

**GENERATIONAL
MOVEMENT**

GFFG Global
Forest
Generation

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024





Chagras (Ecuadorian cowboys) during a tree-planting event. Photo by Todd Brown/UNEP

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ABOUT

Global Forest Generation is a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to sustaining critical yet neglected forest ecosystems across the world. GFG's first initiative, Acción Andina, is restoring forest ecosystems in the Andes with its strategic partner, Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN).

LEADERSHIP

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Erin Lebbin, COO

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On the cover, photos by: Todd Brown/UNEP, Michell León Fotografía y Naturaleza, The Earthshot Prize, and Fundación de Actividades Biosféricas



GROWING *a* GENERATIONAL MOVEMENT

At Global Forest Generation, our mission is rooted in our name. We are growing a **global** movement – dedicated to keeping our Earth habitable. We believe in the timeless power of **forest** ecosystems to nurture our wellbeing, to safeguard water, to provide a refuge for people and nature throughout the world. And we are bringing together a **generation** of local leaders and global partners to heal the ecosystems of today, for generations to come.

OUR VALUES

Alliance

We honor the harmonization of local wisdom and modern resources, showcasing the bond between tradition and innovation. We seek a coalition of peers with a similar focus to achieve common outcomes.

People-focused Solutions

We aim to build a multi-generational movement dedicated to creating a resilient world for everyone.

Holistic Ecosystem Regeneration

We see the bigger picture. We support initiatives that restore balance to entire ecosystems – the forests, the understory, the wetlands, the wildlife habitats, and more.

Community-led Conservation

Respecting nature means respecting communities. We believe in long-term partnerships with local communities, and that they should have voice, vision, oversight, and governance of their land.

FROM THE CEO

Florent Kaiser



Photo by Todd Brown/UNEP

We are at a crucial moment in Earth's history, where we must ask ourselves: How can we heal the planet and our relationship to it? At Global Forest Generation, we believe that the path forward lies in blending ancient wisdom with innovation.

Through our work, particularly with Acción Andina, we've seen the profound impact of blending cultural traditions with science. Indigenous communities in the Andes, guided by centuries of stewardship, lead efforts to restore forests and protect watersheds. At the same time, modern tools – from satellite monitoring to advanced reforestation techniques – allow us to scale and accelerate these efforts.

We know this model works, as seen in the tremendous progress and recognitions outlined in this report. All of our donors, conservation partners, board of directors, co-founders, and the local communities have made this possible.

We also know that we must keep going. Climate change is already impacting the Andean region, melting glaciers and causing droughts and destructive wildfires. The work ahead is both imperative and daunting.

While the challenges are great, so is our determination. Restoring the Earth demands a reconnection to nature. It requires partnerships that transcend borders, disciplines, and generations, rooted in the shared responsibility to safeguard our planet.

The journey ahead requires humility, collaboration, and unwavering hope – but it's a journey worth taking, **one ecosystem at a time.** We hope you'll join us...

An Urgent Call to Act in the Andes

By Constantino Auca Chutas, GFG co-founder, president of Acción Andina, and founder of lead strategic partner organization, ECOAN

Imagine this: One wakes up in Ecuador's highlands or capital, hoping for a hot shower, but there's no electricity – worse, there's no water. Why? Because of an environmental, water, and energy crisis. Though there are dams to generate electricity (some poorly built), five months of drought have left them at a third of their capacity. You don't need to imagine this scenario, because it's happening now. We are seeing nearly empty reservoirs, people scrambling to collect water, buy generators, and find ways to keep devices charged, even by running their cars.

Politicians are planting trees in burned areas without regard for species, only seeking election support. Meanwhile, lawmakers across South America pass laws favoring illegal mining, deforestation, and even crime. This crisis began in Peru and Bolivia three years ago, where droughts killed llamas and alpacas, ruined potato production, and decimated trout farming.

Many refuse to discuss climate change, considering it a divine punishment, and some communicators spread this misinformation. This year, we are experiencing the impacts of these crises directly, and our work is also affected. The losses will be significant if we keep promoting only 'Adaptation to Climate Change.' **Instead, we must do what our ancestors did – ACT with positive resilience to counter these crises.** For many high-Andean families, Acción Andina is their only hope. They are calling for us to expand our efforts, knowing that the millions of native trees, jobs, and complementary actions we're implementing are still insufficient to counter the effects of climate change. **Let's not wait until it's too late to act.**

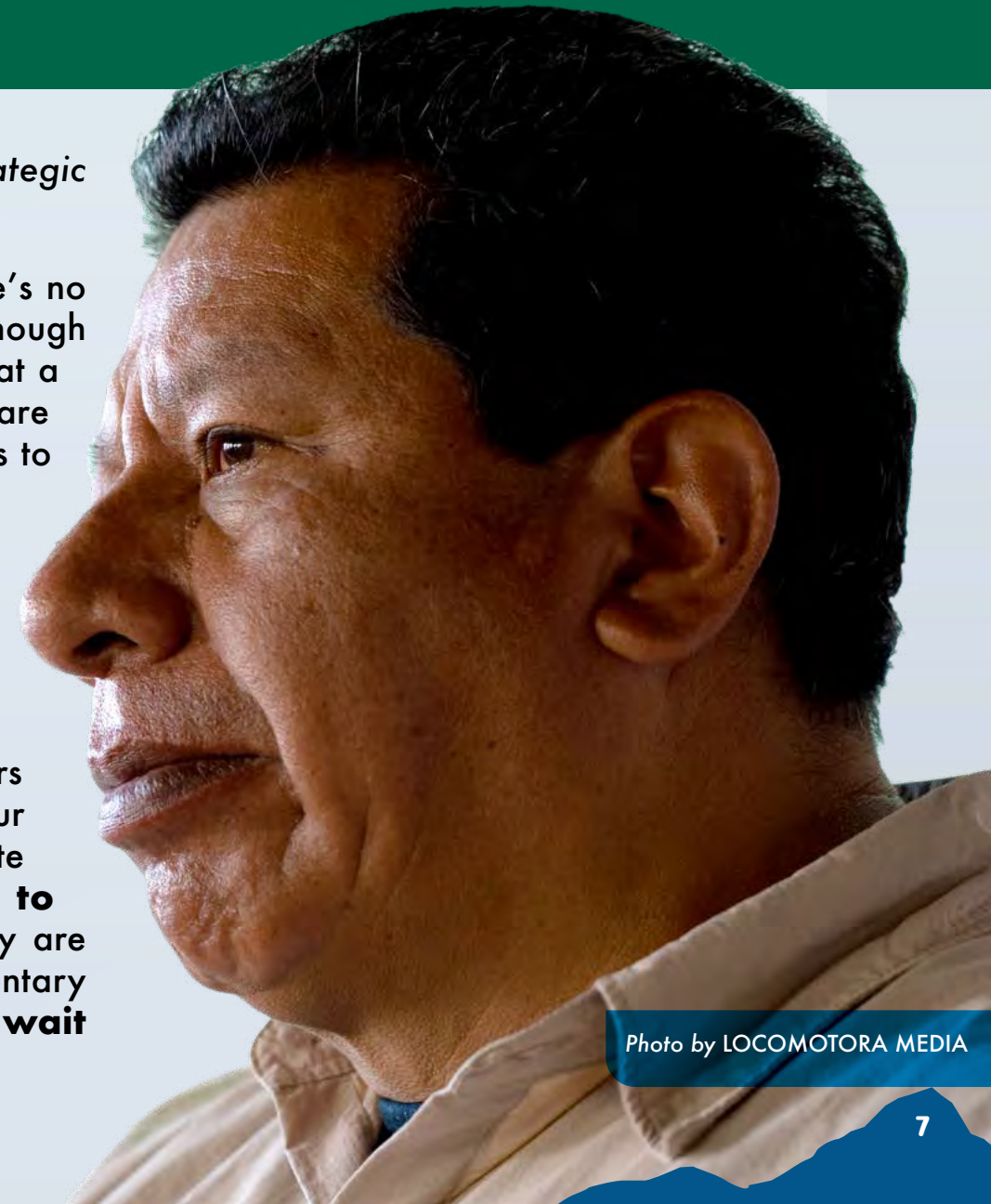


Photo by LOCOMOTORA MEDIA

OUR TEAM



WE MEET AT LAST

The Global Forest Generation team met in person for the first time since its founding in 2018. Besides an opportunity to learn more about each other (and see what we look like in real life), the retreat provided an opportunity to reflect on our growth and set priorities for the next five years. The week was filled with planning sessions, lots of sticky notes, laughs, and some much-needed team-building exercises. Outcomes from the retreat will guide our 2024–2029 work plan and ensure we continue to stay focused and aligned on our bigger mission: to create a habitable Earth for everyone, today, and for generations to come. We thank GFG Board of Directors Chair and GFG Co-founder Leslie Danoff for hosting.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(active during the 2023–24 FY)

James Brumm (Dec. 2018 -)
Board Vice Chair (as of Oct. 2024)
EVP & General Counsel (former)
Mitsubishi International Corporation
New York, NY



David Harrison (Dec. 2021 - June 2024)
Radiologist
Salem Radiology Consultants
Salem, OR



Leslie Danoff (July 2018 -)
Board Chair (as of Oct. 2024)
Co-founder
North Hero, VT/New York, NY



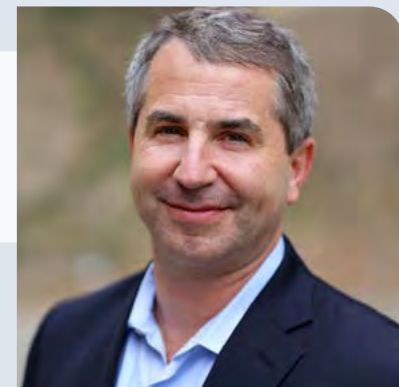
Alberto Paniagua (June 2023 -)
CEO (former) Profonampe
Peruvian Trust Fund for Nat'l Parks
& Protected Areas
Lima, Peru



Kelly Grier (June 2023 -)
EY US CEO-Emeritus
Chicago, IL



Shaun Paul (May 2021 -)
General Partner, Reinventure Capital
Morelia, México



MEET THE GFG TEAM

Global Forest Generation is a small team of passionate leaders, conservation specialists, communicators, financial officers, and fundraisers who together are helping to power some of the most ambitious restoration initiatives on the planet.

Who am I: Anna Allen

What Position: Development Manager

When I Started: January 2021

Where I Live: Oaxaca, Mexico

My Why:

For everyone of today and everyone of tomorrow!

Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?

My cats and the view from my window. :)



Who am I: Stephanie Arellano

What Position:

Conservation Program Officer

When I Started: September 2022

Where I Live: Quito, Ecuador

My Why:

Nature has always been my passion and where my soul truly connects. I aim to give nature a voice and highlight its vital role in sustaining all forms of life.

Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile? Connecting with people I love, whether through spending time together, a call, a message.



Who am I: Jan Holloway

What Position: Administrative & HR Assistant

When I Started: March 2023

Where I Live: Moncks Corner, South Carolina

My Why:

We get ONE Earth to live on. We either protect and restore it now for future generations, or the natural world that we all love will not be around to enjoy for years to come.

Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?

My dogs, Skye and Dodge.



Who am I: Erin Lebbin

What Position: Chief Operating Officer

When I Started: 2018, as a volunteer

Where I Live: Vienna, Virginia

My Why:

I am motivated by high-impact nature conservation.

Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?

Not every day, but I'm always happy to get out for a run.



Who am I: Catherine Forbes
What Position: Development Director
When I Started: October 2024
Where I Live: Highland, NY

My Why:
We must take action now to protect the places we love.
Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?
A morning run powered by coffee.



Who am I: Abby Metzger
What Position: Communications Director
When I Started: September 2023
Where I Live: Corvallis, Oregon

My Why:
I want my children and many future generations to enjoy birdsong, to see wild places, to breathe clean air, to see salmon returning to rivers, and to experience wonder and curiosity about the natural world.
Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile? Drinking coffee in the morning with my family. Being by rivers. Any river.



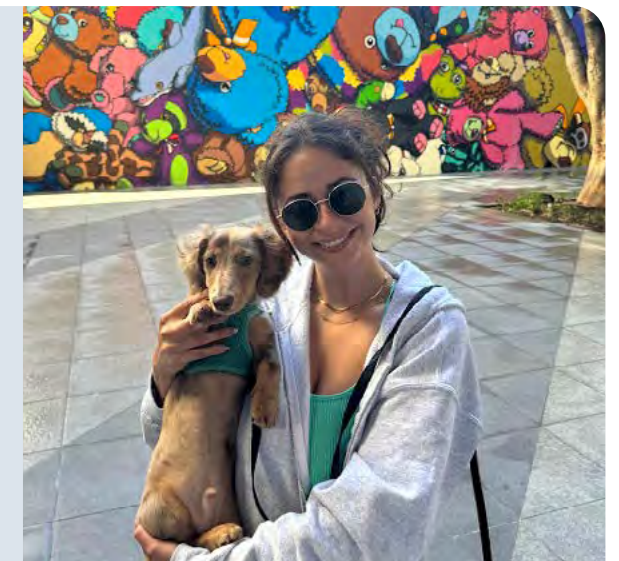
Who am I: Kathleen McGibbon
What Position: Development Officer
When I Started: July 2022
Where I Live: Lima, Ohio

My Why:
Addressing the impacts of the climate crisis requires action, and forest ecosystem restoration is one of the most effective steps we can take.
Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?
I listen to Bill Withers' song "Lovely Day" each morning. It is a great song to set the tone for the day.



Who am I: Isabella Orgel
What Position: Communications and Digital Content Specialist
When I Started: May 2024
Where I Live: Miami, Florida

My Why:
Adapting to the impacts of the climate crisis is the best solution we have moving forward, and ecosystem restoration is the best tangible action we can take to do that.
Bonus: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you smile?
My dog, Banjo!



FEATURE STORY

UNSEEN ARCHITECTS: HOW HIGH ANDEAN POLYLEPIS FORESTS FEED THE AMAZON

By Anita Huan

Picture a string telephone with cups on both ends, the kind a child might use in a tree fort. On one end, the majestic Andes mountains reach for the sky, and on the other, the lush green Amazon Rainforest. These two places may seem worlds apart, but they're connected through a stream of flowing water partially directed by the Polylepis trees perching atop the Andean mountain ranges.

How do these trees with gnarled branches and sturdy trunks, isolated on lofty mountains, contribute to the rivers of the Amazon? The answer lies in a watery journey that begins high above the clouds.

Imagine clouds drifting lazily across the sky, carrying droplets of water. As these clouds pass over the Andes, Polylepis forests sip from them like thirsty sponges – a process called interception. The excess water captured by high-Andean forests then trickles down the mountain slopes, following a gravity-guided path.

As the water descends, it joins forces with streams and rivers from melting snow and rainfall, creating a network of waterways that crisscross the

Andes. These pathways, filled with fresh water, gather momentum and volume, and over many, many years, create valleys and canyons.

When it reaches the foothills and lowlands of the Andes, the water, now enriched with minerals and nutrients from its mountainous journey, merges into larger rivers like the Madre de Dios and the Ucayali. These tributaries then direct mountain-born waters to blend seamlessly into the Amazon River, supplying it with fresh water and helping the rainforest ecosystem to thrive.

Polylepis forests may not appear as grand as the Amazonian tropical rainforests, but they are the unseen architects of Amazon rivers that help support many diverse species and ecosystems, representing another example of nature's interconnection between two seemingly disconnected entities.

SOURCES: • [PNAS](#) • [Science Direct](#)

**So, the next time you
marvel at the greenery of
the Amazon, remember
the workers behind the
scenes — the high Andean
Polylepis forests.**

This image depicts a serene, mist-covered mountain landscape in the Chalpi area of Ecuador.

Photo by FONAG

MAJOR MILESTONES

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, Global Forest Generation celebrated a remarkable series of achievements, beginning with Acción Andina's win of Prince William's Earthshot Prize to 'Protect and Restore Nature.' This honor was followed by Acción Andina's designation as a UN World Restoration Flagship, identifying it as a leading initiative in global ecosystem restoration. We also began work on two major monitoring initiatives that will help us assess long-term impacts of our restoration and conservation work. Read on to learn more.

Florent Kaiser and Constantino Auca Chutas receiving The Earthshot Prize in November 2023.
Photos courtesy of The Earthshot Prize



ACCIÓN ANDINA WINS THE EARTHSHOT PRIZE!



In November 2023, Global Forest Generation learned the momentous news that our flagship restoration initiative, Acción Andina, won Prince William's Earthshot Prize in the 'Protect and Restore Nature' category! Acción Andina was one of five winners, chosen from among 15 finalists, and more than 1,000 entrants. Winners were each awarded a £1 million prize to help scale their solutions and accelerate their growth and impact. The work of this

third cohort of Earthshot Prize winners spans the globe, protecting and restoring the environment and supporting local communities across six continents. Acción Andina's honor extends to thousands of partners and communities across the Andes, and our supporters, founders, and friends. Ultimately, The Earthshot Prize was a win for Mother Earth! Learn more about The [Earthshot Prize](#) and [watch the feature video](#) on Acción Andina.

MAJOR MILESTONES

United Nations Recognizes Acción Andina as One of the Most Ambitious Restoration Efforts in the World

Constantino Auca Chutas and Florent Kaiser at the UN Gala of Hope in Nairobi Kenya, in February 2024, celebrating Acción Andina's recognition as a UN World Restoration Flagship.
Photo by Kiara Worth/UNEP

Soon after winning The Earthshot Prize in 2023, Global Forest Generation received more good news: In early 2024, Acción Andina was distinguished as one of seven UN World Restoration Flagships, a prestigious recognition celebrating exceptional large-scale and long-term ecosystem restoration efforts. UN World Restoration Flagships are selected under the banner of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030), a global movement designed to prevent and reverse the degradation of natural environments across the planet. Acción Andina is honored to join the global #GenerationRestoration movement, safeguarding unique high-altitude ecosystems for water, economies, and wildlife.



MAJOR MILESTONES

HELPING PARTNERS IMPROVE MONITORING

Monitoring the implementation of Acción Andina's restoration and conservation work is crucial for tracking the progress of each season's activities. It allows us to assess the impact of our 14 partners in the field and report results to donors and key allies. This process requires a standard system of data reporting, and the growth of Acción Andina since its establishment in 2018 has necessitated a more robust system to effectively support and enhance current monitoring practices.

During the fiscal year, GFG and Acción Andina lead implementing partner, Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN), began work on a new system to improve stakeholder relationships and track and communicate restoration activities. The system will incorporate a Salesforce-based impact management platform that provides a central hub for conservation partners to report key metrics and restoration activities. The platform will feature a data dashboard to track long-term progress across the entire Acción

Andina initiative, as well as a grant lifecycle tool to measure the impact of funds over time and reduce the burden of grant reporting. With a more streamlined and standardized system, GFG will be able to monitor and evaluate restoration and conservation progress in near real-time, allowing for better decision-making, more cost-effective programs, and improved transparency and accountability to donors and other stakeholders.

"While our implementing Acción Andina partners already collect detailed data, this new system will provide a holistic view of our restoration progress and how funds are supporting on-the-ground conservation," says Stephanie Arellano, GFG's conservation program officer. "The project is still in its early stage, but we no longer will have to manually synthesize data and create static, periodic reports. We will be able to share up-to-date progress with our supporters and how we are helping to create more resilient communities and ecosystems in the Andes."



Acción Andina partner Faunagua in Bolivia monitoring *Polylepis* trees in the communities of Chiaraje and Icari.

MAJOR MILESTONES

WATER IMPACT MONITORING TO ENSURE CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE ANDES

Record droughts in South America have led to devastating wildfires, water rations, and planned power outages – upending lives and economies. Driven by the urgent water crisis in South America, Global Forest Generation began work on a new “Acción Andina Water Impact Monitoring Framework,” with funding from The Coca-Cola Foundation. This crucial effort will provide missing intel about how much water is retained from high-Andean reforestation efforts, helping local conservation partners make informed decisions on where to replant for maximum benefit to communities experiencing drought.

The effort aims to create a locally led, simple, and effective reporting tool that will enhance partner capacity to monitor water availability and societal benefits. It will have a standard methodology to track key water metrics that will support broader

public and private sector goals. With better data across the region, the initiative will improve decision-making by identifying threats and opportunities, while optimizing GFG’s investments in restoration and conservation activities.

The Acción Andina Water Impact Monitoring Framework will be developed through four phases (discovery, design, development, and piloting), in close collaboration with three initial partners from Ecuador (FONAG), Bolivia (Faunagua), and Peru (ECOAN). These partners have existing water monitoring systems in place for local projects but are not yet integrated into Acción Andina. Insights from the initial partners will inform the design phase and help establish the water reporting criteria for all partners. We aim to complete the project by the beginning of 2025 and will update partners and donors on our progress regularly.



Chaulaccocha community members in Vilcanota, Peru, March 2024.
Photo by Michell León Fotografía y Naturaleza

MEDIA MENTIONS: CONTRIBUTING TO THE CONVERSATION

Part of Global Forest Generation's mission is to help shape the global conversation on restoration to inspire transformative actions. GFG has hosted workshops, authored thought pieces, and participated in interviews with climate activists and reporters to showcase both the urgency and opportunity in implementing nature-based solutions.

Continue reading for a sample of how we engaged.



Attendees and fellow Earthshot Prize finalists at the 2024 London Climate Action Week.

Photo courtesy of The Earthshot Prize

LONDON CLIMATE WEEK RECAP

Global Forest Generation participated in the 2024 London Climate Action Week, a "festival" focused on finding global solutions to climate change.

We were thrilled to have spent the week alongside our fellow Earthshot Prize winners, engaging in inspiring conversations about climate action. Florent Kaiser and Constantino Auca Chutas connected with global leaders and attended special events hosted by Prince William, fostering important discussions on sustainability.

The week included a workshop on June 26 at Salesforce Tower, which served as a soft introduction to our new finance strategy and fundraising campaign for Acción

Andina, called Yaku Ñan (meaning, the path of water). Yaku Ñan is designed to build long-term sustainability for Acción Andina by creating a regional fund for the Andes, assembling a coalition of donors and investors, and elevating the Andes on the global stage. The workshop was an invaluable opportunity to gather feedback from supporters and lay the groundwork for expanding our efforts to restore ecosystems in the Andes. Stay tuned for more updates on Yaku Ñan, and learn how you can contribute to this exciting initiative!

MEDIA MENTIONS: CONTRIBUTING TO THE CONVERSATION

DID YOU CATCH THESE PODCASTS?

Climate Connections: A Podcast Interview with GFG and Acción Andina

In this episode of Climate Connections, listeners delve into how Acción Andina is reviving ancient Indigenous practices and galvanizing the collective effort of multiple generations of locals and their conservation leaders to protect the Andes. Join Global Forest Generation CEO Florent Kaiser and Acción Andina President Constantino Auca Chutas as they discuss their collaborative efforts to restore Andean ecosystems and secure vital water supplies for local communities. Discover the role of these initiatives in addressing climate challenges and promoting sustainable practices across the region.

LatAm in Focus: How Can Latin America Fix Its Water Crisis?

In this episode, Florent Kaiser joins Rodney Martinez from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to discuss Latin America's water crisis and the innovative reforestation projects making a difference. The conversation highlights insights from a recent WMO report on the challenges posed by rising temperatures, which are leading to severe droughts, wildfires, and glacier loss across the region. Florent emphasizes the role of forests in reviving water supplies, stating, "[The Polylepis forest ecosystem] is one of the highest forests in the world. It has an incredible ability to capture water from air humidity and convert it into water through condensation, storing it within the root systems at high altitudes."



MEDIA MENTIONS: CONTRIBUTING TO THE CONVERSATION

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF OUR PARTNERS

Global Forest Generation and Acción Andina staff partnered with international Public Relations agency, *Another*, to launch a Latin America media campaign after the Earthshot and UN World Restoration Flagship recognitions. The intent was to celebrate the local efforts of our Acción Andina conservation partners through regional media coverage. The three-month campaign, which involved print, online, and broadcast interviews in five Andean countries, resulted in 127 publications. More than half of these publications were in top-tier media outlets. Beyond the numbers, the campaign's biggest impact was showcasing our many local leaders and their important contribution to restoring and protecting forest ecosystems.



Interview with Alan Chamorro with Acción Andina strategic partner organization, ECOAN.
Photo courtesy of Another PR firm

MEDIA MENTIONS: CONTRIBUTING TO THE CONVERSATION

CATCH UP ON OUR LATEST VIDEOS!

Since last year, we've produced two new videos that highlight the collaborative efforts of Acción Andina and its partners in the fight against climate change and environmental degradation. The videos showcase the powerful environmental work being done across the Andes. They are a testament to the collective dedication and spirit of everyone involved.

In our first video, you'll dive into the heart of our flagship initiative, Acción Andina, exploring how local knowledge, passion, and perseverance are driving reforestation efforts and revitalizing the Andean highlands.

The second video, part of the United Nations' Restore documentary series, illuminates the pivotal role of Polylepis trees in this monumental endeavor and the inspiring success stories in Ecuador.

Explore the stories and successes behind these efforts and join us in continuing this important work. Your support and engagement are vital as we continue to advance our mission and expand our impact to restore lost forests and nurture hope for a sustainable future.



WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM THOUGHT PIECE: WHY WE NEED A LONG-TERM VISION FOR RESTORATION

Forests are vital ecosystems – beautiful, complex, and rich in history. In an article for the World Economic Forum, Global Forest Generation CEO Florent Kaiser advocates for a 100-year approach to forest restoration, highlighting the significance of multi-generational leadership and the integration of Indigenous knowledge. He emphasizes that long-term planning and local, ancestral practices, as exemplified by the Acción Andina initiative, are essential for nurturing biodiversity, ensuring water security, and preserving cultural values amidst climate change.

The article explores how Acción Andina employs this approach in the Andes, blending local and Indigenous knowledge with a forward-looking vision to address pressing environmental challenges. To dive deeper into these strategies and insights, [read the full article.](#)

OUR DONORS & PARTNERS



Acción Andina March donor partners gathered at Tirijuy glacier in Vilcanota, Peru in March 2024. Read more page 25.
Photo by Michell León Fotografía y Naturaleza

“We all have a few key things in common. We’re just normal people with bucket-loads of passion and drive to protect our planet for the future...I hope that just maybe, this might inspire others who may be doubting whether they have the ability to make a difference... anything is possible. Please jump in and join us in the fight against climate change.”

Amanda Bronkhorst, CEO and founder of JUST ONE Tree

OUR DONORS & PARTNERS

OUR ONGOING COLLABORATION WITH THE EARTHSHOT PRIZE



Florent Kaiser and Constantino Auca Chutas with Prince William as part of winning The Earthshot Prize.
Photo courtesy of The Earthshot Prize

Winning the 2023 Earthshot Prize was a pinnacle moment for everyone involved in Acción Andina, and a milestone in our ongoing partnership with The Earthshot Prize (TEP) community. Since then, TEP has become more than a global award. It continues to be an essential ally in our fight to bring back lost ecosystems and protect water in the Andes.

One primary way that TEP has championed our restoration initiative is through their nine-month Fellowship program, meant to supercharge growth and impact by unlocking new partnership and financing

opportunities. The Fellowship program has provided international communications and media support, as well as speaking engagements at key international conferences. TEP has also showcased Acción Andina on its [Launchpad](#) platform to investors and philanthropists.

GFG in turn has involved key members of The Earthshot Prize team in on-the-ground restoration projects and strategic planning events. Both Mathilde Carraro, director of fellowship; and Tanya Aritao, senior acceleration manager, visited Acción Andina projects



IN THE HEART OF THE ANDES: UNITING FOR REFORESTATION

Photo by Michell León Fotografía y Naturaleza

in March 2024 in Peru (see story, right) and joined a workshop lunch during the 2024 London Climate Action Week (see story on page 19) to envision a new financing strategy for Acción Andina.

Such in-person collaborations are invaluable. Aritao says visiting Peru and participating in a tree-planting ceremony provided a meaningful opportunity to witness multiple generations of families planting together and celebrating the regrowth of their forests.

“Knowing that you are planting trees that will live and grow for generations is incredibly powerful. You can read and learn about it through articles and videos,

but it’s extremely different to experience the solution up close,” she says. “We’re so excited to have tangible ways to support what’s next for Acción Andina, because we know it’s going to be different from what got them here...it’s going to make a huge impact across the world.”

We are thankful for the continued collaboration with TEP – through conferences, summits, virtual calls, and gatherings that have brought global visibility to our large-scale restoration initiative. TEP support has been essential to growing Acción Andina, and we look forward to deepening our partnership with them and the growing global community of winners and finalists.

The magic of the Andes is most powerfully experienced in person. In March 2024, a core group of our donors and strategic partners gathered in Cusco, Peru, to participate in a reforestation ceremony amongst the majestic mountains. Our friends, including from The Earthshot Prize, the United Nations Environment Programme, Ecologi, JUST ONE Tree, and Teck, visited the glaciers of Tirijuy, a reforestation site, and the pristine old growth forest of Abra Malaga. The high point of the trip was the Queuña Raymi: the Indigenous communities’ tree-planting festival with celebratory music and dance in addition to hours of arduous and gratifying reforestation.

Participants represented different organizations with distinct missions, but all were united by the experience of helping to reforest the Andes.

OUR DONORS & PARTNERS



Photo by Todd Brown/UNEP

We thank all of our partners for their transformative support for Global Forest Generation and our initiative, Acción Andina.

In particular, we thank the following donors, supporters, and allies for providing incredible platforms to amplify our work and grow the collective restoration movement around the world.



GROW WITH US



Together, with communities, governments, and organizations worldwide, we are working to ensure that future generations inherit a healthier, more resilient planet. We have many ways you can support Global Forest Generation and help us realize this future. [Learn more.](#)

Photo by FAB

FEATURE STORY

UNCOVERING THE TIES BETWEEN GLACIER MELT AND FOREST RESTORATION

Did you know that glaciers act as time capsules, preserving invaluable climate records from thousands of years ago? As they melt, we lose not only a glimpse into our planet's past, but also vital freshwater resources. Climate change has led to a 30–50% reduction in Andean glaciers over the past 30 years, threatening water security for the 90 million people who depend on their meltwater for agriculture, daily use, and industry. In 2024, Venezuela became the first Andean nation in South America to lose all its glaciers in modern history, highlighting the critical impact of ice loss on local

water supplies and climate history, while underscoring the need for comprehensive approaches to address climate change.

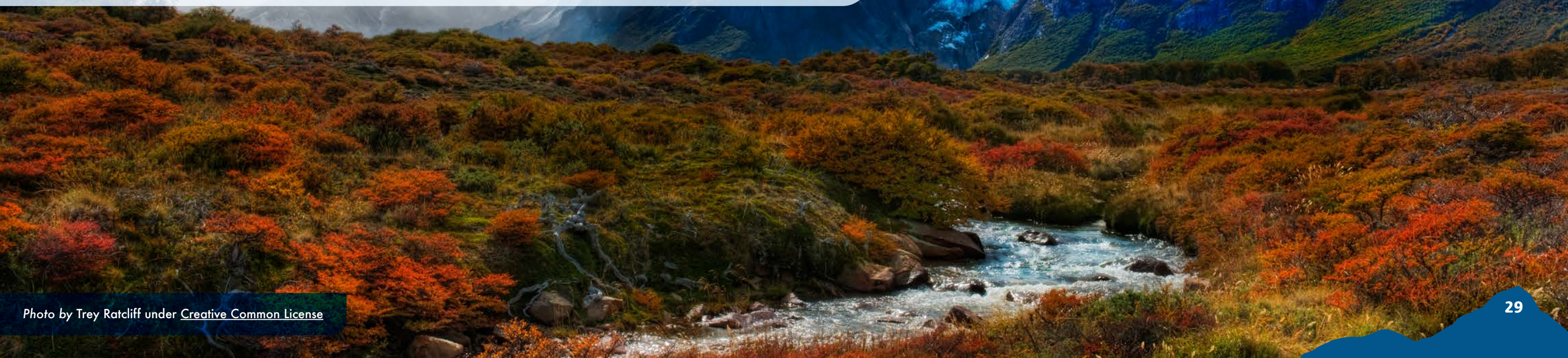
Regenerating forest ecosystems is a cost-effective and tangible way to protect against drought and achieve climate resilience. That's because forests play a profound and sometimes surprising role in the water cycle. They enhance groundwater recharge by capturing rainfall and allowing it to infiltrate the soil, which sustains river flows and maintains water supplies. Through the process of transpiration, trees release water

vapor into the atmosphere, contributing to cloud formation and precipitation – essential for regions reliant on seasonal rainfall for agriculture.

Large-scale forest restoration can even influence precipitation patterns worldwide. For example, forest restoration in the Amazon can impact rainfall as far afield as Europe and Eastern Asia! The forests in South America **are more than just regional rainmakers**. They are part of a complex system that sustains our planet, and thus stewarding these ecosystems is a global imperative.

Strengthening the role of forests in promoting water resilience is crucial for safeguarding both human and ecological communities. At Global Forest Generation, we recognize the intertwined nature of these challenges. Just as glaciers preserve climate history and regulate water supplies, forests play a critical role in maintaining environmental balance and water cycles. By revitalizing these ecosystems, we strive to enhance water resilience, support biodiversity, and ensure a sustainable future.

SOURCES: • [Phys.org](https://www.phys.org) • [NASA](https://www.nasa.gov) • [MDPI](https://www.mdpi.com) • [NBC News](https://www.nbcnews.com)



ACCIÓN ANDINA HIGHLIGHTS

Revitalizing Ecosystems, Protecting Water

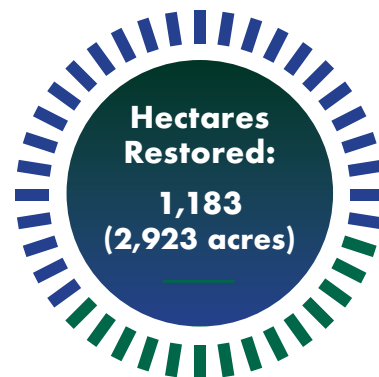
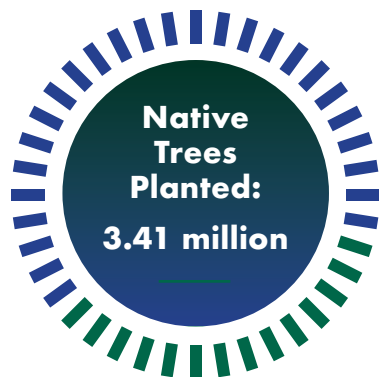
The vision behind Acción Andina, guided by both Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN) and Global Forest Generation, has always been to create a continental-scale movement to restore the Andes. This year was no different, and the initiative made strides in foundational areas such as water security. It also moved into new territory, such as launching a more robust data reporting and monitoring system for our many partners across several countries. We know, too, that restoring once-forested areas will not be enough. Protecting intact forests is essential in our fight against a warming climate – untouched ecosystems are the blueprints for restoration, and we need nature’s designs to inspire and guide our efforts.

During the fiscal year, Acción Andina finished one planting season and launched another. Local conservation partners and communities continued to grow millions of

native seedlings in nurseries and began planting activities during the rainy season, which typically begins in October or November. Droughts and destructive wildfires in some cases disrupted plans (in Ecuador, for example, Andean Adventures decided to move seedlings from one nursery to another due to extreme dry weather). But local conservation partners were still able to meet the season’s planting goal.

And yet, our work is more than planting an ever-increasing number of trees. We also strive to achieve more intangible goals: learning from local communities on where to prioritize plantings and engaging with young learners on the importance of high-Andean ecosystems. We also build deep partnerships with governments, conservation experts, the private sector, and more, while revitalizing entire ecosystems for widespread resiliency. Learn more about the year’s work for Acción Andina.

AT A GLANCE: 2023-24 season*



*Note: The Acción Andina season is 15 months long, beginning in January and ending in March of the following year. The data reported here reflect the planting season and not the fiscal year.

Visualizing Acción Andina's Work

Acción Andina spans five countries (soon to be six), where thousands of people are collectively working to restore the highest growing forests in the world. Sometimes the sheer scale of our work is challenging to grasp – including our 14 implementing partners, the many restoration sites in each country, and our ever-moving metrics.

During the fiscal year, we began work on a new mapping tool called **Restoration Scope**. The map not only will give viewers a visual sense of where we work, but also will include specific data on each country, partner, and project. The platform will display essential data, such as hectares restored and conserved, number of communities involved, nurseries established, as well as a narrative of each project. This data – collected since the start of the initiative – has undergone thorough cleaning and analysis to ensure accuracy. We plan to go live with the map within the 2024-2025 fiscal year.



ACCIÓN ANDINA HIGHLIGHTS

Meet the Acción Andina Team

Who am I: Beto Cruz

What Position: Project Supervisor

When I Started: April 2023

Where I Live: Cusco, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

Interacting with the implementing partners and carrying out field work so we can be a positive force in this context of climate change.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

Going on walks in nature and the mountains, as well as playing soccer.



Who am I: Ani Luna

What Position: Director of Operations

When I Started: August 2020

Where I Live: Cusco, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

Together, across an entire continent, we speak the same language and seek the same solutions for our beloved Pachamama (Mother Earth). I collaborate with so many nations and people who work tirelessly for a better future. It fills me with happiness.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

I love being in the Sacred Valley of the Incas, a magical, green place, full of nature and history, enjoying the sun and the company of my family and my farm animals. In that place, time stands still.



Who am I: Ana Vaneza Hurtado Alegre

What Position: Accountant

When I Started: January 2022

Where I Live: Cusco, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

I'm helping a little to preserve ecosystems, not only in Peru but also across South America. This has meant that I've had the opportunity to understand how work is carried out and developed in other countries and how solutions are found to different obstacles.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

I love spending time with my family, especially with my son, helping him with his homework, playing, and talking with him.



Who am I: Jean Pierre Salguero

What Position: Communications Officer

When I Started: May 2022

Where I Live: Lima, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

Being able to collaborate on something bigger than myself, whether it's helping to promote our program and its values, or seeing first-hand in the field how we can help our communities improve their quality of life.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

I'm a big fan of reading books on psychoanalysis and fiction; I think that by understanding how the human brain works, it's easier for me to connect with the world. I also love spending time with my children doing activities we create together.



Who am I: Victor Sanchez

What Position: Spatial Monitoring and Analysis Officer

When I Started: May 2024

Where I Live: Trujillo, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

What I enjoy most about my job is the opportunity to understand landscapes from another perspective and how each natural component connects and sustains life.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

I love exploring natural spaces, whether it's bird watching, landscape photography, or just hiking.



Who am I: Adrián Torres

What Position: Director of Conservation and Impact

When I Started: December 2018

Where I Live: Lima, Peru

What I Love About My Job:

I like to help people conserve nature and connect with it. I have the opportunity to travel; meet unique species, landscapes, and people; and share success stories about common problems we all face. I also like the constant learning I receive thanks to the great team around me.

Bonus: What is something you like to do outside of work?

I like illustration, trekking, and photography. In a way, my work incorporates my hobbies. Outside of that, I enjoy video games, cooking, and skating!



Photo courtesy of Rolex

GFG Co-founder and Acción Andina President Wins 2023 Rolex Award

GFG Co-founder and Acción Andina President Constantino Auca Chutas received the prestigious 2023 Rolex Award for his visionary leadership in environmental conservation. Tino was recognized for his transformative reforestation movement across the Andes, including the planting of millions of native trees and the creation of 16 protected areas in Peru's Vilcanota mountains that have significantly impacted the region's biodiversity and water resources. By revitalizing essential

Polylepis forests, which play a critical role in the Amazonian water cycle, Tino's work through Acción Andina not only combats deforestation and soil erosion but also honors and integrates traditional Quechuan values with innovative conservation practices. His recognition underscores the profound impact of community-driven initiatives in preserving our planet's vital ecosystems. Congratulations, Tino!

ACCIÓN ANDINA HIGHLIGHTS

Partners



Acción Andina Partners Come Together

In September 2023, the Acción Andina local leaders summit took place in Córdoba, Argentina, hosted by Global Forest Generation and ECOAN. This gathering brought together over 50 dedicated individuals from 14 Acción Andina partner organizations. The summit's goal was to foster collaboration among partners.

During the summit, participants shared their excitement about how Acción Andina is more than just a program – it's a collaborative effort that supports their work, requiring growing involvement in shaping management plans.

Over three dynamic days, local leaders from five Andean nations engaged in workshops, including a field trip to the Provincial Water Reserve of Pampa de Achala and the stunning Quebrada de Condorito National Park, where Acción Andina Argentinian partners Fundación Bosquizar and Fundación de Actividades Biosféricas are actively implementing restoration projects.

Check out our [partner video](#) to experience the enthusiasm and commitment firsthand! As one participant stated: "Las fronteras son imaginarias hoy día, pero nuestra naturaleza, nuestro entorno, es lo que hay que cuidar." ("Borders are imaginary today, but our nature, our environment is what we must protect.")

Gratitude for Our Local Conservation Leaders

Local partners are fundamental to our efforts to restore and conserve ecosystems. During the fiscal year, Acción Andina collaborated with 14 partner organizations on 23 projects across five countries in South America, ensuring the entire operation of each effort is sustained by local experts familiar with the opportunities and challenges of the area. Partners in turn collaborate with local communities who lead restoration activities – from growing trees in nurseries, to planting tens of thousands of trees during reforestation events.

Thank you to the following partner organizations for being a part of the Acción Andina team. (And a soon welcome to our 2025 partners!) The successes reflected in this report would not be possible without their knowledge, passion, leadership, and commitment to protecting the planet.



Conservation

Protecting Remaining Forests

Ongoing protection of high Andean forests takes many forms, from signing agreements with local communities, to conserving existing forest patches, to working with regional and national government agencies, to creating protected areas and management plans. In Aquia, Peru, for example, ECOAN submitted a final proposal for the creation of a new protected area.

Wildfires are an increasing threat to protecting existing forests, and prevention and management remain a top priority. In Bolivia, where Armonía has trained more than 100 people from nine communities since 2021, 15 additional sets of firefighting equipment were provided to four community firefighter brigades. In Peru, ECOAN provided hands-on, practical training to 60 people in its Vilcanota project, equipped two communities in its Ccorca project, and established and equipped a community firefighter brigade in its Nor Yauyos Cochas project. In Argentina, Fundación de Actividades Biosféricas conducted 36 patrols for forest fire prevention and conservation in the Pampas de Achala Water Reserve.

Other forest protection activities include simple but effective measures such as installing fencing to prevent livestock grazing, or working with local park guards to monitor invasive species and educate public visitors about protected areas. In Ecuador, Aves y Conservación hired two park guards from local

communities located in the Water Protected Area of Otavalo, Mojanda, which it helped establish last season. Similarly, Fundación Actividades Biosféricas in Córdoba province, Argentina, worked with park guards in the Pampa de Achala Water Reserve to repair fencing and other infrastructure, helped educate visitors, and observed signs of invasive exotic species. Also in Argentina, Fundación Bosquizar reviewed 46 kilometers of previously installed fencing, making repairs where necessary.

Together these activities protect pristine forests and provide a model for how to restore healthy, functioning ecosystems.



*Left photo: Installed fencing at the Vilcanota project in Peru helps prevent grazing. Photo by ECOAN
Right photo: Fire prevention training in December 2023 with Asociación Armonía in Bolivia.*



Local community members in Vilcanota, Peru, using provided tools (flashlights, jackets, shovels, and hoses) during a training to prevent fire.
Photo by ECOAN

SPOTLIGHT

How Do We Propagate Trees in a Nursery?

Part of Acción Andina's work to restore high Andean ecosystems is planting millions and millions of native trees, mostly different species of Polylepis. But how do we get and grow these trees? While some partners cultivate Polylepis trees by seed, most use cuttings, or parts of a mature tree that are then grown in nurseries. Partners will collect Polylepis cuttings in local native forests, which allows for the genetic material to be preserved. However, because these cuttings are essentially clones, implementing partners are careful about where they collect cuttings to ensure genetic diversity. Cuttings are then transferred to local nurseries and are cared for over the course of several months (the exact time depends on the region, growing conditions, and species). When cuttings are mature enough with a strong enough root base, our partners and local communities plant the young trees, usually between October and March. Reforestation with these native, local plants produces trees with a high survival rate – generally around 90% of trees in the nurseries survive.



Water

Water for Everyone

Water scarcity is an ongoing issue within many Acción Andina communities and will continue to worsen with climate change. Forest protection and restoration is one crucial way we are helping to retain and protect local water resources. To learn more about the crucial link between forests and freshwater, read our two feature stories on pages 12 and 28.

In addition to restoring forest ecosystems, local communities install infrastructure such as water catchment systems and efficient sprinklers in nurseries. Together these on-the-ground efforts complement Global Forest Generation's efforts to engage governments around water policy and implement new monitoring protocols to better understand the impact of our restoration activities on water availability (see story about our new water monitoring initiative on page 18).

Here are a few examples of how our partners are working to address water scarcity.

- Acción Andina partners in Ecuador have been installing and maintaining a variety of irrigation, catchment, and reservoir systems. They are also working on obtaining a certification from the Ministry of Water, Environment, and Ecological Transition, which will help them access public funding. Andean Adventures built three water catchment systems to help nearly 1,200 community members save and use clean water more efficiently.

- Bolivia partner Armonía also constructed two water reservoirs in two communities. It reports that families there are eager to participate in restoration activities due to their positive impacts on water security in the long term.

- In Peru, Instituto para la Conservación de Especies Amenazadas (ICEA) installed a new micro-sprinkler irrigation system, benefitting 120 families.



“For us, water is a source of life.”

- Justina Quispe Taco, Member of Rumira Sondormor Native Community, Peru



Watering a nursery in Peru's Challabamba District.
Photo by ACCA

SPOTLIGHT

Engaging with Governments

Collaboration between conservation organizations and governments is vital for scaling impact and ensuring policy alignment. Governments bring legal frameworks, funding, and long-term planning capabilities, while conservation organizations may contribute field expertise, community connections, and innovative restoration strategies. Ultimately, collaboration ensures that conservation projects are scientifically sound and embedded in broader environmental policies.

Florent Kaiser and Constantino Auca Chutas presenting the Acción Andina initiative at an event with the British Ambassador in Lima, Peru, in April 2024.



Below is a summary of how some of our Acción Andina partners engaged with governments during the fiscal year:

Aves y Conservación (Ecuador):

Aves y Conservación's restoration activities align with the National Forestry Plan and municipal conservation ordinances. Additionally, they work within protected areas like the Cotacachi-Cayapas Reserve, following management plans to protect these sensitive ecosystems.

Fundación de Actividades Biosféricas (Argentina):

In partnership with the Ministry of Environment of Córdoba, FAB collaborates on restoration efforts such as developing a management plan for the Pampa de Achala Water Reserve, and supporting environmental education through workshops for local guides and guards.

Árbol y Vida (Argentina):

Árbol y Vida is in the initial stages of collaborating with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Their restoration work aligns with the Yala Provincial Park Management Plan, and they seek to expand their involvement in other provincial projects.

Community Outreach and Engagement

Deepening Roots Through Collaboration

Acción Andina's commitment to community engagement is at the heart of its mission, fostering collaboration among thousands of individuals dedicated to restoring Andean ecosystems. From Indigenous communities participating in tree-planting festivals in Peru, to educational workshops throughout the region, to providing training and funding to nursery technicians, to engaging university students and volunteers from local businesses in Ecuador, these collective efforts are crucial for raising awareness and inspiring collective action toward protecting forests and the water security of the continent.

Acción Andina partners prioritize community involvement in decision-making, including where nurseries will be built, how land will be managed, and which products and services will be developed. For instance, in northern Peru, the community of Aquia installed 4 kilometers of irrigation tubing, positively impacting 120 families!

As we continue to strengthen these community ties, our partners remain focused on environmental education. ECOAN in Peru, for example, collaborated with the National Service for Protected Areas to develop an environmental education strategy aimed at young students, ensuring they understand the vital role of ecosystems in their daily lives. In Argentina, Fundación Bosquizar engaged 225 participants through workshops focused on the importance of Polylepis forests for water security. Over in Ecuador, Páramos de Tungurahua (now called Incana) distributed 100 home garden kits, promoting sustainable agricultural practices that complement reforestation efforts.

As Acción Andina enters its seventh season, we look forward to sharing more updates on our community engagement and the tangible impacts of our collaborative efforts across the region!



A nursery in Ecuador.
Photo by Todd Brown/UNEP

Community Engagement at a Glance

Throughout the 2023/24 season, local partners engaged with approximately 25,000 participants across 117 communities through a variety of workshops, community fairs, technical trainings, and local involvement in Acción Andina reforestation events.

Local Leadership Development

Acción Andina provides ongoing leadership support to local partner organizations to make long-term careers in conservation possible in these remote, high-Andean environments. This season US \$364,445 was disbursed to 33 conservation leaders. US \$572,467 was disbursed to 210 project coordinators and nursery managers, and many more part-time nursery technicians.

SPOTLIGHT

Warmi Kewiñas: Bolivia's Women Tree Guardians

Since October 2022, the Warmi Kewiñas, a women's organization from the Chiaraje community in Bolivia, has been making strides in environmental conservation through the Kewiña Forest Restoration project. Initially started by 10 women, the group now includes 20 members who have expanded their knowledge in nursery management and native tree production. This initiative has been supported by Faunagua, partner of Acción Andina, which has provided resources and training in nursery management and native tree production.

Their efforts extend beyond tree planting; they've engaged in waste management and recycling initiatives to keep their community clean. Recognized nationally and internationally, the Warmi Kewiñas inspire other women in Cocapata Municipality to become environmental defenders.

Currently, they aim to gain legal recognition and improve their quality of life while continuing their environmental work. Their impact underscores the critical role of women in local climate action and community development.



Warmi Kewiñas preparing seedlings.
Photo by One Tree Planted

Biodiversity

Polylepis forests in the high Andes, with their twisted trunks and dense canopies, provide a critical refuge for a remarkable range of species, many of which exist nowhere else. The restoration of these forests is essential for protecting species such as the Andean condor and rare bird species like the royal cinclodes. Polylepis forests are also home to the solitary Spectacled (Andean) bear, the only bear species native to South America, whose iconic look [inspired Paddington Bear](#).

While Acción Andina does not have a formal biodiversity monitoring program across the initiative, several conservation partners have reported on the following activities during the fiscal year.

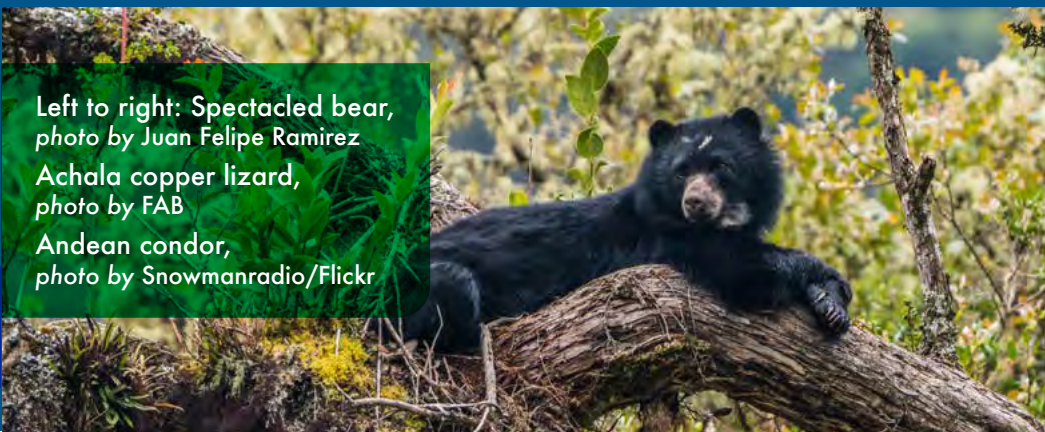
- Fundación de Actividades Biosféricas contributes to the protection of various species that live in the Pampa de Achala, in the province of Córdoba in Argentina, including the Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*), Andean mountain cat (*Leopardus jacobita*), Andean fox (*Lycalopex culpaeus*) and the Achala copper lizard (*Pristidactylus achalensis*).
- Acción Andina partner Conservación Amazónica in Peru leads the Spectacled Bear Project (*Tremarctos ornatus*).

Since 2021, monitoring has been carried out using camera traps at the Wayqecha biological station, as well as in the forests of the Juan Velasco Alvarado Community and the Alto Pilcomayo Conservation Concession. In 2023, the team used tracking collars to learn about how these elusive animals shape the forests (for instance, by eating plants and then excreting seeds miles away).

- While Ecuadorian partner Aves y Conservación does not receive direct support from Acción Andina to conduct biodiversity studies, they routinely monitor local birds, including 21 species associated with the Yanahurco landscape, 33 species associated with the Pichincha landscape, and 135 species associated with the Imbabura landscape. These birds are not only found in Polylepis forests but surrounding wetlands, lakes, and brushy areas.

The Tree that Goes by **MANY NAMES**

The name Polylepis, means “many skins,” on account of its layered, papery bark. This native high-Andean tree also has many names. In Peru, it is known as *queñual*, *queñua*, or *queñoa*. In Bolivia, it is called *kewiña*. In Ecuador, it is referred to as *árbol de papel*, and in Argentina, it’s known as *tabaquillo*. The genus Polylepis consists of 45 species, which are crucial for retaining moisture and storing water at high altitudes. However, due to deforestation caused by livestock grazing and logging, only 1-10% of the original forest remains. To address this issue, Acción Andina is leading community-based planting through “minkas” (which means communal efforts in Quechua), reviving ancestral Andean traditions.
References: [Ceiba.org](https://ceiba.org)



Left to right: Spectacled bear,
photo by Juan Felipe Ramirez
Achala copper lizard,
photo by FAB
Andean condor,
photo by Snowmanradio/Flickr

LOOKING AHEAD

Photo by ECOAN

Restoring the Andes and the most critical ecosystems across the globe will be a century-long effort. It will require an unprecedented **multi-generational COLLABORATION.**

Transformative partnerships, both in the region and globally, are key to our success with Acción Andina, our first multi-nation initiative. **We are seeking support across all sectors to grow Acción Andina's impact in the following ways:**

**GROW, plant, and care for
100 MILLION
native trees to
expand native
forest ecosystems.**

**GROW the social
ecosystem restoration
movement to over
1,000
local communities,
preserving unique cultures
& forest ecosystems.**

**PROTECT
500,000
hectares of remaining
endangered forests and
their biodiversity.**

LOOKING AHEAD

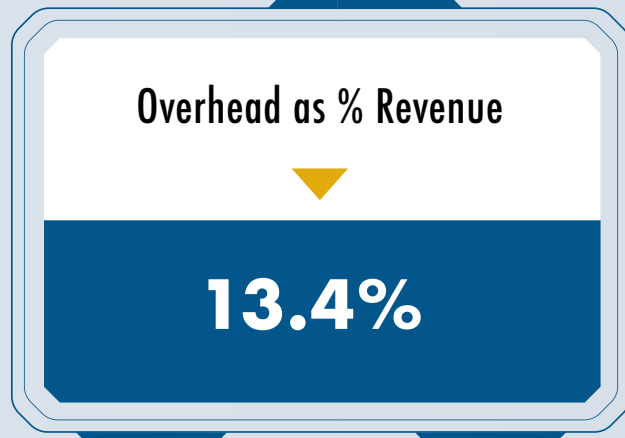
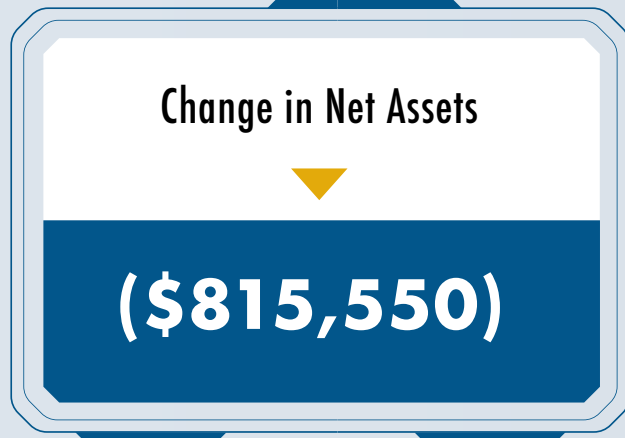
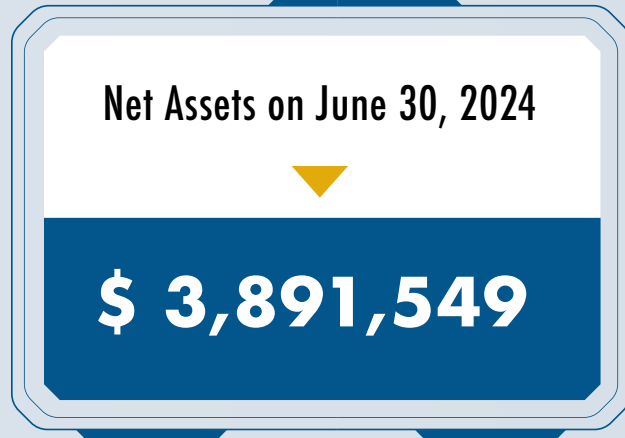
TRAIN THOUSANDS
of local restoration
leaders to sustain
restoration efforts
long-term.

ENGAGE companies,
governments, media,
and many more to share
the GFG/Acción Andina
story to every potential
audience to continue
to build and sustain
long-term support.



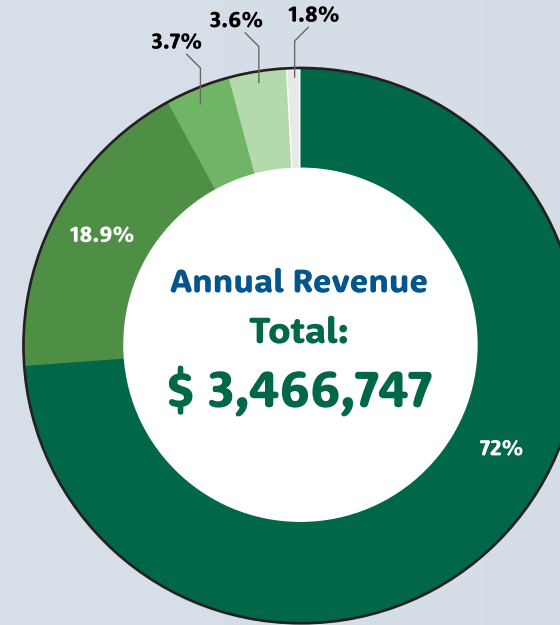
Photo by FAB

Financial Overview



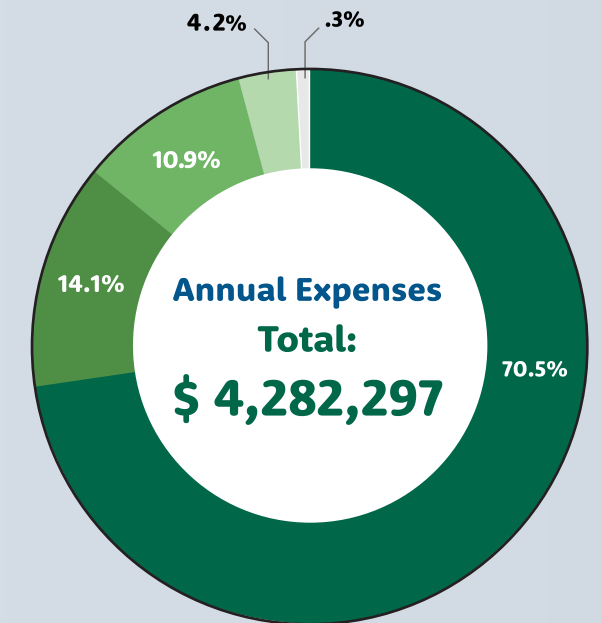
Note: Although GFG had a strong fundraising year for FY24, we had to report a loss totaling \$1,680,000. This was the result of a single donor defaulting on their multi-year commitment, which had been made in FY23 and was booked as revenue that year. This resulted in a decrease in net assets.

REVENUE & EXPENSES



- Foundations: \$2,492,746
- Corporations: \$656,813
- Nonprofits & Associations: \$128,463
- Individuals: \$125,429
- Other Income: \$63,296

- Acción Andina Implementation: \$3,018,240
- Acción Andina Capacity Building: \$603,590
- Administration & Fundraising: \$464,852
- Communications: \$181,269
- New Initiatives: \$14,346





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**2023-2024
ANNUAL REPORT**