



SYNCHRONICITY
EARTH

SPOTLIGHT 2018

Vision

An Earth where all life is valued, celebrated and flourishing.

Mission

We act to address overlooked and underfunded conservation challenges for globally threatened species and ecosystems.

We do this through:

Conservation

We know that conservation works, but there is nowhere near enough of it. We focus on identifying gaps where scaling up action and funding could have most impact for species and ecosystems that are overlooked and underfunded.

Engagement

We engage creatively and collaboratively with a range of communities across different sectors – finance, fashion, food, philanthropy. We are also an active member of the conservation community, helping to develop key tools and innovative approaches to promote robust science and good practice within the sector.

Funding

Philanthropic funding for the environment needs to grow significantly, both in quantity and scope. Our approach is to listen to NGO needs and work with donors to provide more long-term, flexible financial support for conservation where it is most needed.

The Challenge Ahead

Synchronicity Earth will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2019. As this landmark approaches, we have been thinking about what we have achieved, but more importantly what we still need to do: how can we be part of a movement to scale up environmental action so that our children will have a vibrant and flourishing natural world to live in?

When we began in 2009, we were welcomed to the space by a few pioneering foundations and a sea of NGOs, because we were stepping in where no one else was. In many ways, it felt like we were ahead of our time. We knew our work was vital but reaching a wider audience and galvanising support for conservation is challenging – especially for species and ecosystems which do not get much attention.

That is changing. The reality is beginning to sink in. Now, more and more people understand that the loss of biodiversity, largely due to human impacts, has to be addressed – our future depends on it. We know that healthy vibrant ecosystems and abundant diverse species help ensure our collective survival.

Coming into our 10th year, we are ready to grow. We have built a thoughtful, robust organisation designed to scale. We are doing real, tangible work in remote areas that urgently need our attention. Our model

operationalises effective conservation, making it easier for donors to take action by giving.

While we are proud that most of our core costs are covered by The Synchronicity Foundation, the majority of support for our partners across the world comes from you, our supporters. Our donors are integral to Synchronicity Earth – you make our design come alive. As a pioneering organisation, we are especially grateful to all of you who have contributed to our work over the last ten years.


The next ten years will shape the future for generations to come: what will our legacy be? Will we leave the next generation a severely damaged planet that can be healed and regenerated, or will we leave a planet that is beyond repair? It is time for a step change in consciousness and action. Synchronicity Earth is designed and ready to play a significant part in this change. We need you to help us scale up our funding, so that we can look ahead to the next ten years with real optimism.

We encourage you to come on board, and be part of this work that is truly making a difference.



JESSICA & ADAM SWEIDAN,
Synchronicity Earth Founders



A photograph of an elderly woman with a weathered face, wearing a bright blue headscarf and a dark purple top with small white polka dots. She is sitting under a traditional thatched roof made of dried palm leaves. The background shows more of the thatched structure and some greenery. A semi-transparent dark blue box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing a quote in white italicized text.

“To make itself contemporary again conservation needs to bubble up from below, fostering a diversity of claims for a liveable future. The future of conservation demands nothing less than a re-imagining of conservation itself.”

JEROME LEWIS, READER IN ANTHROPOLOGY AT UCL AND SYNCHRONICITY EARTH EXPERT ADVISER

Welcome to our Spotlight



The team at Synchronicity Earth is always looking forward. Our programmes set long-term objectives to bring about real change, protecting precious ecosystems, bringing species back from the brink and regenerating wildlife habitats to bring back flourishing landscapes full of life.

As we look forward, we know that conservation works and we know that vibrant landscapes enrich our lives, but we need to do a lot more.

Good conservation is about people and how we live within our natural world, as much as it is about species and ecosystems:

- Our Congo Basin Programme supports action to recognise indigenous peoples' rights and supports them to protect their ancestral lands.
- Our Freshwater Programme is funding work to support communities to protect river systems, giving people who live and depend on rivers the tools and funding to protect their rights to food and clean water.
- Our High and Deep Seas Programme funds advocacy and scientific work so that the United Nations High Seas Biodiversity Treaty, which is currently in development, delivers a structure to enable governments to work together to protect the ocean and its wildlife.
- Our developing Asian Species Programme supports local groups working with communities to protect endangered species and the landscapes they live in.
- Our Amphibian Programme focuses on coordinating the work of the key amphibian conservation teams around the world to tackle threats to the most endangered taxa of species (over 40% of amphibian species are threatened).

We all need to be more ambitious and be part of significantly increased action to save and regenerate our wonderful natural world. In this Spotlight, you will meet some of our partners working on the ground to put our programmes into action and find out how we are contributing to cutting edge conservation initiatives. And we will show you how we harness creativity to explore the way we view and value nature with collaborators from very different fields.

Synchronicity Earth offers donors the curated programmes of action that can contribute to a flourishing future. We are constantly inspired by the people and organisations we work with, often in challenging circumstances. We invest in them and their hopes for the future, and we hope that you will be inspired to donate to our work and join us in making their hopes a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Bryan'.

CATHERINE BRYAN
CEO and Trustee

SYNCHRONICITY PLUGGING GAPS

Intensive research and analysis since 2009 has allowed us to identify gaps in funding and attention for biodiversity conservation, building relationships with those best equipped to address these challenges. By working with a range of expert advisers and over 90 partner organisations, globally, we have built up a picture of where we can have most impact to conserve threatened species and ecosystems, strategically developing our Programmes to plug these gaps.

The many faces of conservation

One of the best things about working in conservation is having the opportunity to meet some extraordinary people.

Arizona Muse

Model, activist and sustainability advocate (Culture, page 20)



Louis Masai

Painter, sculptor and illustrator (Culture, page 21)



Mike Baltzer

Director of Shoal (Freshwater, page 13)



Citlalli Morelos-Juarez

Jocotoco Foundation (Regeneration, page 17)



Samuel Nnah Ndobe

Land Rights activist (Congo Basin, page 11)



Lucy Cooke

Author, TV Producer and Presenter
(Biodiversity, page 18)



Tess Gatan Balbas

Director of the Mabuwaya Foundation
(Asian Species, page 9)



Alex Rogers

Marine Ecologist
(High and Deep Seas, page 15)



Phil Bishop

Chief Scientist of the Amphibian
Survival Alliance (Amphibians, page 7)



Isabelle Lackman

Primatologist and Co-Founder, Hutan
(Regeneration, page 16)



These are just a few of the people we have been fortunate enough to work with this year. What connects all these people – whatever they do – is their love of nature and their desire to bring positive change for the environment. They are all conservationists, using their knowledge, talent and passion to stand up for nature.

Conserving our planet's biodiversity – its wildlife and wild places – calls for a diversity of voices and approaches. Whether for their scientific expertise, their ability to tell engaging stories, their voice within various industries and sectors, or their dedication to protecting nature on the ground, working with a broad spectrum of people is the lifeblood of our work at Synchronicity Earth.

Amphibians

FUNDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR AMPHIBIANS

Amphibians are by far the most threatened class of vertebrates and face very specific threats. Yet despite their priority status, both donors and conservation NGOs have largely ignored their plight.

This is why Synchronicity Earth established its Amphibian Fund in 2017, in honour of the late Dr George B. Rabb, a founder of global amphibian conservation. During 2018, we have been working to

attract new donors to the Fund. We have partnered with the Chicago Zoological Society (of which Dr Rabb was President for over 30 years) and we held a joint fundraising event in Chicago in September 2018.



SYNCHRONICITY NURTURING PARTNERSHIPS

As we build relationships with the partners we fund, we find out more about the challenges they face and the type of support that will help them to deliver their conservation objectives. Where there is a need, we fund core costs, skills training and organisational development. We also connect partners to broader conservation networks, where this can help to amplify their impact.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *In May, we held a special event, **It's a Frog's Life**, in London, to raise funds for our Amphibian Programme, through which we support the work of the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA) and data gathering on the conservation status of amphibians.*
- *Priorities for amphibian conservation are guided by the listing of these species on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. At present there is a huge push to update the listing for the 7,000+ amphibian species by 2020. As a result of our support, over 700 amphibian species listings have been updated during 2018, in some cases showing important new information, for example, serious declines of frogs and toads in Cameroon due to disease.*

LOOKING AHEAD

Key priorities for 2019 include ongoing work so that the conservation community has both the information on the most threatened species and those areas of habitat around the world (Key Biodiversity Areas) that are most crucial to amphibians, in order to prioritise work to protect and conserve key landscapes and species over the coming years. The Amphibian Fund is growing well, and following a fundraising drive in 2019, we aim to reach a level where we can start making grants to crucial conservation actions for amphibians around the world.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Phil Bishop

Chief Scientist of the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA)

How has Synchronicity Earth supported the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA)?



"Synchronicity Earth has been involved with the ASA right from the word go. The whole project just fits in with their ethos and it's been fantastic that they've supported the formation of ASA, both logistically and with funding, and they have understood why amphibians are important. With their help, the ASA appointed Helen Meredith (Head

of Amphibian Programme) as their Director – and with Simon Stuart (Director of Strategic Conservation) coming on board – all of a sudden everything gelled: we had people in salaried positions, working for amphibians.

One of Helen's big achievements has been to create the Strategic and Operational plans, which gave the Alliance some important direction and kudos and it has now become a well-rounded and respected organisation."

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Fringe-limbed Treefrog

(*Ecnomiohyla*)



There are 10 species of Fringe-limbed Treefrog (genus *Ecnomiohyla*) in Central and South America, six of which are either Critically Endangered or Endangered. The late Dr George Rabb, in whose honour our Amphibian Fund was created, had a treefrog named after him and his

wife: Rabbs' Fringe-limbed Treefrog (*Ecnomiohyla rabborum*). Sadly, this treefrog is now most likely extinct. The last known individual, known as 'Toughie', died in September 2016. However, one species, *Ecnomiohyla phantasmagoria*, a large treefrog with distinctive webbed feet, has recently been rediscovered in Ecuador in Tesoro Escondido where our partner, Jocotoco, works. This is the first record of this close relative to Rabbs' Fringe-limbed Treefrog, for many years.

Asian Species

Southeast Asia is experiencing an extraordinarily rapid decline of its wildlife and wild places. As regional economic development has accelerated and local human populations have grown, harvesting and hunting, combined with habitat loss, has caused loss of forests, peatlands and many other habitats: numerous species have been driven to the edge of extinction.

With our Asian Species Programme, we seek to scale up our work in Southeast Asia, increasing our support for partners on the ground and building capacity to ensure a positive legacy for conservation in the region.

Despite experiencing some of the greatest levels of forest loss in the world, Southeast Asia still has extraordinary species diversity and endemism. There is a growing conservation movement in the region

which recognises the urgency of the crisis and is starting to mobilise dynamic and dedicated people to act. The Asian Species Action Partnership (ASAP), a growing coalition of organisations working to conserve species in the region, plays a key role in this movement. However, the move towards species-focused action is still slow and lacking in scale and ambition. Working closely with ASAP, Synchronicity Earth is well-placed to increase its engagement in the region.

The initial focus of our support for Asian species will be in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, building on our current partnerships.



LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019 Synchronicity Earth will start to build its Asian Species Programme by supporting existing and new partners working on the species most at risk of extinction, especially in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. To do this, we shall need to secure new funding, identify new partners, and help build the capacity of existing ones.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *The Maburwaya Foundation, which works to conserve the Critically Endangered Philippine crocodile, continued to work closely with local management bodies, carrying out six village meetings and working with 14 local ‘sanctuary guards’ to carry out four monitoring surveys of fish and crocodile sanctuaries. They also gave lectures and put on puppet shows in local schools to teach children about biodiversity in the region.*
- *Save Vietnam’s Wildlife launched a new anti-poaching team in the Pu Mat National Park and conducted extensive interviews within local communities to determine motivations for hunting as part of their work to reduce this activity in the area. They also used camera traps to carry out research across an area of about 20,000 hectares on pangolin species populations in the park.*
- *The Asian Species Action Partnership has been gradually growing its membership this year to include around 70 organisations.*
- *Synchronicity Earth worked with Catherine King, White-bellied Heron Working Group’s Captive Breeding Advisor, to enable a member of the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) team from Bhutan to work with three different zoos in Europe (Prague, Zlin and Warsaw) to gain first-hand experience of bird handling, basic vet care and incubation and hatchling care. This will help to ensure that the captive breeding centre for this Critically Endangered bird is successful.*

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Tess Gatan-Balbas

Director of the Mabuwaya Foundation, Philippines

How does conserving the Philippine crocodile benefit the community where you work?



“To conserve the crocodile also means conserving their habitat, which consists of freshwater wetlands and the banks of rivers and lakes. By doing this, you also conserve fish and other species and habitats associated with these ecosystems. People need clean water and fish and other resources from these wetlands, so what benefits the crocodile benefits the community!”

But at the beginning, conserving the crocodiles did not provide direct and immediate benefits to the communities. So, as the success of our crocodile conservation depends on having the communities on board, the Mabuwaya Foundation has found ways to deliver direct benefits to people. For example, we provide pump wells to communities to give them clean water and limit interactions with the crocodiles. We also provide communities with fruit and forest trees that are planted within the buffer zones of the crocodile sanctuaries. People benefit from the fruit, while the forest trees serve as soil erosion control on eroded river banks. We give cash incentives to those communities that are actively protecting their crocodiles, based on the number of crocodiles counted in each community every year. These cash incentives are often used for community projects, such as repairing school buildings, creating paved corn-drying areas, repairing chapels and road maintenance.”

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Philippine Crocodile

(Crocodylus mindorensis)



The Critically Endangered Philippine Crocodile is only found in a few locations in the Philippines, and there are only believed to be around 100 individuals surviving in the wild.

The species has been threatened by commercial overexploitation, followed by widespread habitat destruction, with wetlands being converted for other uses.

The good news for the Philippine Crocodile is that many local communities respect and do not wish to harm the crocodiles; some feel the crocodile brings them luck and others believe in making offerings to the crocodile to appease their ancestors. Crocodile populations are now slowly growing, thanks to work with local communities to implement habitat protection, regular monitoring and release of crocodiles hatched in captivity.

Congo Basin

Synchronicity Earth established its Congo Basin Programme in 2017. After funding several groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since 2012, we identified the need to scale up our support and collaborate with other funders to grow our impact.

The programme now has 16 partners working in the DRC and Cameroon. It supports groups across 4 themes: urgent and reactive assistance, indigenous rights, capacity building and alternative economic development approaches.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *Synchronicity Earth is collaborating with four foundations to implement the programme.*
- *Our flexible funding model means we have been able to provide emergency support to an environmental activist under threat in the region, so that he was able to continue his work.*
- *We have provided funding for core costs to grassroots groups.*
- *We are working closely with our partner Well Grounded to support four of our partners in the DRC and Cameroon to learn new skills and improve how they work.*
- *Synchronicity Earth's two local consultants, Bihini Won wa Musiti and Samuel Nnah Ndobe, spent time with our programme partners throughout June 2018 to help us better understand the challenges they are facing and how the programme can better support them.*
- *Thanks in large part to strong and long-term advocacy work by our partner, the Dynamique Des Groupes des Peuples Autochtones, the first ever piece of legislation made specifically in favour of indigenous peoples rights in the DRC was passed in June this year. This was a provincial level law covering the defence and promotion of the rights of indigenous Batwa peoples in Mai Ndombe.*

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019, we hope to deepen our impact by supporting more of our partners to strengthen their organisational capacities and strategies and to connect with and learn from each other. We will also develop the gender strand of the programme, empowering more women in the region to take part in and lead conservation efforts.

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Bonobo (*Pan Paniscus*)



The Bonobo, *Pan paniscus*, is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Endemic to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Bonobo is thought to be the closest living relative to humans genetically. Much of the habitat of the Bonobo has been cleared for agriculture, and although not traditionally targeted by hunters (eating bonobos is a taboo in many local cultures), the Bonobo is currently at risk from the bushmeat trade, because of increased demand in recent years.

Population estimates from the four known Bonobo strongholds, based around protected areas, suggest a minimum population of 15,000–20,000 individuals. Despite legal protection, illegal hunting and forest clearance are still occurring. Various organisations, including one of our partners, Mbou Mon Tour, are working with local communities and the DRC government to protect bonobos and their habitat.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Samuel Nnah Ndobe

Land rights activist, Cameroon

Why is funding local organisations so important in the Congo Basin?



“The Congo Basin is the second largest intact tropical forest after the Amazon. In a context where most big international grants are going into funding humanitarian-related crisis issues and the very big conservation organisations, grassroots organisations and their networks are usually left out.

These are the groups at the forefront, supporting community conservation efforts and livelihoods, especially in very difficult and challenging contexts for personal security and land security, which is the foundation of life in these communities.

Supporting efforts to build communities’ livelihoods and developing ‘community forests’ secures their lands against complex ‘development’ projects and land-grabbing from corporates and political elites. This is key for indigenous peoples and other forest-dwelling communities, whose voices are hardly heard in the political sphere.

Synchronicity Earth’s support for local grassroots organisations and partners is very strategic because these groups are embedded in local communities and operate in a culturally appropriate way, putting communities at the heart of the solution.”

Freshwater

The Freshwater Programme couples conservation science and action with support for grassroots organisations working to protect and restore our rivers, lakes and wetlands. Like coral reefs or tropical rainforests, these diverse and dynamic habitats are hotspots for life on Earth and integral to our social and economic needs, whilst also being fundamental to the health of wider ecological systems.

Our programme focuses on supporting organisations working in three key areas:

CONSERVATION ACTION:

Freshwater species receive very little direct conservation attention, despite facing an extinction risk four to six times greater than their marine or terrestrial counterparts. Our local partners across Southeast Asia are working to develop sustainable conservation solutions in collaboration with local communities.

RIVERINE COMMUNITIES:

Empowering local communities and grassroots organisations as managers of freshwater resources is fundamental to long-term conservation. Our partners are working to advance community rights to freshwater, promoting both social justice and environmental conservation.



CONSERVATION SCIENCE:

Effective conservation begins with robust and relevant data, so we are supporting work to identify and record the most important sites on Earth for freshwater species. This will put critical freshwater habitats on the map, helping to inform policy, investment, development and conservation decisions.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *We incubated an innovative new partnership which brings together fish enthusiasts, such as anglers and aquarists, to support freshwater fish conservation. This partnership, named 'Shoal', launches in 2019.*
- *We began working with a new network, Femmes Solidaires, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who are engaging women from along the shores of the Congo River in the sustainable management of river resources.*
- *We funded a global analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of civil society networks around the world working to conserve river systems. Our partner, International Rivers will use the results to inform the development of capacity building and training materials to be provided through their regional offices in Latin America, Africa and Asia.*
- *We provided funding and staff support for a workshop to identify Key Biodiversity Areas for freshwater species in the Lower Mekong River and funding for a 'Red Listing' workshop to assess the conservation status of eels.*
- *This year we saw first-hand the excellent work of our partner Living River Association, which works with local communities to create and manage conservation areas on the Mekong river and its tributaries, thereby protecting and increasing fish populations.*

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019, our new freshwater conservation initiative, Shoal, will be actively recruiting partners and fundraising for in the field fish conservation projects. Our support for work at International Rivers will produce key findings on what is working well globally in community-led freshwater initiatives and how this could be replicated. We also hope to secure funding for online access to more than 500 freshwater sites recognised as Key Biodiversity Areas and for more regional workshops to delineate these sites.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Mike Baltzer, Director of Shoal at Synchronicity Earth



"In October, I joined Shoal to lead this vital innovation for a critical set of species. Having worked for many years to save some of the most iconic species such as tigers and rhinos, I am very excited to make a difference for a group of fascinating but overlooked species that represent well the variety and beauty of nature."

I have always strongly believed that nature conservation is only possible when we inspire and engage people. Too often conservation can be rather exclusive and distant from everyday experience, but Shoal aims to seize the opportunity, perhaps for now hidden and unrealised, to garner support for the amazing neglected biodiversity that is out of view. It will be a challenge to reach the levels of support required to make a difference, but one thing has been clear in the short time we have worked on Shoal – there is a belief that something new may help and there is a lot of passion to make it work. It is my honour to be part of this deeply important initiative."

© Michel Roggo

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Siamese giant carp
(*Catlocarpio siamensis*)



The Siamese Giant Carp is known by a number of names, but all of them include one word: giant! It is one of the largest species of

freshwater fish on Earth with adults reaching up to 300kg in weight and 3 metres in length, although few individuals of this size are now caught. A pregnant female can also produce over 10 million eggs! Native to river basins in Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam, the species has declined drastically in recent decades and is now listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List. One of the primary threats to this species is over-fishing. More 'no fishing zones' in critical habitats need to be established, like those promoted by our programme partner, Living River Association in Thailand.

High and Deep Seas

Together, the ‘high and deep seas’ make up the vast majority of the ocean and host an astonishing level of biodiversity. ‘High seas’ describes the area of the ocean that lies beyond the national jurisdiction of coastal nations (around two thirds), while the ‘deep sea’ is generally defined as the area of the ocean below 200 metres in depth.

Currently there are limited and weak global management systems in place for the high seas. Belonging to no-one, this vast expanse of water is governed by out-dated regulations, allowing fishing, shipping and deep-sea mining to expand, virtually unchecked, into areas that are often out of sight and out of mind. Our programme is aimed at addressing this gap.

In September 2018, over 190 nations gathered in New York to start official negotiations on a new High Seas Biodiversity Treaty. This treaty is a ground-breaking opportunity to change the way governance for the high seas works, by bringing in new legal requirements for the protection of biodiversity in the blue half of our planet. This will be a crucial step in

achieving the goal recommended by scientists that we create protected areas covering 30 per cent of the ocean, and paves the way for much-needed regulation to limit destructive activities at sea.

LOOKING AHEAD

From finalising the High Seas Biodiversity Treaty to developing deep-seabed mining regulations, the next 18 months are a crucial time to act for the high and deep seas. There are now real opportunities to make huge strides, and what happens in this time will affect the ocean for decades to come. We will continue to work with our five partners over this period.



2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *Our partner, the High Seas Alliance, took part in official negotiations of the High Seas Biodiversity Treaty at the United Nations in October, setting the stage for a positive negotiation outcome over the next 18 months.*
- *Following advocacy from our partner, the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, the European Union Parliament called for a moratorium on commercial seabed mining exploitation licenses until the risks have been fully understood.*
- *The World Trade Organisation committed to developing an agreement in 2019 to bring in restrictions on the most damaging kinds of fisheries subsidies, having come under pressure from a wide range of NGOs, including our partner, BLOOM, to address this unsustainable practice.*
- *A company seeking to mine in Papua New Guinean waters has suffered major setbacks following years of campaigning, in part by our partners Act Now! and Bismarck Ramu Group.*



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Alex Rogers

Expert Scientific Adviser

Why do you think ocean conservation doesn't get the attention it deserves?



“One of the major problems we have is that people don't recognise the relevance of the oceans to them: they don't know what's in there, they have no idea that there are these hugely diverse ecosystems which are performing very important functions and essentially

supporting the whole of the Earth's life support system. This is something we constantly come up against, certainly when dealing with things like deep-sea bottom trawling, climate change impacts on the ocean, and a whole variety of other issues. And it's not just the public – politicians often have a very poor understanding of the relevance of the ocean to all of us. Education is hugely important. The next generation, especially, needs to be far better equipped to understand the ocean, to realise its importance and understand that we must look after it.”

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Sea Toad (*Chaunacops coloratus*)



Chaunacops coloratus is a species of 'sea toad' – a group of bottom-dwelling deep-sea fishes that have charmed scientists with their unusual appearance and grumpy facial expression. These species are related to frogfishes of tropical

waters, and deep-sea anglerfishes that famously use a bioluminescent lure to attract prey. Sea toads also have a lure that sits in a depression between their eyes and has been described as looking like a small mop. Scientists think this might also use light, or perhaps an attractive smell, to entice prey. Sea toads have strange, feet-like fins, which are modified to allow them to perch on the seafloor. Like myriad other deep-sea species, there is still a lot to discover about sea toads and their fascinating way of life.

Regeneration

BRINGING LIFE BACK TO LANDSCAPES

Bringing life and diversity to tired and degraded landscapes is critical if we are to turn around the loss of species around the world. We fund this cross-programme work through our Regeneration funding initiative, supporting individuals and organisations restoring forest, freshwater and coastal landscapes around the world. It is remarkable the speed with which recovery can happen and how quickly wildlife can take up residence once more.

We have been delighted to partner with a number of businesses in funding this work. Many businesses are seeking to reduce their environmental impact and these regeneration projects deliver a host of benefits: they not only produce a positive impact for species and ecosystems, but they also have much broader impact as carbon stores and provide support for community-run initiatives and education programmes.



SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES

Mache Glass Frog (*Cochranella Mache*)



The Mache Glass Frog is an Endangered (EN) species, but can be found just 15 minutes from the field office at Tesoro Escondido Reserve. It is endemic to north-western Ecuador and measures just two to three centimetres in length. Habitat modification from deforestation and habitat fragmentation are anticipated to be the predominant drivers of population declines and Tesoro Escondido is a key stronghold.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- *At Tesoro Escondido Reserve, Ecuador, the parabiologist team have successfully propagated around 500 seedlings of two Critically Endangered Magnolia species. Magnolia Canandean and Magnolia Dixonii are both found in the reserve and the latter species had not previously been sighted anywhere since 1965 before being re-discovered in the reserve.*

- *The team at Tesoro Escondido continue to actively engage local communities in conserving the Chocó rainforest. They have this year begun an agroecology project with workshops on sustainable farming practices, a project focused on reducing human/wildlife conflict and their environmental education programme continues to go from strength to strength, now reaching high schools in the region.*

- *Hutan have worked with local stakeholders to establish a 450 acre wildlife corridor reconnecting two fragmented protected areas. This will provide critical habitat for threatened species including the Bornean orang-utan and Asian elephant.*

- *Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative have worked with local communities in Tanzania to cultivate more than 10,000 seedlings of indigenous tree species. These will be planted into the forested savannah landscapes managed by communities during the rainy season, contributing towards a target of 15,000 native trees planted in the first year of a three-year project to restore and sustainably manage 225 hectares of woodland.*

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Jocotoco



The Chocó forest, on the north-west side of the Andes in Ecuador, is a treasure trove of species and is recognised globally as a biodiversity hotspot. A two-week bird census identified 250 species in the reserve – half the number of species which either inhabit or regularly visit all of Europe in just 2,000 hectares of rainforest!

Yet estimates put the amount of this amazing forest which has now been lost at over 90 per cent, and what remains is still under threat from logging. The Tesoro Escondido reserve covers 2,000 hectares of this remarkable ecosystem and work is underway to reforest areas both within the reserve and beyond, reconnecting Tesoro Escondido with neighbouring reserve Canandé. Both reserves are run by the local non-profit organisation, Jocotoco.

Funding for regeneration has been used to set up tree nurseries around the reserve, using seeds collected by the reserve team. As further survey work is done, exciting discoveries are being made. The tree nurseries now include seedlings of 35 tree species, including those of the Critically Endangered *Magnolia dixonii* and *Magnolia canandean*, both of which were found to be growing in the reserve in the past year. The first phase of planting took place in 2018, and the process of building a forest link between the reserves is underway.

The funding goes beyond regeneration, to supporting education programmes in local schools and starting small-scale horticulture projects with local women. Funding also provides ongoing training for the local reserve team, building conservation capacity in an exceptional part of the world.

The Biodiversity Challenge

Lucy Cooke, Synchronicity Earth Biodiversity Ambassador

We tend to read a lot about extinction, and what hits the headlines is often the number of species that are going extinct. But what we are often not aware of – or made aware of – is the widespread decline in abundance of huge numbers of species. It might not be as headline-grabbing – ‘There are fewer ants this year than there were last year’. It does not necessarily come across as news and get reported. But shrinking species populations all have an impact on each other, so it is crucial that organisations are protecting not just those more famous species that are hurtling towards extinction, but also ring-fencing species that are simply in decline.

What I love about Synchronicity Earth is that they are a very brave organisation. They have chosen to look for gaps in conservation action and funding and to try to fill those gaps, rather than just focus on charismatic species and well-known

regions. They are not just another organisation trying to protect the ‘sexy’ animals or environments that grab the headlines – the pandas, tigers or rainforests of this world. They understand that if we just looked after the cute and fluffy, charismatic creatures at the top of the food chain and forgot about all the others, then those species would not survive either.

I think Synchronicity Earth's policy of looking for those gaps in conservation is incredibly valuable. The innovative approaches they take to doing this – drawing together artists, scientists and communicators to try to change public feeling and to mend those broken bonds with nature and make us all feel more connected is also very brave. Trying to find positivity and empowering people so that they understand what they can do as individuals is vitally important: I am a firm believer that conservation starts here, with the individual. Everybody can be a conservationist. It is our individual responsibility to save this planet, not something that we can offload on to politicians or scientists. We cannot just sit back and rely on other people to solve the biodiversity crisis. It is up to us.





“Despite what we may think, we are not the centre of the animal universe (...) If anthropomorphism is enemy number one, arrogance is a close runner-up. From obliterating beavers for their bogus medicinal balls to using frogs to test for pregnancy or recruiting pandas as diplomats, we have a history of viewing the rest of the animal kingdom as simply here to service our needs. This selfish standpoint has resulted in many of our most misguided mistakes. In these times of mass extinction, we cannot afford to make many more.”

LUCY COOKE: THE UNEXPECTED TRUTH ABOUT ANIMALS

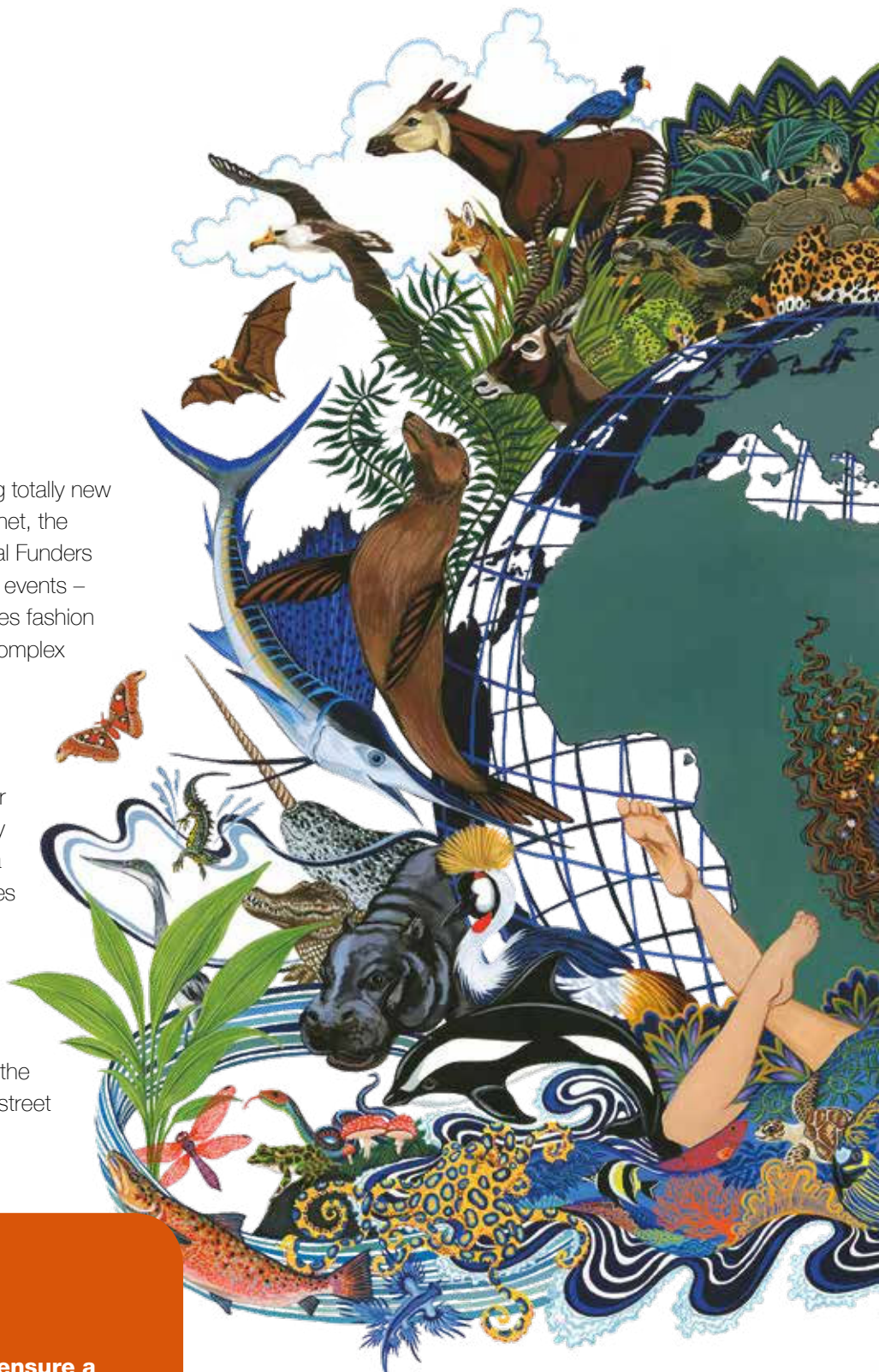
Culture

Fabric of Life

Synchronicity Earth undertook something totally new for 2018: we partnered with Canopy Planet, the Sustainable Angle, and the Environmental Funders Network to deliver a series of captivating events – the Fabric of Life series. Fabric of Life uses fashion as a lens through which to explore our complex relationships with biodiversity.

Given how critically important and little understood biodiversity is, we decided to explore its functions, value and place in our own lives, as well as the threats it faces, by showing how our daily choices in one area – fashion – impact ecosystems and species around the world.

Events have covered topics spanning the entire fashion supply chain, from the forests, rivers, ecosystems, and species that are ultimately impacted by the fashion industry, all the way to the high street and our wardrobes.



SYNCHRONICITY ENGAGEMENT

To protect the natural world and ensure a 'future liveable Earth', we all need to be part of the solution. On the ground conservation is one piece of the puzzle, but if we want to understand the causes of biodiversity loss around the world, we need to start looking closer to home. A key strand of the work we do is designed to engage diverse sectors – finance, fashion, food, philanthropy – in dialogue around their impact on nature, and be part of a movement to bring about change.

Launched in October 2018 and continuing through March 2019, we have selected experts from a variety of backgrounds to engage with our series participants in rich discussions and unique opportunities. Series speakers include:

- Kresse Wesling, Founder of Elvis and Kresse;
- Helen Crowley, Head of Sustainable Sourcing Innovation for Kering;
- Edwina Ehrman, Senior Exhibition Curator at the V&A;
- Claire Bergkamp, Head of Sustainability and Ethical Trade for Stella McCartney;



© Alice Shirley

Cheli Cresswell Sinclair

Early in 2018, Cheli Cresswell Sinclair joined Synchronicity Earth in the new position of Engagement Strategist. Cheli provides our networks and community with creative and meaningful connections to the work that Synchronicity Earth does around the world. She is wrapping up a PhD at the University of Oxford which focuses on the evolving technologies and roles of citizen science in conservation.

Bringing with her more than a decade of experience in digital engagement, Cheli has a particular passion for empowering people from all walks of life to make a positive impact for conservation.

Cheli is also the Director of Conservation Optimism, a movement that began as a three-day summit during Earth Day 2017. Since the summit, Conservation Optimism has evolved into a global community inspiring and empowering people around the world, challenging the fatalist 'doom and gloom' narrative that dominates both the popular media and the conservation literature.

Conservation Optimism is supported by Synchronicity Earth and the University of Oxford. In September 2019, the second international Conservation Optimism Summit will be held in Oxford, and plans are currently being developed to build up regional hubs around the world to help build up local leadership. Conservation Optimism has also partnered with Key Conservation, a brand new cutting edge mobile app, which will connect grassroots and local conservation organisations to anyone who would like to get involved by giving small donations, in-person volunteering, and skills-donations.

- John Sauven, Executive Director of Greenpeace, and many others.

We have also brought together three Fabric of Life series Ambassadors – supermodel and activist Arizona Muse, actress, activist, and musician Alison Sudol, and model, activist, and artist Wilson Oryema – to help us share these messages with a wider audience.

Find out more by going to fabricoflifeseries.org.



Louis Masai at London Zoo

In July this year, our good friend Louis Masai painted a series of huge murals in a shadowy, forgotten corner of London Zoo (actually the Nuffield building, home to the Institute of Zoology). Visitors emerging from the underpass can now see the grey, brutalist walls transformed, brought to life by six rare and endangered species. These are animals you may not have encountered before: species that are on the EDGE of Existence.

If we want to conserve – and restore – Earth's incredible natural diversity, it is important to do more than just focus on the world's best known species and most iconic wild places. The legions of obscure, enigmatic species that are in decline around the world – and the countless vital ecosystems and habitats that are disappearing with them – deserve our attention as much as the more celebrated species.

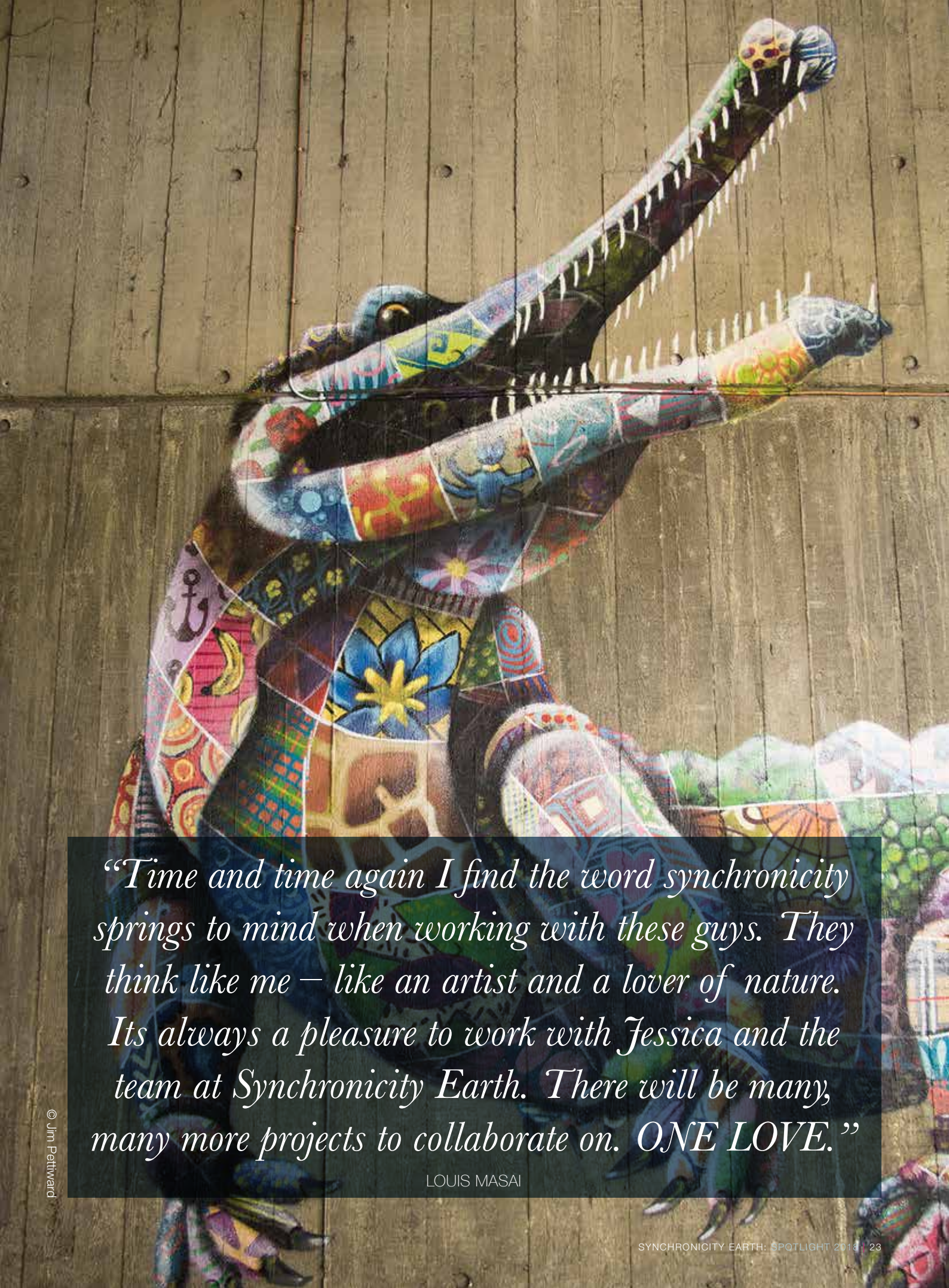
Bringing more conservation attention and funding to some of the world's forgotten and unloved species and ecosystems is at the heart of our work at Synchronicity Earth, which is why, with Louis, we approached ZSL to collaborate on this project.



Why are we doing this?

Conservation on the ground where it is most needed is vital, but work being done around the world can be amplified by what we do closer to home. We want to be part of a movement to champion biodiversity, to celebrate the role of abundant species populations and healthy ecosystems, not just for what they provide for us – think food, water, shelter, air to breathe, wellbeing – but also for their own intrinsic value and right to exist on our planet. Alongside our Conservation Programmes, by collaborating with artists, institutions like ZSL and a range of conservation NGOs, our goal is to:

- creatively engage new audiences with biodiversity.
- foster understanding of our impact on the natural world and the scale and causes of biodiversity loss.



“Time and time again I find the word synchronicity springs to mind when working with these guys. They think like me — like an artist and a lover of nature. Its always a pleasure to work with Jessica and the team at Synchronicity Earth. There will be many, many more projects to collaborate on. ONE LOVE.”

LOUIS MASAI

Conservation

Simon Stuart

Director of Strategic Conservation



Synchronicity Earth became a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in April 2018. This was a natural move for us given our close engagement with IUCN ever since we were founded, including by supporting the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, which is the world's official means of

determining the risk of extinction of each species.

We are now participating more broadly in IUCN's work, for example in helping to develop a new approach to measuring the overall progress of conservation, species-by-species. This will become the IUCN Green List of Species, designed to sit alongside the Red List, and will measure both the impact of conservation measures, and how much needs to be done to achieve full recovery for each species.

In addition to the work on the Green List, I have been particularly involved in two other IUCN-related initiatives:

SYNCHRONICITY UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Our work relies on understanding where levels of biodiversity on Earth are highest and where the greatest threats to it are found. We are part of a network of leading experts and organisations dedicated to providing the most accurate and up to date information on the state of the natural world for businesses, governments and the general public.



I am serving as the Chair of the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Committee, which runs the partnership of 11 organisations committed to identifying all the places around the world that must be conserved if we are to stem the tide of extinctions, using the new IUCN KBA Standard. In 2018, the first Head of the KBA Secretariat, Dr Andrew Plumptre, was recruited, and fundraising is now stepping up across all 11 KBA partners to identify KBAs worldwide. At Synchronicity Earth, we are focusing in particular on freshwater and amphibian KBAs.

I am also participating on the IUCN task force working on the potential impacts of new genetic technologies (often called synthetic biology) on conservation. A number of possible benefits and risks have been identified, and the IUCN assessment on this will be published in early 2019, providing the evidence base to guide the development of the IUCN policy on synthetic biology and conservation.

THE IUCN GREEN LIST OF SPECIES

Anna Heath

Conservation Research Analyst



Over the past two years, the Synchronicity Earth team has been involved in the development of an exciting new conservation tool through the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – a ‘Green List’ of species. The first results of this work were published in an impactful paper in 2018, marking a bold step forward for conservation.

Conservationists are pushing for more ambitious and optimistic targets for species conservation, rather than solely focusing on saving a species from extinction. The idea behind the new Green List, designed to sit alongside the Red List, is to describe species targets based on full recovery, to move the conversation beyond saving species from extinction.

The Green List proposes four new measures for species:

- **CONSERVATION LEGACY** *aims to show the importance of past conservation efforts by comparing the current status of a species against what would have happened without any conservation action.*
- **CONSERVATION DEPENDENCE** *predicts what would happen in the future if conservation action stopped today. This is important for species that may seem to be healthy but are still heavily reliant on human intervention and should help ensure that is considered.*
- **CONSERVATION GAIN** *looks at how much a species could improve over the short to medium term if conservation action continues, thus encouraging the maintenance of conservation efforts.*
- **RECOVERY POTENTIAL** *describes an aspirational yet achievable goal of status improvement a species could achieve over the long term. Here the new methodology aims to depict what a fully recovered species would look like – from increasing population sizes back to historic levels, to a species being able to carry out activities and interact with the rest of the ecosystem in the way it would naturally.*

Although it is only in its early stages, the new Green List could be a pivotal moment in conservation and provide inspiration for more ambitious action for species.

Growing our funding for conservation

We are very fortunate to receive unrestricted philanthropic funding from the Synchronicity Foundation*, which covered just over 80% of our core staff and office costs in 2017 and is on target to cover 100% of those costs in 2018. This funding enables us to devote the necessary resources and skills to developing our conservation programme funding and to engage broadly across the conservation community. It also means that donors can be confident that their funding has conservation impact.

During 2017 we were able to significantly increase the level of funding for our charitable activities compared to 2016, and this trend continued into the first half of 2018. We were delighted to receive support for our Congo Basin programme from four foundations in 2017 and 2018 and we have continued to increase support from both individual donors and businesses.



GENERAL INCOME	2017 £	2016 £
INCOME FROM		
Donations	1,411,655	807,634
Fundraising	251,784	0
Other	162	177
Total Income	1,663,611	807,791
EXPENDITURE		
Raising Funds	243,378	9,245
Charitable Activities	1,200,220	754,738
Total Expenditure	1,443,598	763,983
Increase in Income		106%
Increase in Charitable Activities		59%

Our Endowment Funds

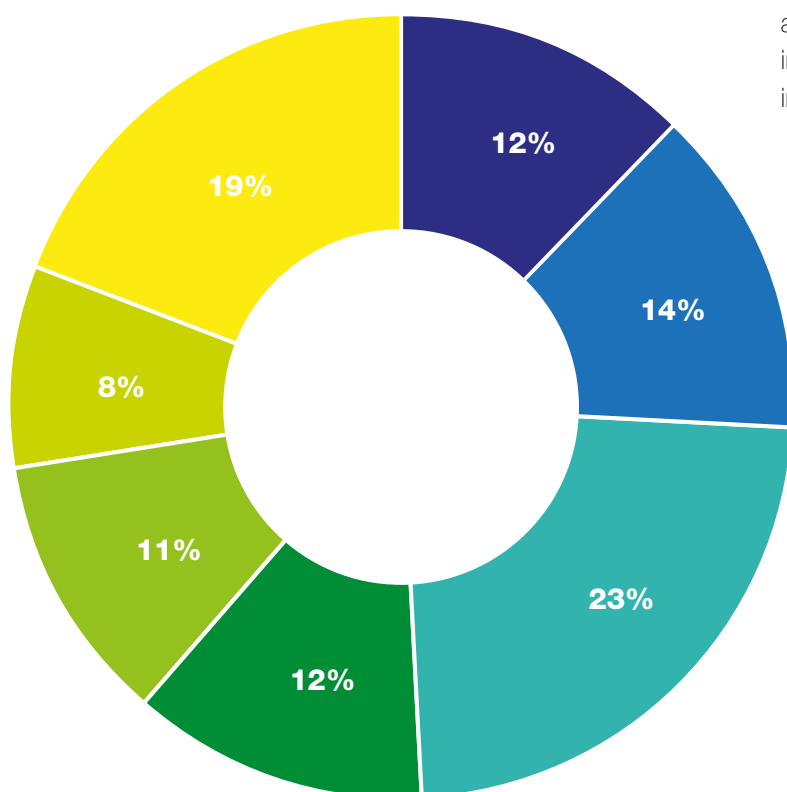
Our strategy to create expendable endowment funds to support long-term conservation funding became a reality in 2017 as we received key seed donations to these funds and we have been continuing to fundraise during 2018, particularly for our Amphibian Fund.

ENDOWMENT INCOME	2017 £	2016 £
ENDOWMENT DONATION INCOME		
	650,822	20
OUR ENDOWMENT FUND VALUATIONS AS OF 30TH DECEMBER 2017:		
Synchronicity Earth Living Fund	194,488	
Ape Fund	231,681	
Durrell Fund	208,593	
Amphibian Fund	10**	
Total endowment valuation	634,772	
** initial establishment of the fund		

* The Synchronicity Foundation receives funding from Aurum Fund Management Ltd. The funding is generated from the advisory fee of Aurum's Synchronicity Fund, which supports a number of charities, principally Synchronicity Earth.

GRANT FUNDING BY PROGRAMME

January 2017 to June 2018










What we fund

We make grants to an amazing range of organisations: a mixture of local groups in our focus regions and larger international groups. Our programmes reflect a range of interventions, that together present a strategy for action.

We are delighted to show the grant funding we have given both for 2017 and for the first half of 2018 in this Spotlight.

We depend on the generosity of our donors to enable us to fund so many people around the world who are working hard to protect species and landscapes that are not only captivating, but so necessary for our future well-being. We extend our sincere thanks for the continuing support of so many individuals, businesses and foundations.

	Amphibians		High & Deep Seas
	Asian Species		Synchronicity
	Congo Basin		Regeneration
	Freshwater		

SYNCHRONICITY SERVING DONORS

Giving to the environment should be a rewarding experience that benefits both donor and recipient. Our aim is to help donors understand the complex interrelationships between human wellbeing and a healthy environment, and provide opportunities to support and learn more about work that has a positive impact for both nature and people.

Grant Funding January 2017 to June 2018

	2017 £	H1 2018 £		2017 £	H1 2018 £
AMPHIBIANS			FRESHWATER		
Amphibian Red List Authority (ARLA)	37,000	18,130	International Rivers – Global	10,000	
Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA)	31,666	42,353	International Rivers Africa	22,210	
ASIAN SPECIES			IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit	5,000	15,000
Masters Student funding	12,312		IUCN Freshwater Conservation Committee	11,000	11,000
IUCN Tortoise & Turtle Specialist Group	3,924	4,250	Living River Association	10,000	10,000
Royal Society for the Protection of Nature	5,000	31,500	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust	10,000	
Save Vietnam's Wildlife	4,339	10,000	Shoal		20,000
Mabuwaya	10,000	15,000	Direct Programme Funding	319	
ZSL Finless porpoise	1,000		HIGH & DEEP SEAS		
Asian Species Action Partnership		15,000	Deep Sea Conservation Coalition	30,000	
ZSL Eels		10,000	High Seas Alliance	40,000	10,000
Direct Programme Funding	(6)	18,995	Bloom	22,988	
CONGO BASIN			Direct Programme Funding	12,701	
Grain	13,000		SYNCHRONICITY		
Forest Peoples Programme	11,000	1,848	Oceans Initiative	8,100	5,000
Green Development Advocates (GDA)	5,812	725	Project Seahorse	3,000	
Life Mosaic	11,000		Bismarck Ramu Group	10,000	
Mbou Mon Tour (MMT)	15,000	38,000	Species naming	4,860	
Reseau Cref	20,000		Agroecology	20,000	
Struggle to Economize Future Environment (SEFE)	1,000		IUCN US	7,403	
Well Grounded	10,000	30,000	A Rocha	4,113	
Rainforest Foundation		9,000	IKAN		5,000
International Rivers Africa		23,107	Durrell		20,000
Dynamique des Peuples			REGENERATION		
Autochtones (DGPA)		43,000	Hutan	18,948	
Femmes Solidaires (FESO)		10,000	International Tree Foundation	11,588	
			Jocotoco	78,500	102,425
			Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust	12,505	
			Cambugan	(26,645)	
			518,637	519,333	

How can I find out more?

Find us on Social Media:

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

@SynchEarth

To find out more about our work, visit our website:

www.synchronicityearth.org

To view our Privacy Policy, please visit:

www.synchronicityearth.org/about-us/privacy-policy

We welcome questions and enquiries about our work. If you would like to get in touch please contact:
info@synchronicityearth.org

Or write to us at:

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SW7 2HQ

Or call us on:

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Save Vietnam's Wildlife, Olivier Girard, Jim Pettiward.



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Registered in England & Wales No 06952204

Registered Charity No 1132786

Printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable oil-based inks
and 100% renewable energy • www.severnprint.co.uk
Designed by Banyan Design, Chalford • banyandesign.co.uk