



### **Contents**

Letter from the President	03
Scope of Work	04
Program Overview	06
Financial Overview	15
ACT Anniversary Gathering	18
Our Team	19
In Memoriam	22

### President's Letter

The year 2016 will mostly be remembered for a bewildering presidential election, but it was also the year in which indigenous communities in North Dakota made headlines across the world. They peacefully protested the oil pipelines—the "black snakes" that threatened to poison their rivers—and called upon governments to recognize the right of all living beings to clean, free, and abundant water. They were met with force, but persisted. The people named themselves Water Protectors.

These are the actions of tribal people. They are not the sectarian and violence-prone tribes of the popular imagination. These are communities who act out of profound concern for the future of their children, and for all children, wherever they may live.

We work with many tribal people. Their tribal identity teaches them that their personal well-being is wholly intertwined with the health of their forests, fields, and rivers. When strong, they are tenacious guardians of their territories. Across the gaping divide that separates our cultures, they welcome us as partners, and we are incredibly grateful to be allowed into their world.

In return, we help our partner communities build capacity so they can meet the challenges that arrive daily in their forests. This means we encourage them to form organizations that strengthen traditional community bonds; to build alliances; and to articulate their plans for their future. We facilitate their efforts to acquire legal rights to their ancestral territories. We help them transmit their traditional knowledge and culture to the next generation. These tactics are part of a strategy we call governance.

In 2016, we turned twenty. As we celebrated our successes, we considered our twenty-first birthday, ACT's coming-of-age. We realized that expansion is the only way to truly and passionately live our vision, but in order to grow effectively, we too had to build capacity.

We formally adopted the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, a rigorous and systematic approach to adaptive management. Learning the process was similar in some ways to learning ethnographic map-making, and just as arduous. In this method, we begin by defining the field [objectives, strategies, tactics, actions, threats] and then plot out the path that we believe will get us to our goals. These results chains of both small projects and large visions help us monitor our progress, evaluate results, and reevaluate our methods and approaches where necessary. Like our maps, they are communication devices that enable others to understand the complex moving parts of our programs.

We engaged Foundations of Success to mentor us through this organizational shift. With their help, we re-articulated our vision and our theory of change. We redefined our action plans: the three essential legs of our new strategic approach are governance, land [protect forests and headwaters] and livelihood [ensure the economic, physical, and cultural health of the people who protect the land]. To support these legs, we also realized that we need to improve communications, development, and our own governance.

Meanwhile, our work in the field continues at its own fierce pace. Though political winds and climate change continually roil the landscape, we now have new skills we can wield in pursuit of our conservation goals. The resources and support you have so generously contributed to ACT over the years have helped us build a network of unflinching tribal protectors that will fight for their land and water—and our children's future—with their lives. They tell us to take heart, because we are all in this together.

Please read on

Mark J. Plotkin

Amazon Conservation Team President

Mark J Plackin

ACT Annual Report SCOPE OF WORK | 04

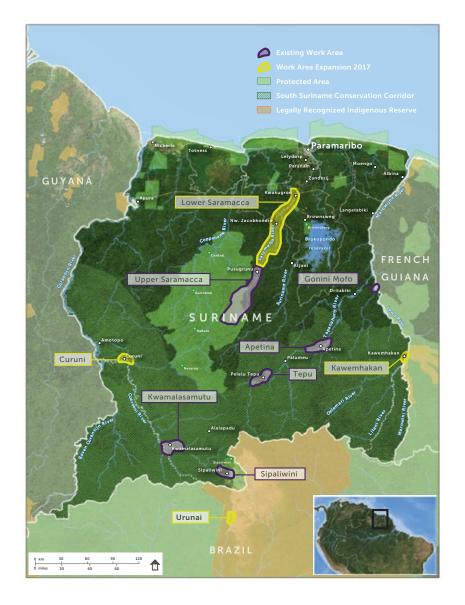


ACT Annual Report SCOPE OF WORK | 05

#### COLOMBIA



#### SURINAME



### **New Strategic Directions**

Through our newly developed three-pronged strategic approach to conservation, focusing on land, livelihoods, and governance, ACT is working with our partners to attain these aspirations while strengthening their traditions.



## Promote Sustainable **Land** and Resource Management

Ensures the protection, stewardship and recovery of prioritized landscapes, including the biodiversity and natural resources they encompass.



#### Strengthen Communities' Internal **Governance** and Traditions

Increases the self-determination of our partner communities.



#### Promote Communities' Secure and Sustainable **Livelihoods**

Improves the local economy and livelihood conditions within our partner communities through environmentally and socially sustainable means.

ACT Annual Report PROGRAM OVERVIEW |  $\it{07}$ 



### **Strategic Focus: LAND**

#### COLOMBIA

### Multi-Tier Agreement to Benefit Indigenous Reserves

In the department (state) of Antioquia, there are currently 36 unresolved expansion and establishment processes for indigenous reserves, some of them with applications dating back 20 years. Through the signing in 2016 of a collaboration agreement between the Indigenous Affairs Office of Antioquia and the National Lands Agency, ACT is currently supporting the requests of Zenú and Emberá communities for the titling, expansion and establishment

of the 36 reserves. Additionally, complementary food security and sustainable livelihood activities will be implemented, linking and validating ACT methodologies used in other areas of the country. Stemming from this partnership, ACT accepted the formal request of the Agency to support its Pacts for the Earth strategy, a national post-conflict initiative to spur wide-scale formal recognition of land tenure for Colombia's rural inhabitants.





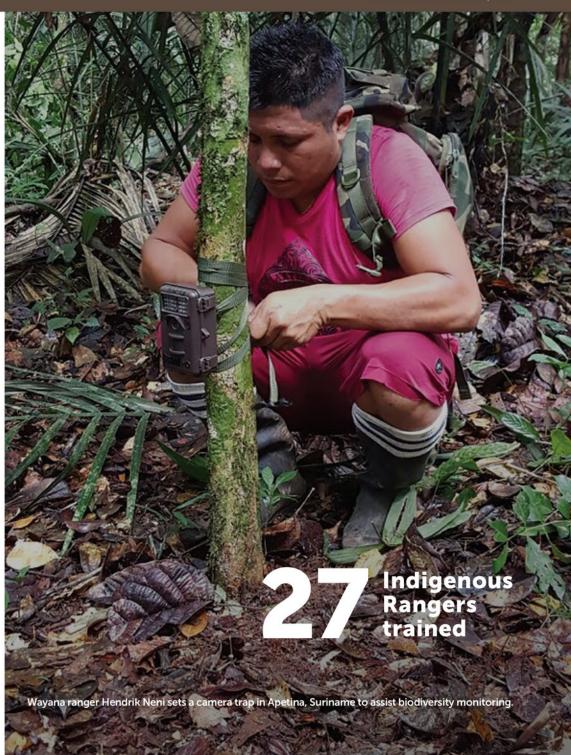
#### SURINAME

### Collaborative Biodiversity Monitoring in Rainforests

Over the past two years, with partners, ACT has trained 27 Amazon Conservation Rangers of the Trio and Wayana indigenous communities of Suriname in sustainable management of the forest as a natural resource. The rangers are local monitors appointed by their communities to prevent the entry of outsiders, promote food security and income generation, and protect essential local forest species.

Simultaneously, with ACT's input, a research team consisting of Rangers and students from the University of Utrecht has collected data on the status of the forest, wildlife and other biodiversity elements. In the process, ACT has sought to increase the interest of local youth in studying forest, nature and biodiversity conservation.

ACT's other project partners have been Suriname's national agricultural research center, national herbarium, national forest management agency and forest service students. Kwamalasamutu - In Pursuit of Human Wellbeing\*, a short documentary film, highlights the almost two-year participatory research project.





### **Strategic Focus: GOVERNANCE**

#### COLOMBIA

# Advancing the Management and Administrative Capacity of Indigenous Communities

With funding from the Skoll Foundation, ACT has been supporting grassroots processes to strengthen the governance capacity of tribal communities in four indigenous reserves located in the middle Caquetá River region of Colombia: Puerto Sábalo-Los Monos, Monochoa, Anduche, and Nonuya de Villazul.

To this end, ACT formalized a partnership with Colombia's National Planning Department—the agency responsible for regulatory reform and allocation of public investments—to strengthen the capacity of local communities to receive and administer funding streams from the

government and to develop and implement projects that significantly enhance their autonomy. This also will enable the amplifying and scaling of ACT's governance support processes in other regions of the Amazon.

Further, through the development of culturally sensitive training modules on a wide range of themes prioritized by local stakeholders including financial management and healthcare administration, all building on earlier government work, ACT has enabled more effective transmission of knowledge and greater intercultural understanding between the national government and indigenous communities.







#### SURINAME

### Designing a Developed Future for Suriname's Matawai Forest Community

Following ACT's collaborative land use and zonal mapping fieldwork with the Matawai Maroons in 2015, our staff traveled numerous times to the upper Saramacca River region to conduct zonal mapping exercises focused on the community forest east of the river, recently acquired by the Matawai. The community forest is a government-designated zone nearly 100,000 hectares (247,100 acres) in size, over which the local community now has the right to determine development and possible concessions. With this acquisition and given the rapid expansion of a road leading to the region, ACT is helping the community plan and demarcate their territory in a responsible and organized fashion. ACT has also conducted life plan research workshops as well as non-timber forest product and traditional medicine trainings with the Upper Saramacca community.



### **Strategic Focus: LIVELIHOODS**

COLOMBIA & SURINAME

# Solar Energy, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Cultural Survival in the Amazon

Many of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon region are rapidly out-migrating from their traditional homelands due to increasing environmental degradation, pressure from land-grabbing interests, and lack of greatly needed public services, creating a context of loss of cultural diversity and traditional ecological knowledge that diminishes prospects for forest conservation in one of the planet's most ecologically important regions. The region's indigenous peoples also live in conditions of widespread malnutrition, poor educational results, health problems, increasing poverty, and underemployment. Further, close to half of the Amazon's population—some 15 million people—live in energy poverty and lack access to regular electricity service.

Since 2014, Barefoot College and ACT have joined hands to empower indigenous women of the Amazon to apply sustainable energy technology to help strengthen and preserve their communities' traditional ecological knowledge, meet basic human needs, and promote the permanence of their peoples in their traditional lands. The ACT-Barefoot collaboration has enabled four indigenous women—two from southern Suriname and two from the middle Caquetá River region in Colombia—to complete a six-month solar engineering training program in Rajasthan, India. There, these women learned to operate and install solar home units, solar lamps, and charge controllers. In 2016, the women returned to their communities to electrify up to 500 households with solar energy units, while at the same time assuming unit repair and upkeep work for at least five years in regions where renewable energy systems are greatly needed.









BRAZIL

# Clean Water for a Model Amazon Village

Potable water is the greatest benefit that any community can have. Safe, clean water free of disease and pollution is a human necessity, but it is not always readily available to the indigenous communities of the Amazon. Since 2011, ACT has been working with the Waurá people of the Ulupuene village located in the southwest corner of Brazil's Xingu Indigenous Park. The Waurá came to ACT with a problem: soybean crop pesticides had contaminated their water supply. They requested ACT's support in drawing clean water drawn from an open deep well.

The major difficulty was transporting the necessary equipment from the city to their village. In 2016, the water levels of regional rivers were extremely low, exposing hazards such as waterfalls and large rocks. With the support and local expertise of the indigenous people, ACT was able to navigate these obstacles, and the Ulupuene village now has a safe source of drinking water.

### **ACT Advances in 2016**



43

indigenous reserve expansion or establishment processes under development or submitted to the government of Colombia for approval (Colombia)



Illegal goldmining practically eliminated from the Puré River National Park (Colombia)



Working with Amazon Conservation Rangers of four indigenous villages to train them in a full suite of monitoring practices, including the use of Open Data Kit and camera traps (Suriname)



Two sacred site properties acquired for indigenous communities in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (Colombia)



Two municipal landscape plans under implementation in the upper Caquetá, improving sustainable management for 12,000 hectares or 29,700 acres (Colombia)



kms (109 miles) of river mapped, completing cartographic documentation of the ancestral and current territory of the Matawai Maroons (Suriname)

### Strategy: **Livelihoods**



415 indigenous and rural people benefiting economically from sustainable natural resource management alternatives projects in the upper Putumayo River region (Colombia) 70

indigenous and Maroon women actively participating in initiatives to produce and sell locally produced ground pepper and handicrafts (Suriname)

5

Waurá women of the village of Ulupuene receiving training in management and maintenance of solar energy systems (*Brazil*)



16

local and regional organizations able to improve implementation of official sustainable land use plans in the upper Caquetá River region (Colombia)



Two additional indigenous reserves neighboring the Puré River National Park now participating in agreements to protect isolated indigenous groups (Colombia)

12

indigenous schools planning, managing, and administering their own self-determined education systems (Colombia)



Successful completion of the upgrading and installation of solar power for all four ACT-sponsored traditional indigenous medicine clinics (Suriname)

### Financial Overview

In our two decades of existence, ACT's investments have largely centered on field operations toward consolidating our conservation efforts on the ground and benefiting our partner communities

Today, with more tightly defined on-the-ground conservation strategies and aspirations to expand beyond our current work areas, we are making investments to ensure organizational long-term sustainability by bolstering areas deemed critical for the organization's growth and effective management across the entire institution.

ACT closed 2016 at record annual revenue (US\$9.3 million). This increase in funding will enable ACT to expand field operations and continue investments in staff capacity building, the development of a robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting system, and other internal areas to support a strong and explicit emphasis or accountability and results.

#### *REVENUE*

In 2016, overall revenue increased by almost US\$5.7 million over prior year. A large portion of this growth was a result of multiyear contributions and foundation grants, with large

tranches to be disbursed in future years. We attribute this increase both to ACT's cemented reputation as a highly valued partner institutionally and in the field and to longstanding funders observing our strong opportunity to scale our work.

#### **EXPENSES**

While overall expenses increased only 14% over 2015 levels, the general and administrative as well as the fundraising categories increased by 29% and 60% respectively, due primarily to investments in capacity building and the upgrading of technical and information systems required for organizational growth. However, ACT's programmatic efficiency remained solid at 80%, indicative of continued prudent management of expenses.

In conclusion, as the global economic outlook remains unpredictable and environmental challenges increase worldwide, ACT will continue to focus on the generation of documentable results while leveraging financial resources to maximize conservation return. ACT's staff and partner communities are deeply grateful for the support of so many generous donors who believe in our team and the importance of our work.

Karla Lara-Otero
Director of Operations and Finan

ACT Annual Report FINANCIAL OVERVIEW | 16

### **Financial Statements**

#### Combined Statement of Financial Position

(For the Year Ended December 31)

	<b>2016</b> In USD	<b>2015</b> In USD	
Cash and equivalents	5,763,874	2,025,062	
Grants and pledges receivable	1,101,262	414,324	
Property and equipment, net	77,890	78,709	
Other assets	51,060	70,709	
Total Assets	6,994,086	2,588,731	
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	142,950	126,764	
Deferred revenue	60,159	0	
Deferred rent	3,063	0	
Other liabilities	450	2,150	
Total Liabilities	206,622	128,914	
Unrestricted	4,118,642	1,583,274	
Temporarity restricted	2,668,822	876,543	
Total Net Assets	6,787,464	2,459,817	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	6,994,086	2,588,731	

Funds are presented according to the accrual method of accounting.

ACT's audited financial statements which reflect an unqualified opinion, can be obtained online at amazonteam.org or by calling (703) 522-4684.





#### Combined Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

(For the Year Ended December 31)

	<b>2016</b> In USD	<b>2015</b> In USD
Contributions	5,243,452	1,914,326
Grants	3,923,843	1,608,665
In-kind contributions	48,977	164,802
Investment income	7,368	3,026
Other	48,320	15,574
Foreign currency valuation gain (loss)	30,197	(92,586)
Total Revenue and Support	9,302,157	3,613,807
Program Services		
Biodiversity	2,259,408	2,300,313
Health	505,408	793,558
Culture	1,234,186	55,645
Program Services	3,999,002	3,646,516
Supporting Services		
General and administration	698,069	542,979
Fundraising	277,439	172,909
Supporting Services	975,508	715,888
Total Expenses	4,974,510	4,362,404
Change in Net Assets	4,327,647	(748,597)
Net Assets, Beginning of year	2,459,817	3,208,414
Net Assets, End of Year	6,787,464	2,459,817

### Finances at a Glance

#### Support

	FY	FY 2016		FY 2015	
	In US\$	Percentage	In US\$	Percentage	
Individuals	1,900,952	20.0%	1,789,803	50.0%	
In-country grants	640,069	7.0%	937,588	27.0%	
Foundations	6,603,274	71.0%	758,000	19.0%	
In-kind contributions	48,977	0.5%	164,802	5.0%	
Corporations	23,000	0.2%	37,600	1.0%	
Other	55,688	1.0%	18,600	1.0%	
Foreign currency valuation gain (loss)	30,197	0.3%	(92,586)	-3.0%	
Total Revenue	9,302,157	100.0%	3,613,807	100.0%	

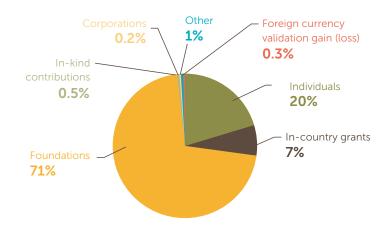
#### Organizational Efficiency

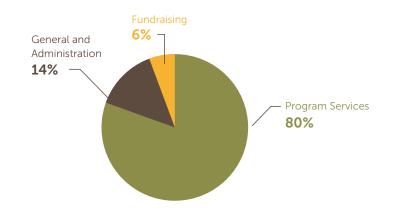
	FY	FY 2016		FY 2015		
	In US\$	Percentage	In US\$	Percentage		
Program services	3,999,002	80.0%	3,646,516	85.0%		
General and administration	698,069	14.0%	542,979	11.0%		
Fundraising	277,439	6.0%	172,909	4.0%		
Total Expenses	4.974.510	100.0%	4.362.404	100.0%		

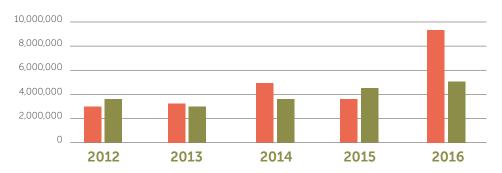
#### **Revenue and Expenses Trends**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Renevue *	2,996,730	3,143,020	4,927,682	3,613,807	9,302,156
Expenses	3,461,373	3,058,407	3,660,113	4,362,404	4,974,510

<sup>\*</sup> Significant annual fluctuations in revenue are attributable to receipt of multiyear grants, the full value of which is recorded as revenue in the year awarded.









# **ACT Anniversary Gathering**

Across a full week in July 2016, in Costa Rica's Osa peninsula, ACT staff, community partners and longtime friends commemorated the organization's twentieth year of existence.

Beyond celebrating how far we have come and strengthening bonds between distant colleagues, we discussed ACT's current situation and action plan for the coming years, and shared and validated progress in our institutional integration of the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation.

In brief, this landmark gathering gave our extended family a very rare opportunity to reflect as one—to consider, as a Team, our future direction in view of a remarkable two decades.





### **Board / Leadership**

#### **Board of Directors**

William M. Cameron

American Fidelity Assurance Chairman

Stephen Altschul

Computational Biologist Secretary

**Bernard Aronson** 

ACON Investments, LLC

**Laurie Benenson** 

Writer and Producer

Ken Cook

Environmental Working Group

**Thomas Lovejoy** 

United Nations Foundation

Liliana Madrigal

Amazon Conservation Team

Melinda Maxfield

Photojournalist

Juan Mayr Maldonado

Environmentalist

Elizabeth Murrell

Murrell Tensile Works, LLC

Mark Plotkin

Amazon Conservation Team

**Nora Pouillon** 

Restaurant Nora

**David Stoup** 

Healthy Lifestyle Brands, LLC *Treasurer* 

**Tico Torres** 

T. Torres Children Foundation

Robert W. Boykin

Emeritus

**Margaret Clark** 

**Emeritus** 

**Ward Paine** 

Emeritus

Advisory Board

**Jeff Bridges** 

Actor and musician

Janell Cannon

Author and illustrator

**Stephanie Dodson** 

Project Healthy Children

Jane Goodall

Jane Goodall Institute

Walter Isaacson

Aspen Institute

Bill Kurtis

Journalist and producer

Julian Lennon

Musician and philanthropist

**Gary Nabhan** 

University of Arizona

Michel Nischan

Wholesome Waves, LLC

**Todd Oldham** 

Todd Oldham Studio

**May Pang** 

Author and producer

**Susan Sarandon** 

Actress

Miranda Smith

Miranda Productions

Karen Allen

Actress and teacher

**Heather Thomas-Brittenham** 

Actress and author

**Bruce Babbitt** 

Environmentalist

**Andrew Tobias** 

Author and journalist

Ed Begley, Jr.

Actor and environmentalist

ACT Annual Report OUR TEAM | 20

### **ACT Team**

#### Brazil

#### João Nunes

ACT-SynBioBrasil Coordinator

#### Colombia

#### Carolina Gil

Program Director

#### Maria C. Prada

Administrative & Financial Subdirector

#### Camilo Andrade

Anthropologist

#### **Lady Angarita**

Field Technician, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### Daniel Aristizabal

Isolated Peoples Program Coordinator

#### Wilmar Bahamón

Medio Rio Caquetá Program Coordinator

#### Lidia Bastidas

General Support, Florencia Office

#### Rafael Calderón

Field Technician, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### Alcira Cao de Guerrero

General Support, Bogotá Office

#### Lina Castro

Environmental Education Specialist

#### Luis A. Escobedo

Fundraising

#### **Guillermo Fernandez**

Land Program Coordinator

#### María F. Franco

Forestry Engineer, Putumayo Program

#### Paula Galeano

Putumayo Program Coordinator

#### **Edier Garavito**

Field Technician, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### Linda García

Surveyor Engineer, Land Program

#### Alvaro Gil

Graphic Designer

#### Yojan Gutiérrez

Field Technician, Medio Rio Caquetá Program

#### Yanelis Julio

Administrative Assistant

#### Germán Laserna

Stakeholder Engagement Specialist, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### Juanita Londoño

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta Program Coordinator

#### Eliana López

Administrative & Financial Support

#### Germán Mejía

Biologist & GIS Specialist

#### Ayda Melo

Attorney, Land Program

#### Andrea Montoya

Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

#### **Carmen Moreno**

Administrative & HR Support

#### María P. Navarrete

Fragua Churumbelos Program Coordinator

#### **Edgar Núñez**

Field Technician, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### María I. Palacios

Land Program Coordinator

#### **Santiago Palacios**

GIS Coordinator

#### Juan P. Parra

Biologist, Medio Rio Caquetá Program

#### Marcela Ramos

Administrative & Financial Support, Florencia Office

#### Ricardo Rey

Sierra Nevada Coordination Support

#### Mauricio Romero

Anthropologist, Putumayo Program ACT Annual Report OUR TEAM | 21

#### Felipe Samper

Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

#### **Hector Silva**

Field Technician, Medio Rio Caquetá Program

#### Wilmer Silva

Field Technician, Fragua Churumbelos Program

#### Claudia Suárez

Accountant

#### Suriname

#### Minu Parahoe

Program Director

#### **Peggy Baisie**

General Services

#### Roché Bhola

Field Station Coordinator, Sipaliwini & Urunai

#### Michel Debidin

Logistics Officer

#### Katia Delvoye

Internal Governance Officer

#### **Mirjam Gommers**

Communications Coordinator

#### Niradj Hanoeman

Field Station Coordinator, Matawai

#### **Bruce Hoffman**

Research & Resource Manager

#### Maikie Jaachpi

Office Assistant (Indigenous Peoples)

#### **Hemwattie Jagroop**

Accounting Coordinator

#### Sergio Kong A San

Field Station Coordinator, Tepu

#### Carlo Koorndijk

Management Assistant and Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator

#### Rayan Madhar

Field Station Coordinator, Apetina

#### **Donicia Molly**

Administrative Coordinator

#### Poernima Monilall

Finance & Administrative Assistant

#### Lucio Wajacabo

Field Station Coordinator, Kwamalasamutu

#### Europe

#### **Dominiek Plouvier**

**ACT-Europe Director** 

#### **United States**

#### **Mark Plotkin**

President

#### Liliana Madrigal

Senior Director of Program Operations

#### Karla Lara

Director of Operations & Finance

#### **Crisbellt Alvarado**

Finance & Human Resources Manager

#### **Arianna Basto**

Program Assistant

#### Liliana Chacon-Menay

Communications Coordinator

#### Isidoro Hazbun

Grants & Development Coordinator

#### **Jessica Hardy**

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning & Reporting Coordinator

#### **Brian Hettler**

GIS & New Technologies Manager

#### **Rudo Kemper**

GIS & Web

Development Coordinator

#### Francelys Peche

Office Coordinator

#### **David Stone**

Information & Content Management Specialist

#### Sarah Voelkl

Coordinator of Corporate Partnerships

#### Roxy Carbonell

Research Intern

ACT Annual Report IN MEMORIAM | 22

### In Memoriam

ACT strives to emulate our indigenous community partners in their cohesion and commitment to their own. Long-term relationships underpin the trust needed to achieve big dreams. And so, when guiding spirits depart this world, we feel that we have lost close relatives.

The dynamic **Paula Cook Sculley**, a passionate conservationist and horticulturist, shared our desire to protect indigenous botanical knowledge throughout the world. In our organizational infancy, she was a strong and experienced Board mentor, and her wise and compassionate counsel shaped our development.

The austere and deliberate high priests, or mamos, of the traditional Kogui indigenous people of Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta exemplify human life in harmony with the natural world. While leading their people, they have provided strong models to other ACT partner groups in their unyielding efforts to maintain their traditional ways and protect their traditional lands.

Mama Marcelo of the ancient village of Seijua was a kind and gentle man whose devotion to sacred traditions was reflected in his bearing. Mama Pedro Juan Noevita, a visionary of great wisdom, humor, and joy, spearheaded the Kogui's effort to recover and protect a great network of sacred sites. Their passing leaves a great void in the Sierra Nevada, and in our hearts.

We will miss these three trailblazers greatly, and constantly endeavor to honor their memory.



ACT Annual Report IN MEMORIAM |  $\it 23$ 





If you'd like to learn more about ACT, please visit

www.amazonteam.org

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