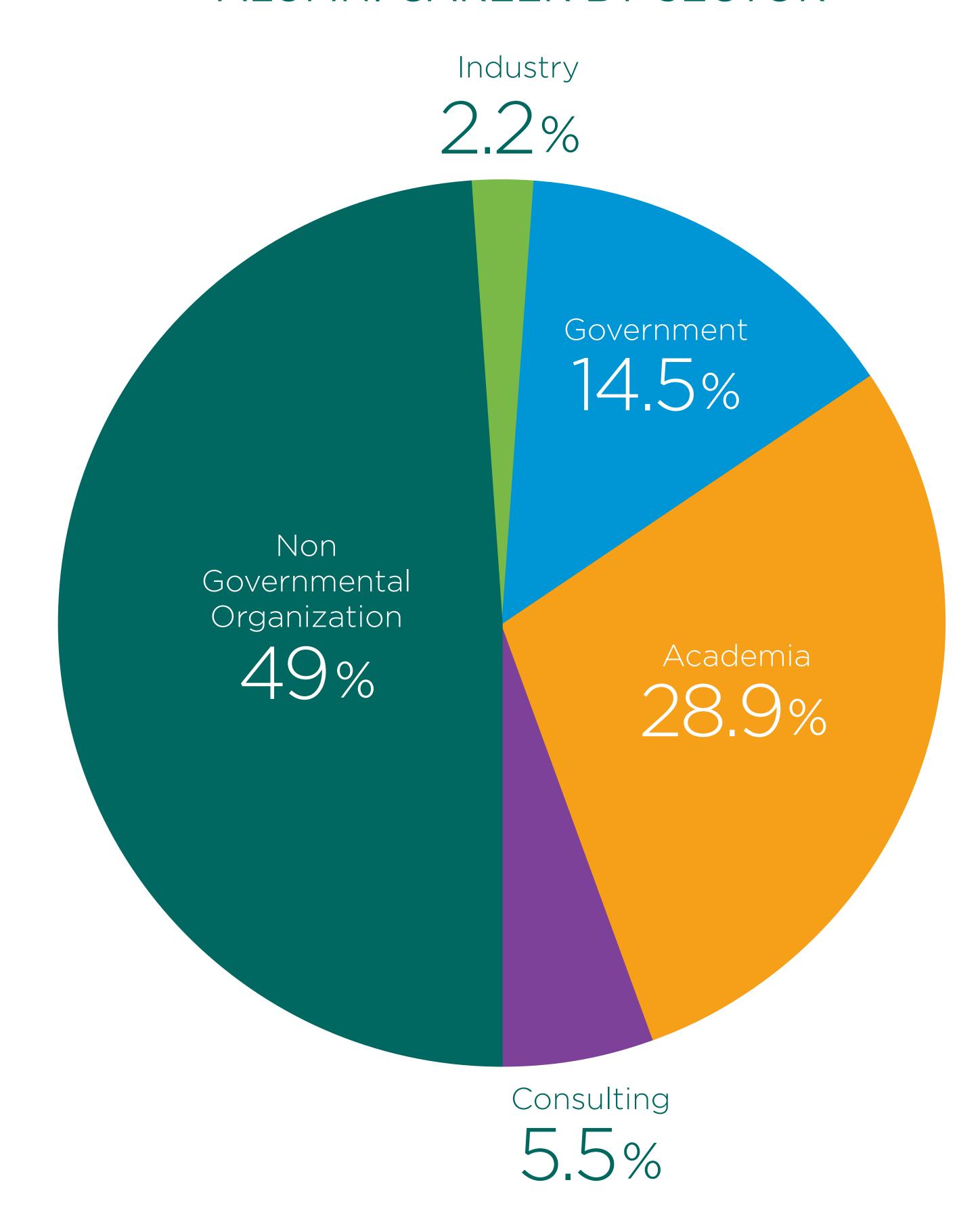
in mid-level

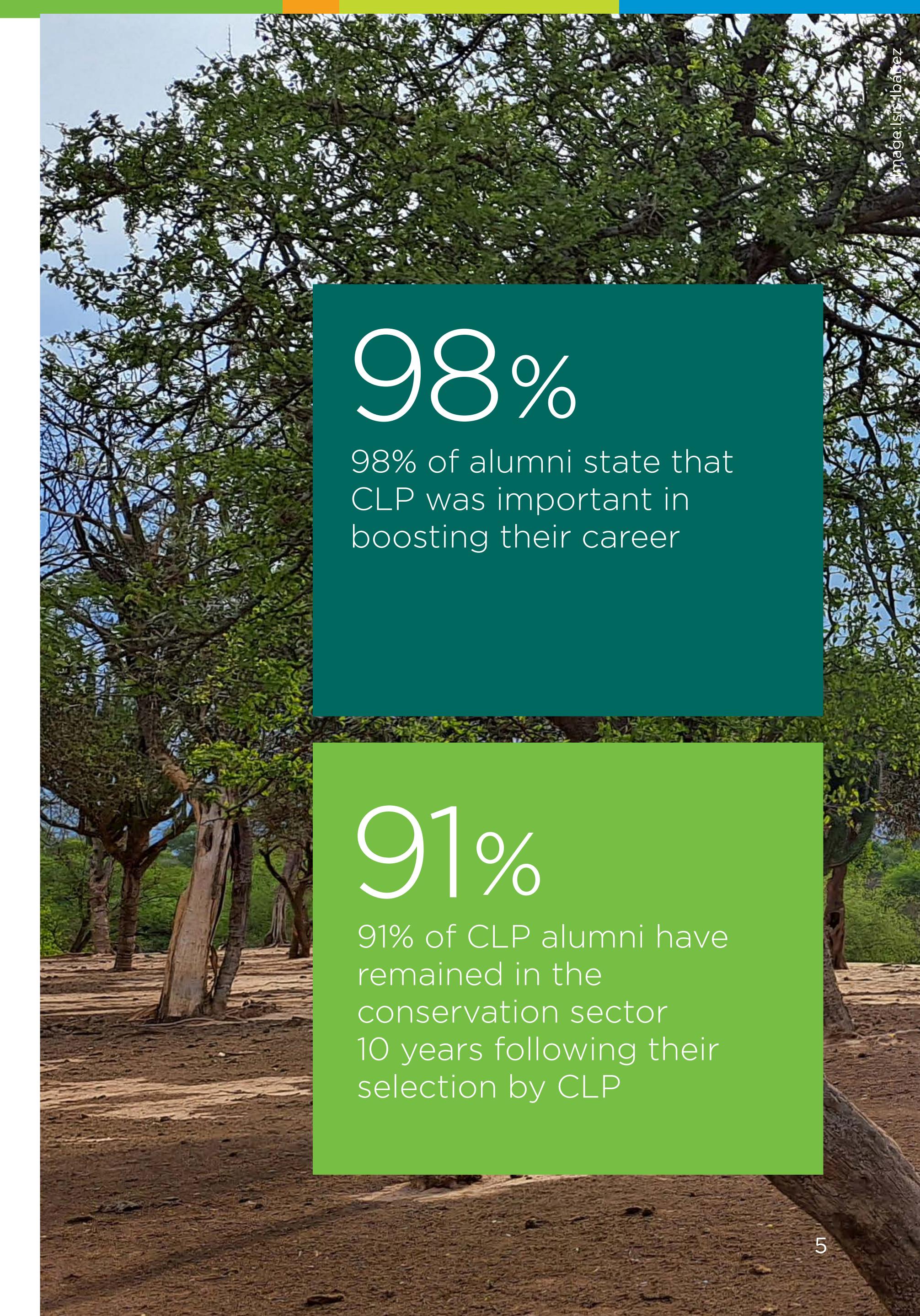
positions 10

by CLP

Alumni have established themselves in leadership positions 10 years following years following their selection their selection by CLP

#### ALUMNI CAREER BY SECTOR





"CLP is one of the most important conservation partnerships in the world."

Alberto Campos
Three-time CLP Winner





Created 75 new protected areas

126
Established 126
new NGOs





Discovered or rediscovered 130 species

# FLIGHT TO SUCCESS: PURNIMA DEVI BARMAN

Purnima Devi Barman gained prominence for protecting the endangered greater adjutant stork in Assam, India with early-career support from CLP.

Purnima has made a huge impact on conservation. Her efforts include catalysing a movement of tens of thousands of women to raise awareness, change perceptions and engage local people in the preservation of the greater adjutant stork and its habitat.

Once persecuted, the species has now become a proud emblem for the people of Assam, with its numbers quadrupling in the region since Purnima began her work.

Purnima is also challenging gender stereotypes as a prominent female conservation leader in India.

"CLP nurtures conservationists during the early stages of their career to the point where their work is achieving real impact on the ground and recognition at a national and international level."

**Purnima Devi Barman** 

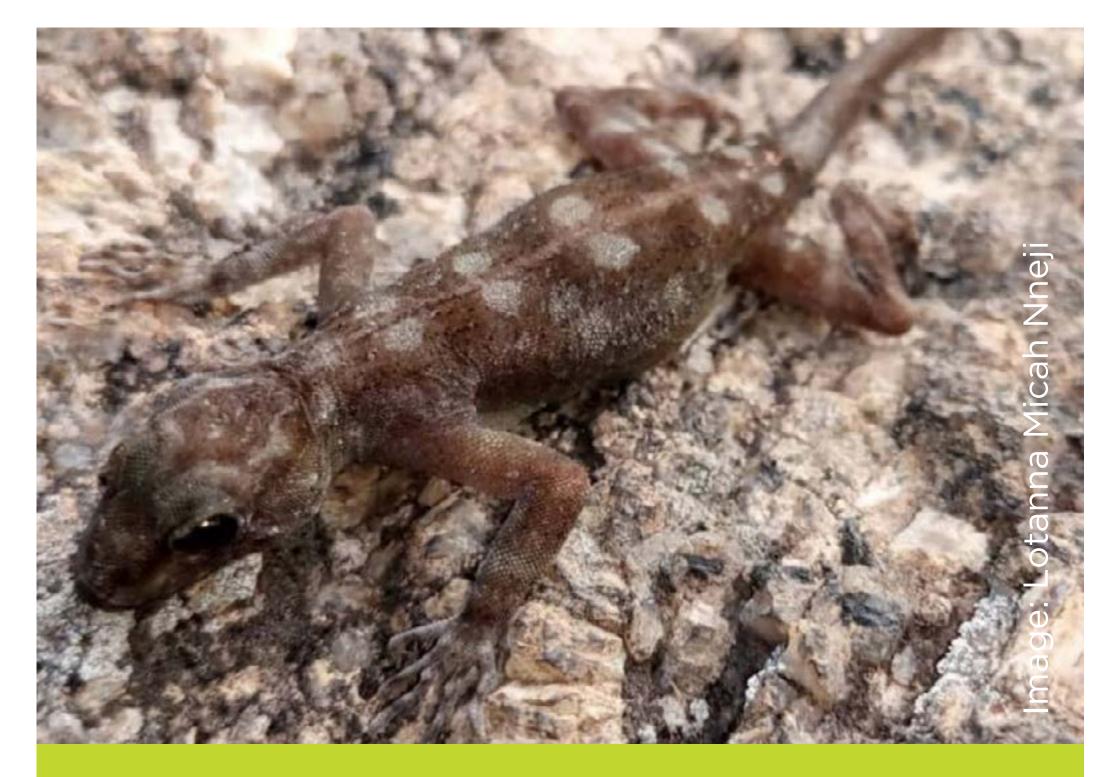
# CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

CLP-funded projects are helping to deliver tangible and lasting impacts on the conservation of threatened species and habitats.



# CAMERA TRAPS REVEAL INSIGHTS CRITICAL FOR CONSERVATION IN BRAZIL AND NIGERIA

A camera trap survey as part of a 2023 CLP project in Brazil has discovered the **first evidence of jaguars breeding** in Pirineus State Park. The survey also revealed **an urban jaguar population resurgence** in Brasilia National Park. Another camera trap study in 2023 (part of a delayed 2021 CLP project) formed the **first intensive survey** of Endangered Preuss's monkeys in the Obudu Plateau, Nigeria. The rare primate was found in only five of the 22 forest patches surveyed and the team discovered **previously unknown** groups.



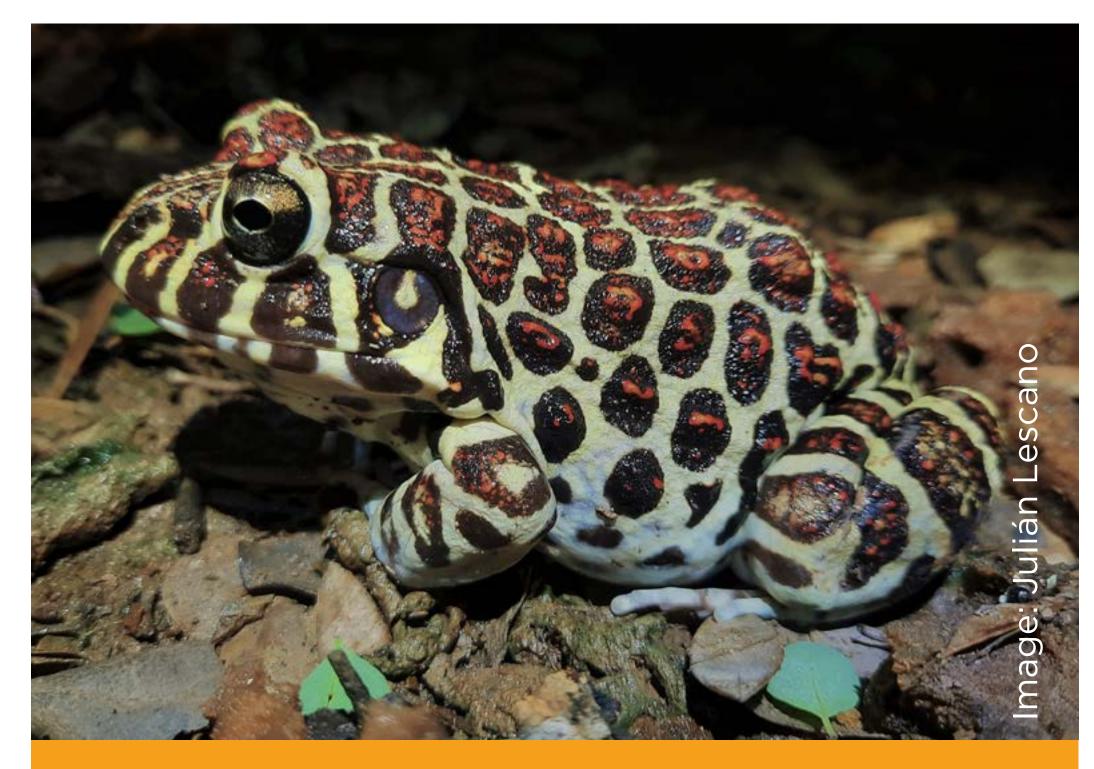
# TRUE RARITY OF THE ONDO FOREST GECKO REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME

Before this project began, there was no information on the distribution and conservation status of the Ondo forest gecko. Over a four-month field survey of 53 areas across Idanre Hills, Nigeria, the team recorded the focal species in only four (7%) of these areas. They also recorded other amphibian and reptile species co-occurring with the target species, including two possible new gecko species and the Critically Endangered and endemic Perret toad. The study also identified key threats, including tourist activities and slash-and-burn agricultural practices by locals.



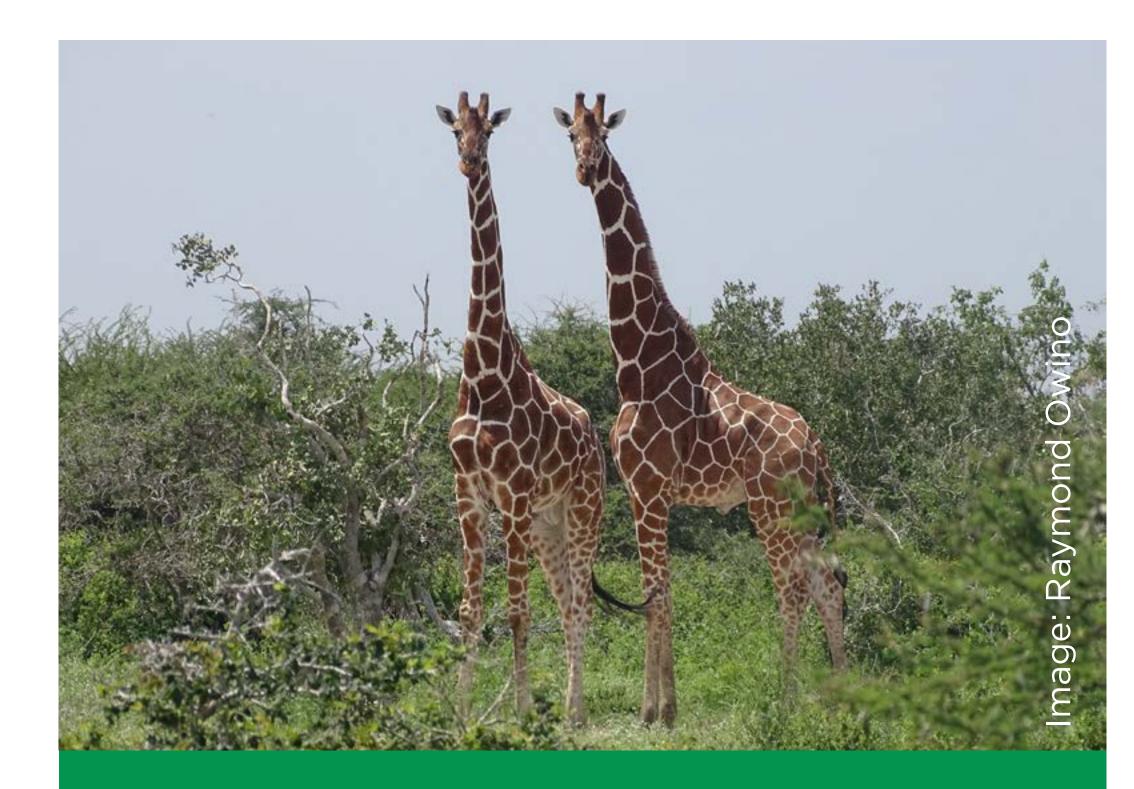
# REMARKABLE PLANT DISCOVERIES REPORTED IN MOZAMBIQUE MECRUSSE FOREST

The project team carried out a field survey of a little-studied Mecrusse forest in Mawayelaand Macuácua, Mozambique. They found the first record of Guibourtia sousae for more than 50 years. Amazingly, they discovered it to be the second most common tree in the forest and identified the main threats to be commercial logging and uncontrolled burning. The team also found new occurrence records for other target plant species, as well as a species new to science. The team is producing a checklist of species from the Mecrusse forest.



# ELUSIVE FROG'S REPRODUCTION DISCOVERED IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN GREAT CHACO

An all-female CLP team conducted three field surveys in the Argentinean Great Chaco to explore suitable habitats for the Santa Fe frog, known locally as Kururu Pytã. They detected **17** populations and obtained novel data on habitat preferences and local threats, and discovered the frog's foam nest and tadpoles, which were **previously** unknown to science (featured in the media, e.g., BBC News.) The team established *Kururu Pytã,* the first amphibian conservation initiative in the region, in collaboration with local criollo and indigenous leaders, scientists, educators, and conservationists.



#### NEW INFORMATION UNCOVERED ON THE GIRAFFE POPULATION IN GARISSA, KENYA

A CLP team conducted the first estimate of giraffe numbers in the Garissa Giraffe Sanctuary, Kenya, using the pattern recognition software, GiraffeSpotter. They estimated a total of 600 giraffes, with a female bias, suggesting the potential for population increases. The team engaged with over 1,000 local farmers and improved awareness of human-giraffe conflict through 11 community meetings and 94 farm visits. As a result, over 80% of the farmers were willing to try new, safer methods to reduce farm invasions by giraffes.



#### NEW NURSERY FACILITY ESTABLISHED FOR BLACK SOFTSHELL TURTLE HATCHLINGS IN ASSAM, INDIA

To allow the long-term rearing of Critically Endangered black softshell turtle hatchlings before their release into the wild, a CLP team developed a nursery facility in Assam, India. An intensive survey also obtained baseline data on the presence and habitat suitability of the species in the wild. Nest search efforts found 123 eggs and monitoring nest sites recorded a hatching success of 40%. The team also enhanced four nesting areas and conducted outreach and training courses for 33 students, 20 teachers and 19 forest staff.



# RED PANDA POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND THREATS IDENTIFIED IN ARUNACHAL, INDIA

This project aimed to encourage community-based conservation of red pandas at a local governance level. Field surveys recorded the presence of red pandas in 15 of the 17 sites and identified major threats to the species, including habitat degradation and hunting. They also engaged 500+ students, 15 village leaders, and 200 villagers in red panda conservation. At the end of the project, all four villages in one area of the study site banned red panda hunting and unsustainable timber collection in their forest area.



# NEW INFORMATION CONTRIBUTES TO HORSESHOE CRAB CONSERVATION ON BORNEO'S EAST COAST

On the east coast of Borneo, Indonesia, a CLP project has provided a clearer picture of the local horseshoe crab population. Previously limited to data from shoreline surveys, the team obtained additional information from local fisheries to reveal associated fishing practices and bycatch locations. The data was used to inform the designation of a mangrove forest in the project study site as an essential ecosystem zone. The team also conducted a dissemination session with the Nature Conservation Agency to provide guidelines on horseshoe crab monitoring protocols.



## TEAM AWARDS

CLP directs funding, training and mentorship to teams conducting priority conservation projects across the developing world.

Each year, CLP Team Awards are granted to teams of conservationists to support the delivery of locally-led, long-term conservation solutions and to build their professional skills. The awards target both newly funded early-career conservationists (Future Conservationist Awards) and existing members of the CLP Alumni Network (Follow-Up Awards and Leadership Awards) to help them build on their previous CLP project outcomes.

In 2023, we were delighted to award \$280,000 to 17 exceptional teams of 74 conservationists. This includes 14 Future Conservationist Awards and three Follow-Up Awards (no Leadership Awards were granted this year). The award-winning projects are focused on conserving a variety of threatened fauna and flora. They are spread across four world regions and 12 different countries.



#### Tier 1

Future Conservationist Awards

Entry-level awards for small-scale research and awareness-raising projects

Duration: **3-12 months**Award value: **\$15,000** 

2

#### Tier 2

Conservation Follow-up Awards

Continuation awards for past recipients of a Future Conservationist Award

Duration: up to two years
Award value: \$25,000



#### Tier 3

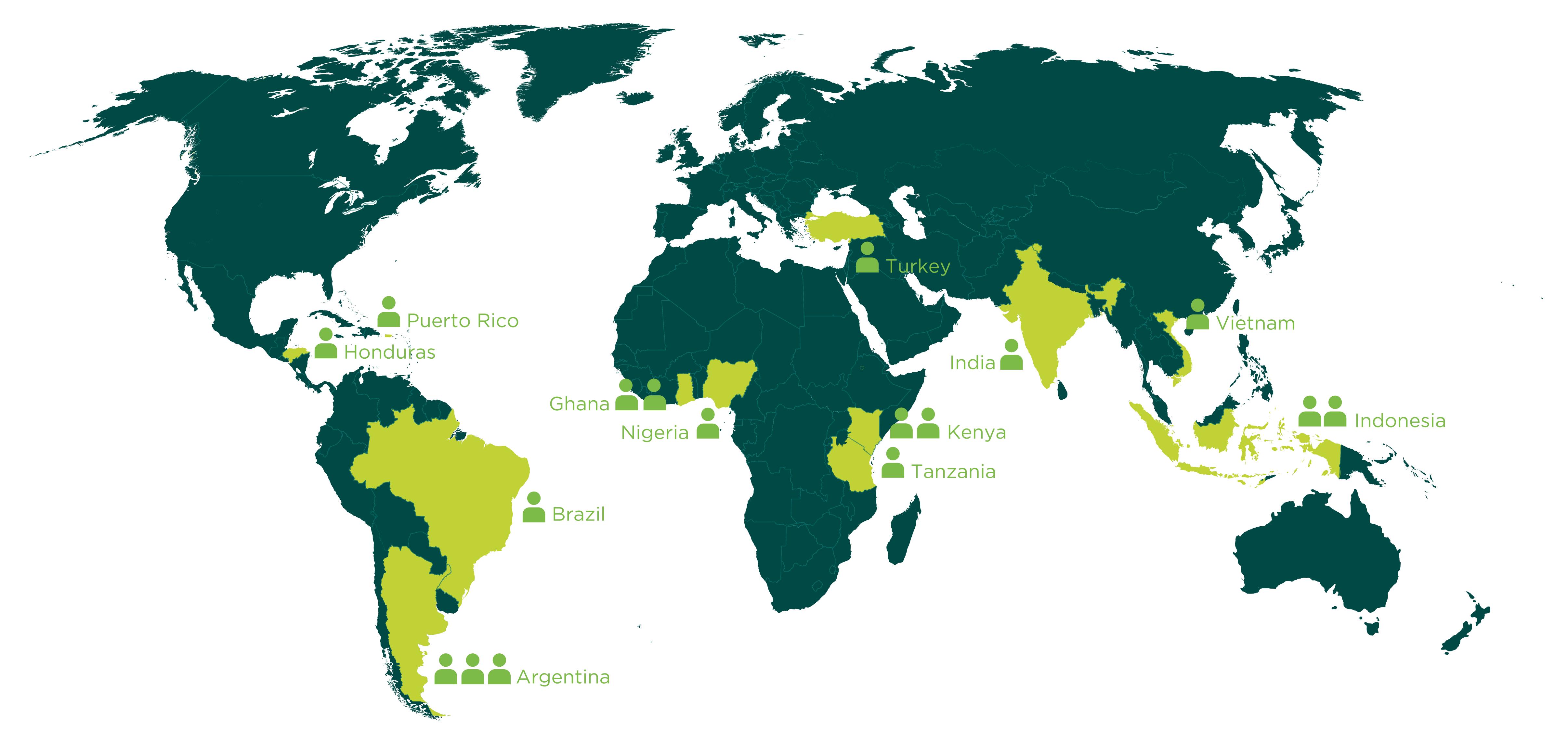
Conservation Leadership Awards

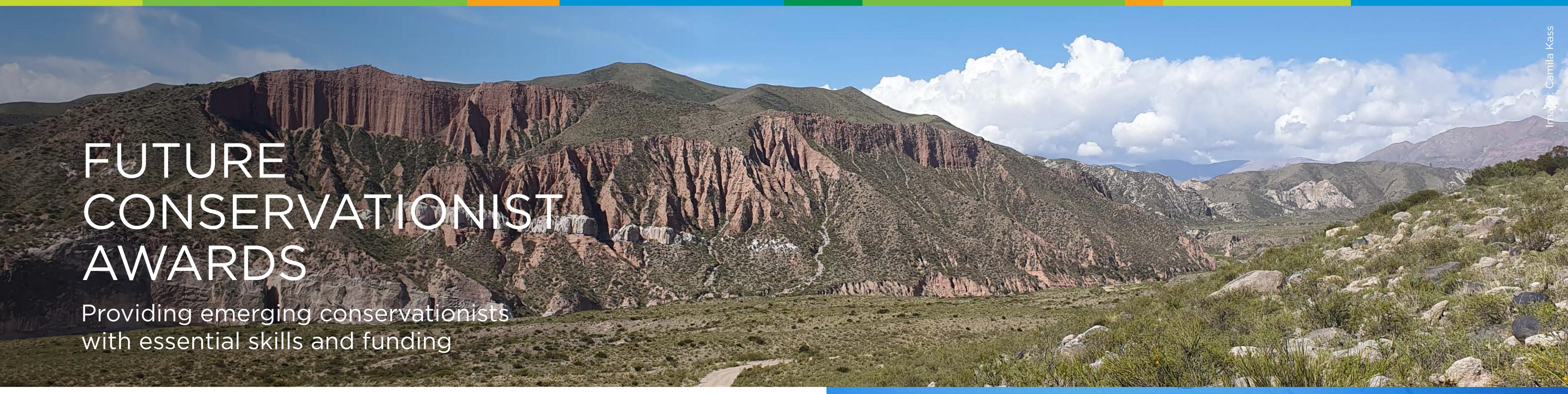
Continuation awards for past recipients of a Follow-Up Award

Duration: up to three years

Award value: **\$50,000** 

#### CLP Team Award Winners 2023





Entry-level awards worth <\$15,000 for projects between three and 12 months in length.

- Conservation of the Critically Endangered hammerhead sharks in Ghana
- Safeguarding the Endangered white-bellied pangolin in Ghana
- Population surveying and raising awareness of three newly discovered tree frogs in Ha Giang province, Vietnam
- Ecology and conservation of the Critically Endangered plant Dombeya ledermannii in Nigeria
- Population monitoring and awareness building for Ludlow's Bhutan Glory in India



- Protecting the threatened thorntail mountain lizard and its habitat in the Famatina Mountains, Argentina
- Engaging key stakeholders in Javan slow loris conservation in Java, Indonesia
- Conservation of Southern Tuco-tucos in Pampean dunes: creation of sanctuaries and threats alleviation
- Local communities' empowerment as a driver to medium and large mammal conservation in the Brazilian Cerrado
- A sustainable seafood network to conserve mobulid rays, thresher and hammerhead sharks
- Conservation of threatened Harrisons giant mastiff bats at Mt Suswa Conservancy, Kenya
- Novel coral nursery designed to improve survivorship growth and increase biodiversity
- Local communities' perception and distribution of giant pangolins in north west Tanzania
- Towards the conservation of the threatened Tandilia lizard of the Pampas highland grasslands, Argentina





#### <\$25,000 for a two year project.

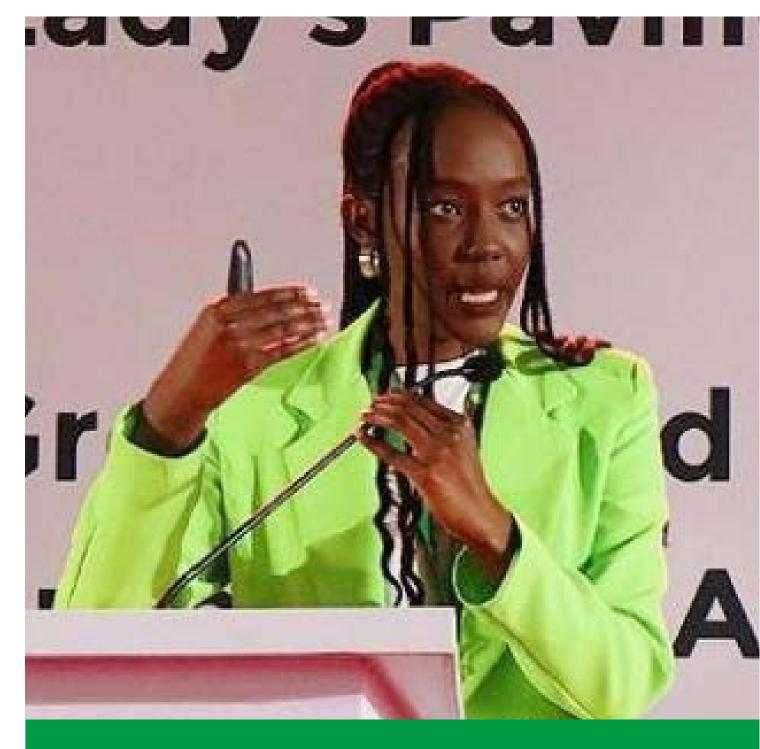
- Creating capacities for the conservation of sharks in Honduras
- Establishing a conservation network for the protection of cave-dwelling bats in Turkey
- Sharpe's longclaw and African people: Conservation through coexistence in Kinangop Regional Plateau



## INTERNSHIPS

CLP internships provide early-career leaders with paid work experience within our partner organisations to boost their career prospects and skills in conservation.

In 2023, we funded five paid interns in regional offices of CLP partner organisations in Africa, Asia and Eurasia. These young, emerging conservationists have learned new skills, received training and certifications in office and field environments, and developed their conservation networks, with several having already secured permanent positions in their host organisations and achieved outstanding conservation impacts.



**ESTHER GITHINJI** 

Fauna & Flora intern, Kenya

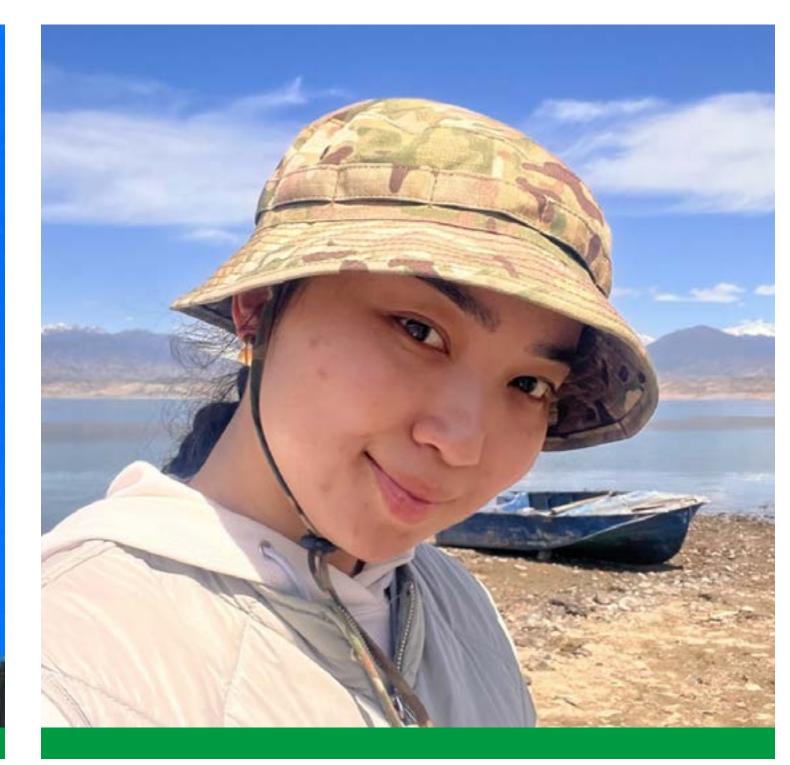
Facilitating capacity building,
knowledge exchange and
collaboration in the Kenyan
conservation technology
community



NGOUAN THARAMONY

Fauna & Flora Intern, Cambodia

Conserving Cambodia's marine
turtle populations



AIGUL ZHUMABAEVA

Fauna & Flora intern, Kyrgyzstan

Combatting illegal trade and
conserving Kyrgyzstan's fruit
and nut forests



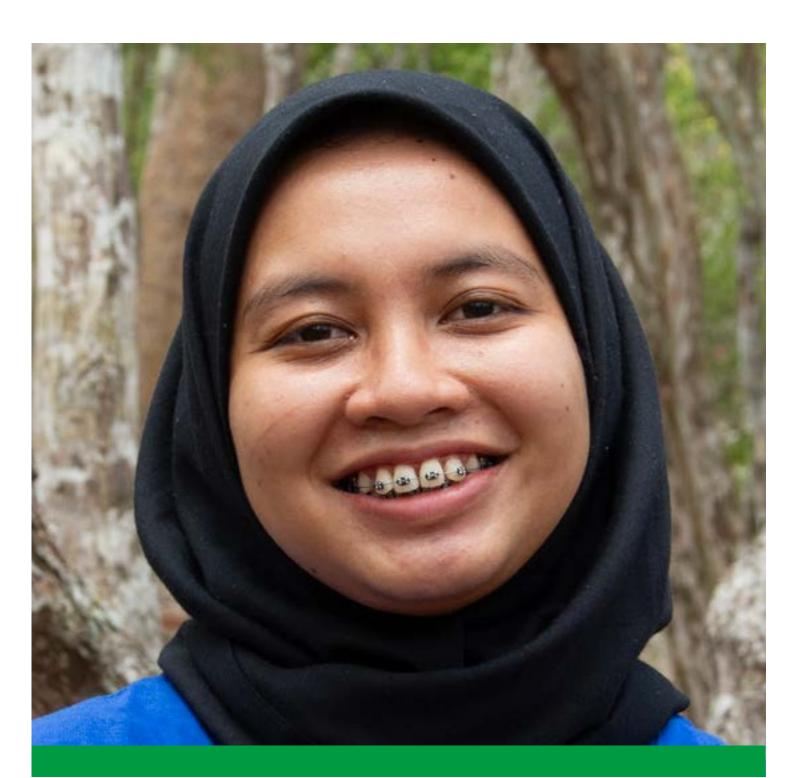


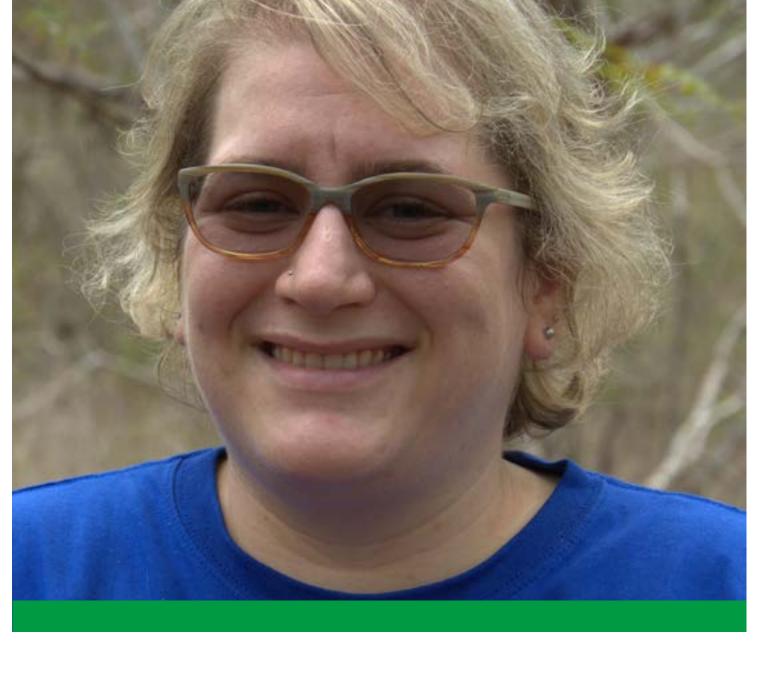
## TRAINING

Our international and regional training workshops enhance the professional development of early-career conservationists.

This year, our Conservation Management and Leadership course took place in Merida, Yucatán, Mexico from June 17-28, with two virtual sessions preceding the in-person course.

The course was delivered to 12 participants from eight countries. Training topics covered on the course included: Gender & Conservation, Conservation Leadership, Project Planning & Fundraising, and Behaviour Change for Conservation. Five participants were unable to attend the in-person training due to visa constraints and will instead join the training in 2024.







"I am confident that this training will give my team and me the skills, knowledge, and tools that we need to be successful conservation leaders. I am excited to use my new skills and knowledge to make a positive impact on the world."

IRIANES GOZALI, INDONESIA

"I learned about implementing effective strategies in my projects, networking and collaboration with others. I gained skills in problem-solving and critical thinking and most importantly. I grew personally and professionally."

CAMILA KASS, ARGENTINA

"Participating in this training has been an enriching and transformative experience. From strategic planning to effective implementation, every aspect of the course has given me the tools to take my project to the next level."

RODRIGO CALVO, ARGENTINA



# SUPPORTING AND CELEBRATING CLP ALUMNI

We continue to embrace online learning environments to ensure we can support the skills and career development of our alumni.

#### CLP LEARNING, TRAVEL & NETWORKING GRANTS

This year, CLP offered online learning grants of up to \$1,250, and travel grants of up to \$1,500 to CLP alumni. Overall, we awarded 29 CLP alumni grants totalling \$38,627. These included 24 travel grants and five online learning grants, which funded travel to and/or attendance at a variety of conferences and training courses including: Wildact's Monitoring, Evaluation and Project Planning for Wildlife Conservation; the 8th International Hornbill Conference in Bangkok, Thailand; the Homeward Bound Leadership Program in Argentina and Antarctica; and the International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence in Oxford, UK.

"My learning from this conference has given me a better perspective on writing a much better proposal. In general, I have also received some really helpful suggestions that I can apply to my ongoing fieldwork."

Gaurav Vasistha (India) on his CLP-funded attendance at Scientific Advances in River Restoration (SARR) in Liverpool, UK

#### MANAGING PEOPLE WITH COACHING & MENTORING SKILLS (VIRTUAL)

The pilot program, "Managing People with Coaching & Mentoring Skills," focused on developing leadership skills for early and mid-career female-identifying WCS staff and CLP alumni. Facilitated by Sarilani Wirawan, this course was co-funded by CLP and WCS's Learning and Leadership for Conservation department. The 11-week program (September –November) brought together 17 women from west, east and central Africa and south and southeast Asia to explore a leader's competency in managing and developing people through the application of mentoring and coaching skills. The program consisted of weekly virtual sessions, independent work, and interactive sessions on how to be a coach and mentor.

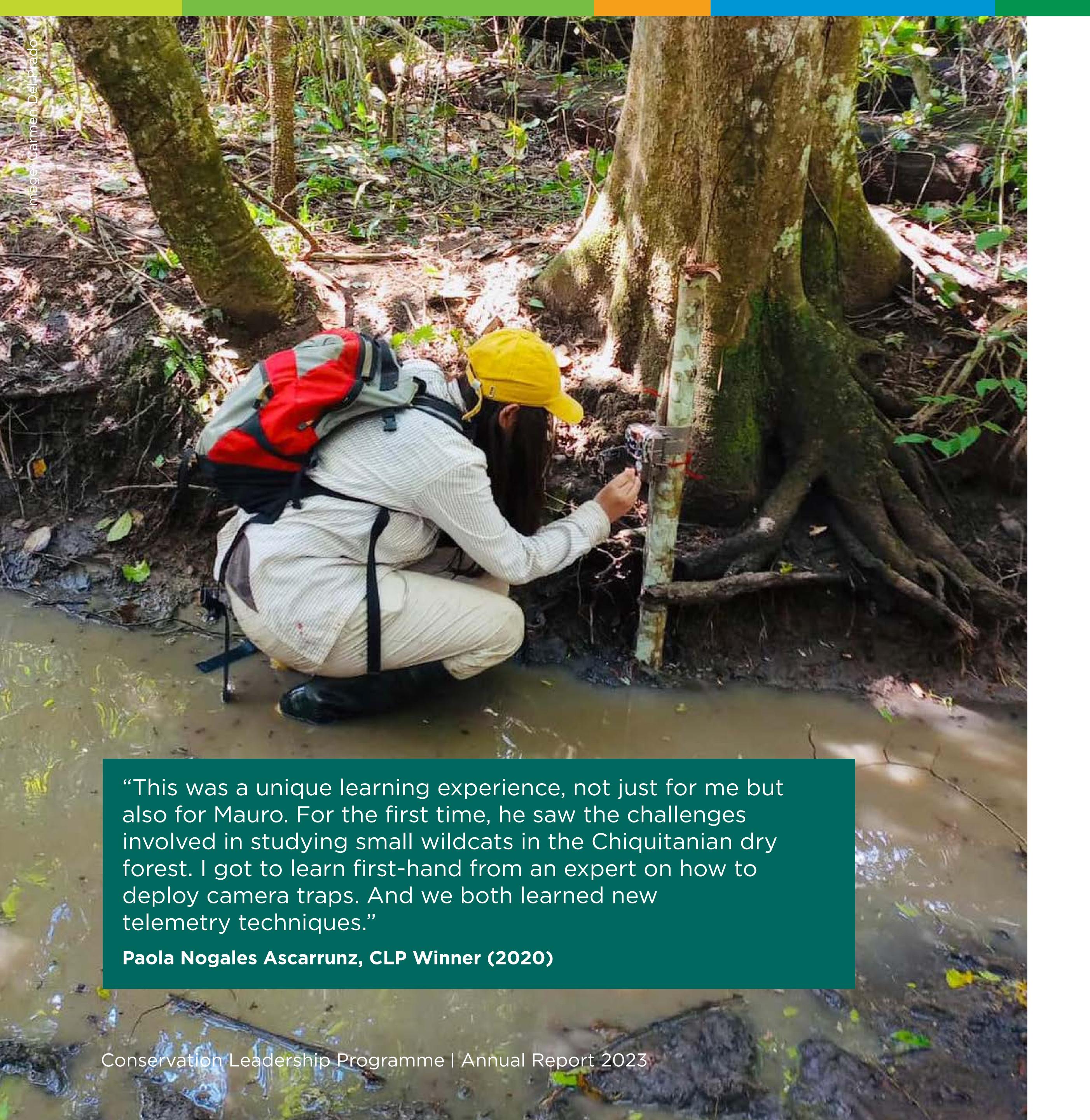
#### **KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ALUMNI**

In 2023, 11 CLP Alumni Newsletters were shared with the alumni network. These updates highlighted upcoming training, funding, and other professional development opportunities both internal and external to CLP, as well as the call for applications for Alumni Reviewers to support the 2024 Team Awards application process.

"I feel privileged to have presented at this conference and interacted with so many hornbill researchers, which deeply encouraged and inspired me. Also, at the event, I was able to get some guidance on site-specific conservation plans, which were crucial to build my understanding of the processes so I can implement my own conservation plan."

Karishma Pradhan (India) on her CLP-funded attendance at the 8th International Hornbill Conference in Bangkok, Thailand





### A CLP LEARNING EXCHANGE

CLP Learning Exchanges bring our alumni together to build knowledge, forge connections and develop new conservation solutions.

#### REDUCING HUMAN-WILDCAT CONFLICT

In 2023, CLP brought together two alumni, Paola Nogales Ascarrunz and Mauro Lucherini, to foster collaborative conservation of wild cats in South America.

The aim was for Mauro, a three-time CLP award-winner and expert on wild carnivores in Argentina, to mentor Paola in her efforts to reduce human-wildcat conflict in the Bolivian Chiquitania, by translocating wildcats to other protected areas in the region.

After several months of planning, in May 2023, Mauro and Paola embarked on their first field expedition. Over a period of four days, Paola and her team deployed 10 camera traps under Mauro's supervision.

Since then, the cameras have captured footage of jaguars and pumas, as well as three lesser-known small wildcats: ocelots, jaguarundi and margay.

#### FORGING CONNECTIONS ACROSS SOUTH AMERICA

In November 2023, Mauro and Paola embarked on the final stage of their Learning Exchange. They joined an ongoing radiotelemetry project in Brazil called "Felinosdo Pampa" (Wild Cats of the Pampa Conservation Project).

Over two days in the field, Mauro and the local project staff showed Paola how to track radio-tagged cats and set up live traps for capturing and monitoring small wildcats as part of any future translocations.

# COLLABORATIONS AND EVENTS

Collaborating, influencing and supporting the wider conservation sector is a priority for CLP.

In 2023, CLP were present at two key events, where we were able to raise awareness about the programme and learn from the network of conservationists who attended.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (ICCB) July 23-27, 2023

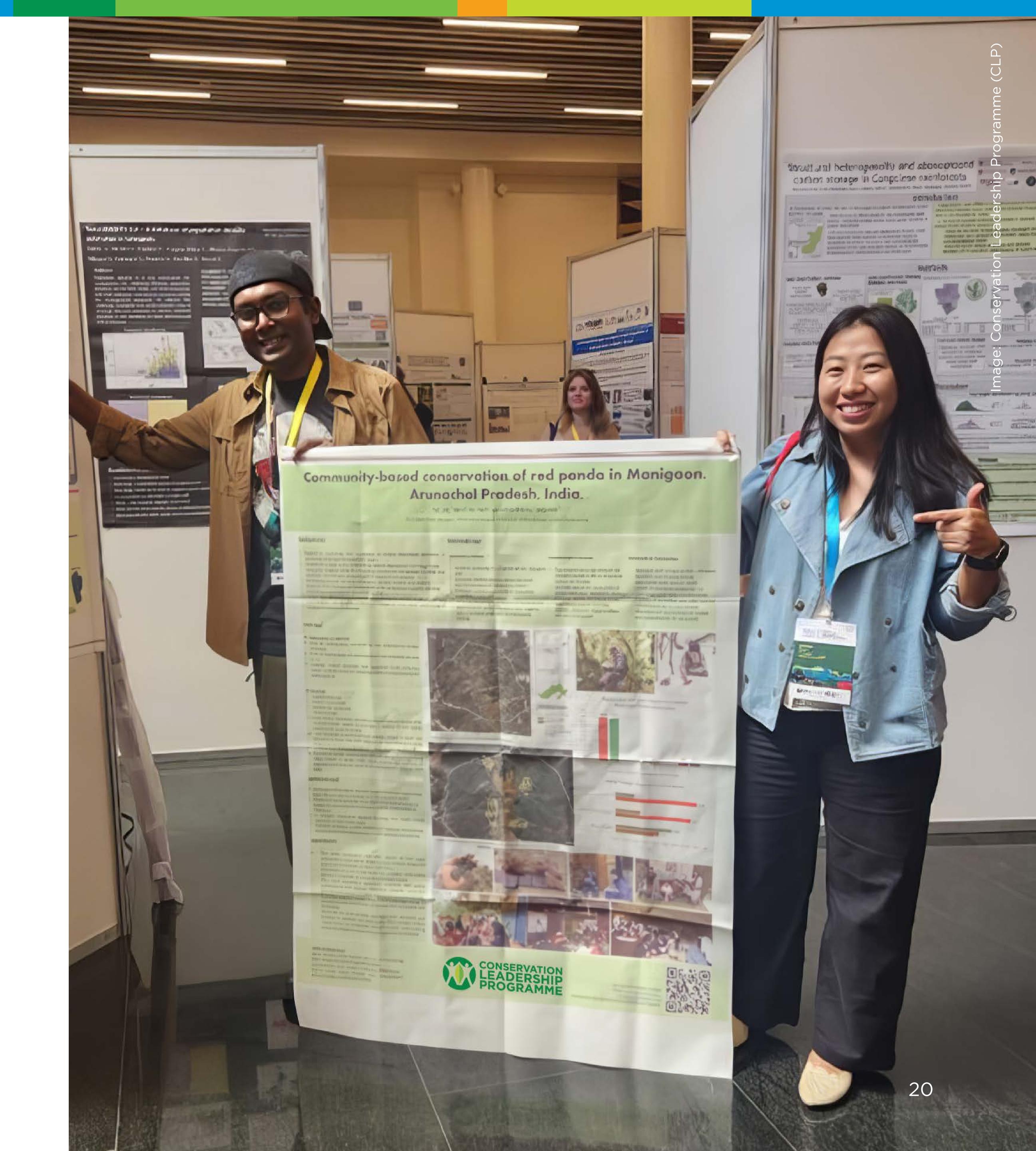
The International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB) is an important bi-annual event for CLP. A global forum bringing together 1,300 conservation practitioners and students, it provides an opportunity for us to support any attending alumni, network with other conservation leadership practitioners, and meet new collaborators.

The 2023 ICCB in Kigali, Rwanda was the first in-person ICCB since 2019, and was attended by 30 CLP alumni. Of these alumni, 16 received travel support from within the CLP partnership, and nine were funded by the De Beers group to attend. Of the 30 alumni in attendance, 22 of them gave presentations. In addition to promoting CLP funding mechanisms, CLP staff delivered two workshops at ICCB on leadership and fundraising.

CLP also organized a networking event for CLP alumni and early-career conservationists to get to know one another before the congress began, and coorganized a networking event with the Rufford Foundation, Whitley Future for Nature, WWF Education for Nature, and WILDLABS. Over 100 people attended this event.

## STUDENT CONFERENCE ON CONSERVATION SCIENCE IN NEW YORK (SCCS-NY) October 4-6, 2023

SCCS-NY took place at the American Natural History Museum in New York in October 2023. At this event, CLP delivered a workshop on leadership, as well as provided feedback on student presentations. Through these workshops, CLP helped early-career conservationists better understand their leadership styles and how to effectively engage with team members and colleagues.



## THE CLP PARTNERSHIP

#### BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

BirdLife International is a global family of 123 national Partners covering all continents, landscapes and seascapes.

BirdLife is driven by its belief that local people, working for nature in their own places but connected nationally and internationally through the global Partnership, are the key to sustaining all life on this planet. This unique local-to-global approach delivers high impact and long-term conservation for the benefit of nature and people.

www.birdlife.org



#### FAUNA & FLORA

Fauna & Flora is an international wildlife conservation charity. They work closely with conservation partners in well over 40 countries to save nature, together. Their focus is on protecting and restoring habitats, saving species from extinction and developing sustainable livelihoods for those living closest to nature. Their people are based around the world; supporting projects on the ground in-country and providing technical and operational expertise from their UK head office, and from regional offices across the globe.

www.fauna-flora.org



# THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY (WCS)

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) saves wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature. To achieve our mission, WCS, based at the Bronx Zoo, harnesses the power of its Global Conservation Program in nearly 60 nations and in all the world's oceans and its five wildlife parks in New York City, visited by 4 million people annually. WCS combines its expertise in the field, zoos, and aquarium to achieve its conservation mission.

www.wcs.org

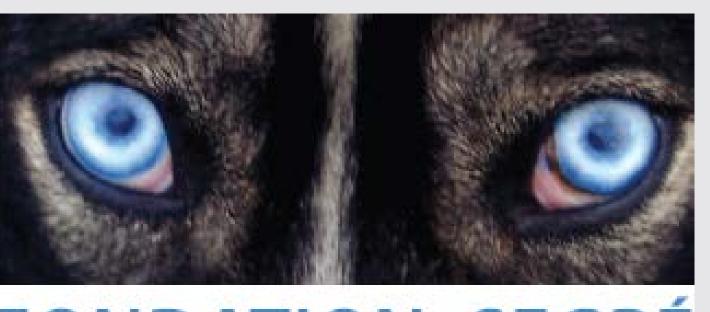


# CLP DONORS





#### DE BEERS GROUP







#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



MARIANNE CARTER
Director Conservation
Capacity & Leadership
Fauna & Flora



LENKE BALINT

Head of Communities and
Capacity Development

BirdLife International



KATE MASTRO
Senior Program Manager
Wildlife Conservation
Society



MANAGEMENT TEAM

OLIVIA COUCHMAN

Executive Manager

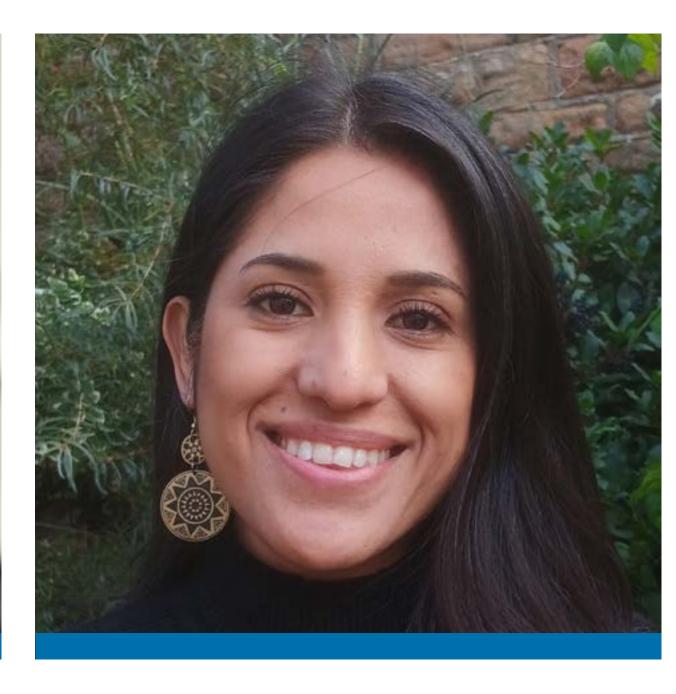
Fauna & Flora



SHERILYN BOS

Programme Officer

BirdLife International



KARLA HERNANDEZAGUILAR

Programme Officer

BirdLife International



ELEANOR GLASS

Programme Officer

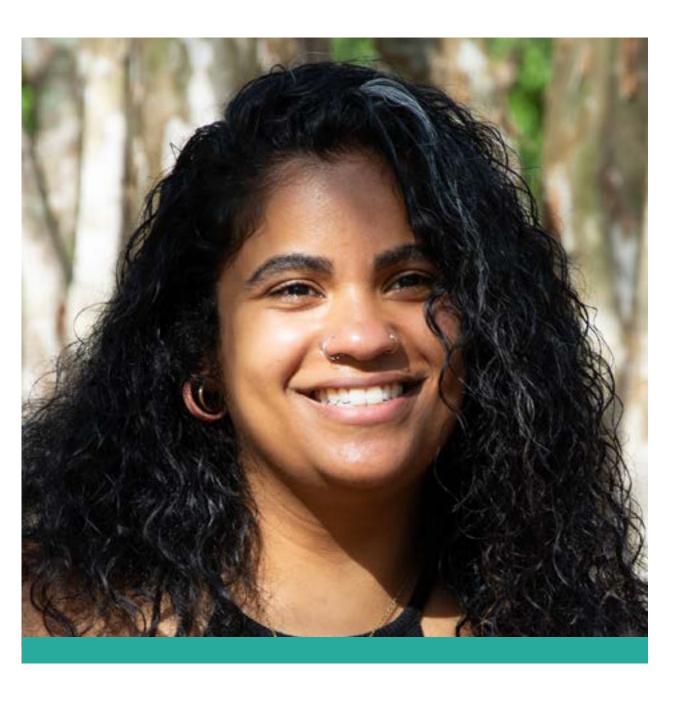
Fauna & Flora



HENRY REES

Programme Officer

Fauna & Flora



NATHALIA SANTANA
Program Coordinator
Wildlife Conservation
Society



LEALA ROSEN

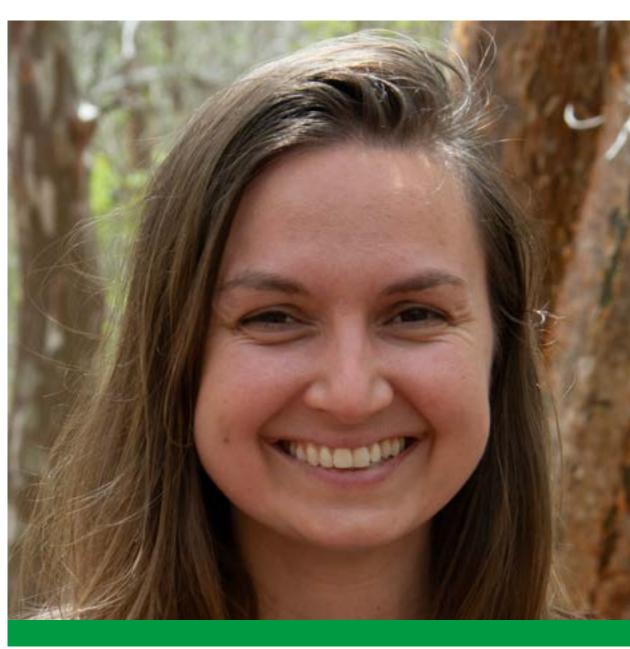
Program Officer

Wildlife Conservation

Society



Communications
Executive (parental leave
Jan-Sept 2023)
Fauna & Flora



BECCA THOMAS

Communications Executive

(parental leave cover)

Fauna & Flora



# LOCKING AHEAD

CLP will continue to offer project grants and capacity support to conservationists working to save threatened species and sites worldwide.

Our call for Team Award applications is announced in July each year.







