



**NIGERIAN
CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**
for nature... for people... for Nigeria

Restoring Balance for People & Nature



2025 Impact Report

& FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



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**Cover Page
Illustration**

Picture 1:
Camera trap
footage of
Forest
Elephant at
Omo Forest
Reserve

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Participants at a
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weighing the
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Picture 3:
Women farmers
tending to tree
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reforestation site



2025 Impact Report Contributors

Editorial Advisers

Dr. Joseph Onoja
Mr. Kunle Olawoyin
Mr. Adedamola Ogunsesan
Mr. Uchenna Achunine

Supervisory Editor

Mr. Kunle Olawoyin

Editor

Mr. Olusomi Oduguwa

Design

Mr. Daniel Okakoso

Contributors

Mr. Olaide Alli
Dr. Stella Egbe
Dr. Mohammed Boyi
Mr. Memudu Adedayo
Ms. Folake Salawu
Mr. Shittu Usman
Mr. Joshua Dazi
Mr. Oluwadamilare Ajayi
Mr. Chidi Ugwuapeh
Mrs. Bolanle Akinleye-Opara
Mrs. Damola Ogutuga
Mr. Emmanuel Owan
Mr. Harry Hanson
Mr. Abdulazeez Oyeladun
Ms. Chinelo Okoli
Ms. Olamide Akinola

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Address by the President, Board of Trustees



Distinguished members of the Board of Trustees, National Executive Council, management and staff of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, valued members, esteemed partners from government, development agencies, the private sector, civil society, and friends of conservation, it is my honour to welcome you to the 37th Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation.

This meeting is a time to reflect on our shared journey, account for our stewardship, and reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding Nigeria's natural heritage for present and future generations.

As we convene, I begin with appreciation for all who make this work possible. To my colleagues on the Board of Trustees and National Executive Council, thank you for your steady leadership and governance oversight. To NCF management and staff, I commend your professionalism, resilience, and commitment to advancing our mission under challenging circumstances. I also recognize our members, volunteers, and supporters whose belief sustains this organization. To our development partners, corporate sponsors, government agencies, and collaborating institutions, thank you for your trust, resources, and partnership. Conservation is not a solitary endeavour; it is shared responsibility, and we are stronger because of you.

The environmental challenges facing Nigeria and the world remain profound. We continue to face escalating pressure from climate change, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and pollution. These realities are not abstract. They are visible in our changing landscapes, in the vulnerability of coastal and forest ecosystems, and in the impact on livelihoods and communities. Yet even amid these challenges, there is reason for hope.

The Nigerian Conservation Foundation continues to stand as a credible and committed

institution working at the intersection of science, policy, and community action. In the year under review, our work has spanned ecosystem restoration, climate resilience, environmental education, policy engagement, and community-driven conservation. Across these interventions, we have strengthened our role as a national platform for practical solutions that bring people and nature into balance.

I acknowledge the efforts being put into Green Recovery Nigeria, but there is still a lot of work to be done. Through this initiative, we are not only restoring degraded landscapes but also strengthening community livelihoods, building adaptive capacity, and demonstrating that nature-based solutions can deliver tangible benefits for both people and the environment. Its impact continues to reinforce the relevance of ecosystem restoration as a central pillar of Nigeria's sustainable future. However, this initiative needs to be expanded and pursued with a more aggressive approach and implementation to achieve significant impact toward our goal of 25% forest cover in the coming years.

We are equally encouraged by the strength of our partnerships, which continue to expand across sectors and geographies. From government institutions to international development partners, from corporate organisations to community leaders, we are witnessing a growing recognition that environmental sustainability must be a shared national priority. These collaborations are essential to scaling impact and ensuring that conservation efforts are both inclusive and sustainable.

Let me reiterate that the state of Nigeria's biodiversity is deeply concerning. Multiple reports confirm that Nigeria has lost over 90% of its original forest cover, placing our deforestation rate among the

highest in Africa. The forests that remain are under severe pressure from illegal logging, agricultural expansion, fuelwood demand, weak enforcement, and competing land-use priorities. The consequence is habitat fragmentation, accelerating biodiversity loss, increased vulnerability to flooding and erosion, and declining livelihoods for forest-dependent communities.

Addressing deforestation and restoring Nigeria's forest cover demands decisive action from government at all levels. This means strengthening and enforcing forest protection laws, ensuring clear tenure rights, and fast-tracking the gazetting of community and state forest reserves under co-management frameworks. Government must also integrate forest restoration into national climate and development planning, increase budgetary allocation to forestry agencies, and support alternative livelihoods that reduce pressure on natural forests. By aligning policy with implementation and prioritizing data-driven monitoring, government can turn commitment into measurable forest recovery.

The private sector has a critical role to play in reversing forest loss and investing in restoration. Businesses must adopt and enforce zero-deforestation commitments across supply chains, particularly in agriculture, timber, and infrastructure. Beyond compliance, companies should invest directly in landscape restoration through public-private partnerships, fund community-led tree planting, and support sustainable production models that protect forest ecosystems while securing raw materials. When business aligns profitability with forest stewardship, it creates jobs, secures supply chains, and builds the resilient environment on which long-term growth depends.

As we look ahead, we do so with renewed confidence and clarity of purpose. The Foundation has concluded the development of its 2026–2030 Strategic Direction, which provides a forward-looking framework to guide our work in an increasingly complex environmental landscape. This strategy reflects our ambition to deepen impact across climate action, biodiversity conservation, pollution management, and institutional strengthening, while leveraging innovation, partnerships, and resource mobilisation to achieve greater scale and effectiveness. It positions NCF not only as a conservation organisation, but as a leader in advancing sustainable societies where people and nature thrive together

As I step down as President of the Board of Trustees at the

Annual General Meeting, I do so with profound gratitude and quiet optimism. I have had the rare privilege of being part of this Foundation since its creation. From the very first meetings where we dared to dream of a stronger, greener Nigeria, to today where that dream is lived out daily, it has been both a privilege and honour and a responsibility to serve this Foundation in various positions. This journey has allowed me to witness, firsthand, the unwavering dedication of our Trustees, the National Executive Council, our committed staff, loyal members, passionate volunteers, steadfast partners, and the communities at the heart of our work. It is their collective commitment that continues to advance the cause of conservation across Nigeria. We must do more to transform this Foundation into a mass membership.

While this Annual General Meeting marks the end of my service in this role, it is not an end to my belief in what we are building. I leave with comfort and confidence knowing that the Nigerian Conservation Foundation remains strong, relevant, and well-positioned for the future. The structures we have built, the partnerships we have forged, and the trust we have earned give me every assurance that NCF's best days are still ahead.

I am confident that the next leadership of the Board will build on this enduring legacy. They will provide the wisdom to guide our new strategic vision, the courage to take bold decisions, and the commitment to strengthen NCF's position as a leading force for environmental stewardship and sustainable development, not just in Nigeria, but across the region and beyond.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you all for your dedication and partnership, and I formally declare open the 37th Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation.

Thank you.

Izoma Philip Asiodu,
CFR, CON

Chairman's Speech

The President, Board of Trustees, NCF
Members of the Board of Trustees,
Members of the National Executive Council,
Corporate and Individual Members of the NCF.
Distinguished Partners and Guests,
Members of the Press
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the National Executive Council of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, I welcome you all to the 37th Annual General Meeting of this great institution. This AGM provides not only a statutory moment of accountability, but also a strategic opportunity to reflect on the state of our environment, the effectiveness of our governance, and the collective progress we are making in safeguarding Nigeria's natural heritage.



Governance Under Environmental Pressure

The year under review has been shaped by an increasingly complex environmental and socio-economic landscape. Nigeria faces mounting pressure from climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, flooding, desertification, and plastic pollution. These challenges are interconnected and systemic, with direct implications for national development, livelihoods, and long-term ecological stability.

In this context, the question before us as conservationists is not only what we have done, but more critically, how effectively we are governing to ensure our impact is sustained, scalable, and resilient.

The National Executive Council recognizes that conservation outcomes today depend as much on the quality of governance, institutional agility, partnership architecture, field interventions and our individual and collective actions.

Strengthening Institutional Direction and Oversight

In 2025, the Foundation demonstrated a strong ability to translate vision into structured action across climate change, biodiversity conservation, pollution management, environmental education, and community engagement. From a governance perspective, we are particularly encouraged by the increasing integration between field programmes and policy engagement platforms. NCF's

work is not confined to implementation alone but increasingly shaping national discourse, influencing policy direction, and strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration at both national and subnational levels. We note with appreciation the Foundation's growing role in convening strategic dialogues that bring together government, private sector actors, development partners, civil society, and communities around shared environmental priorities.

Initiatives such as the National Business Advisory Group, participation in state-level climate governance platforms, and contributions to national environmental frameworks demonstrate a maturing institutional profile that is aligned with global best practice in conservation leadership.

Global and Local Conservation Environment

The conservation landscape continues to present both significant challenges and important opportunities. Globally, biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution remain major threats to ecosystems and human well-being. At the same time, the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework and growing recognition of nature-based solutions have

strengthened international commitment to conservation.

In Nigeria, pressures on forests, wetlands, mangroves, and wildlife continue to grow due to population expansion, infrastructure development, unsustainable resource use, and climate-related impacts such as flooding, drought, coastal erosion, and desertification. However, new opportunities are emerging through climate and biodiversity finance, nature-positive investments, and ecosystem restoration initiatives. Against this backdrop, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation remains committed to providing leadership and building partnerships to conserve Nigeria's natural heritage while promoting sustainable development.

Policy Influence and Strategic Positioning

- A defining feature of the year under review is NCF's deepening engagement in policy and systems influence. The Foundation has continued to provide technical input, convening impactful, and evidence-based advocacy that strengthens Nigeria's positioning in global environmental processes. We recognise that national progress in conservation will depend on how effectively we align policy ambition with implementation capacity. In this regard, NCF's role as a trusted technical partner remains vital. However, we must also acknowledge that policy influence alone is not sufficient without stronger enforcement mechanisms, coordinated institutional action, and sustained investment in environmental governance systems.

During the year under review, the National Executive Council provided strategic oversight for the development of the Foundation's new Strategic Action Plan, strengthening management structures, governance systems, and the organisational framework to position NCF for its next phase of growth. The process culminated in a renewed Vision, to be a leader in creating sustainable societies where people and nature thrive, and a Mission to protect and restore natural resources through partnerships that deliver lasting benefits for present and future generations. These are anchored on four strategic pillars: Climate Change, Biodiversity, Pollution, and

Institutional Strengthening and guided by the core values of Integrity, Partnership, Accountability, Innovation, Resilience, and Excellence.

Activities undertaken in the Year under review

a. Flagship Events- S.L Edu Lecture, Special Days, Walk for Nature and NCF Ball

Throughout the year, the Foundation's flagship platforms continued to strengthen NCF's role as a convener of environmental dialogue, public engagement, and collective action. Initiatives such as the Chief S.L. Edu Memorial Lecture, Walk for Nature, the commemoration of global environmental observances, and the NCF Green Ball brought together policymakers, development partners, the private sector, academia, communities, and citizens to advance conservation awareness, influence policy discourse, mobilise resources, and inspire wider participation in environmental stewardship. Beyond their immediate outcomes, these platforms reinforced the Foundation's visibility, deepened strategic partnerships, and expanded the national conversation on the urgent need to safeguard Nigeria's natural heritage.

b. Field Activities

Across the country, the Foundation continued to translate strategy into action through field interventions that strengthened biodiversity conservation, restored degraded landscapes, empowered communities, advanced environmental education, and influenced policy. These initiatives, delivered across diverse ecological and socio-economic contexts, demonstrate that lasting conservation impact is achieved through sustained engagement with people, places, and partnerships.

I wish to pay special tribute to our field officers and project teams who work tirelessly, often under difficult and insecure conditions, to deliver these interventions. Their professionalism, resilience, and unwavering commitment to protecting Nigeria's natural heritage embody the values of the Foundation and remain indispensable to our continued success.

Finance

Sound financial stewardship remains fundamental to the Foundation's ability to deliver lasting conservation impact. I am pleased to note that the organisation continues to maintain a strong and stable financial position, underpinned by prudent resource management, robust governance, transparent financial controls, and the confidence of our donors, members, and partners. I express sincere appreciation to our Finance Committee, management, staff, auditors, and every partner whose continued support and disciplined stewardship have strengthened the Foundation's financial resilience and positioned NCF to sustain its conservation mission well into the future.

Governance Risks and Emerging Challenges

While significant progress has been made, the NEC remains mindful of persistent and emerging risks that threaten environmental sustainability and institutional effectiveness such as

- The accelerating pace of environmental degradation, particularly deforestation and wetland loss
- Weak enforcement of environmental regulations in critical ecosystems
- The widening financing gap for biodiversity and climate action
- Fragmented coordination across environmental institutions
- Increasing pressure from urban expansion, industrial activity, and unsustainable resource use
- The need for stronger data systems to guide decision-making and accountability
- Raising finance for environmental activities

These challenges underscore the importance of strengthening governance frameworks, improving inter-agency coordination, and expanding innovative financing mechanisms for conservation.

Future Governance Priorities

As we look ahead, the National Executive Council reaffirms its commitment to strengthening NCF's institutional resilience, policy relevance, and delivery capacity. Our governance priorities include:

- Strengthening oversight systems that support effective programme delivery and measurable impact through the use of Information Technology

- Deepening partnerships with government, private sector, and international institutions
- Enhancing transparency, accountability, and performance tracking systems across all programme areas
- Strengthening conservation finance mechanisms, including carbon markets and nature-based investment pathways
- Supporting innovation in climate adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and community-led conservation.
- Increased impact nationally working with States and Local Communities
- Strengthening and refreshing the Board and Management
- Constitutional Review

We also recognise the importance of ensuring that NCF remains agile, responsive, and forward-looking in a rapidly evolving environmental landscape.

Closing Reflections

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Board of Trustees for their leadership, to Members of the National Executive Council for their support, to management and staff for their dedication, to partners for their steadfast support, and to members and volunteers for their unwavering commitment to nature conservation.

We also recognize the invaluable role of our donors and development partners whose investments make this work possible.

As we reflect on the year's achievements, we do so with a sense of responsibility, not finality. The environmental challenges ahead remain significant, but our collective capacity to respond with innovation, collaboration, and resolve is greater.

Thank you for listening.

Hon. Justice (Mrs.) R.I.B Adebisi

Chairman, National Executive Council



Director General's Report

Distinguished members of the Board of Trustees, members of the National Executive Council, partners from government, development agencies, the private sector, civil society, members of the Foundation, dedicated staff, volunteers, and friends of conservation,

It is my privilege to present the Director General's Report for the 2025 reporting year of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation.

This report reflects a year defined by delivery under pressure, expanding partnerships, and deepening impact across Nigeria's most critical ecological landscapes.

Reflecting on the Year in Context

The year under review unfolded against a backdrop of intensifying environmental challenges. Across Nigeria, we continue to witness the accelerating effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, pollution, and ecosystem degradation. These pressures are not abstract. They are visible in the lives of communities, the productivity of landscapes, and the resilience of ecosystems that sustain livelihoods.

At the same time, expectations for conservation organisations have continued to grow. Partners, governments, and communities are increasingly demanding not only ambition, but measurable results, scalable solutions, and demonstrable impact.

Within this context, 2025 required agility, collaboration, and a strong commitment to execution. It was a year in which we strengthened our delivery systems, expanded our partnerships, and deepened our presence across communities and ecosystems in Nigeria.

Executive Snapshot of Impact

Despite the complexity of the operating environment, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation delivered significant and measurable outcomes in 2025:

- 19,900 beneficiaries empowered
- 265,561 trees planted
- 300 hectares of degraded land restored and habitats regenerated
- 58 endangered faunas protected through different conservation action across various landscape in Nigeria
- 515 schools reached across Nigeria
- 15,321 students directly engaged
- 119 communities actively involved in conservation programmes

These results represent more than numbers. They reflect restored ecosystems, strengthened livelihoods, empowered

young people, and communities increasingly taking ownership of conservation outcomes.

Programme Delivery Across Key Thematic Areas:

Our work in 2025 was delivered across four interconnected thematic areas, each addressing a critical dimension of Nigeria's environmental challenges.

A. Climate Action and Ecosystem Restoration

In response to increasing climate vulnerability, we expanded nature-based solutions across key landscapes. In the Niger Delta, we advanced mangrove restoration and climate justice interventions that combined ecosystem recovery with livelihood support.

Across the East Atlantic Flyway, we strengthened wetland restoration, biodiversity protection, and community resilience, integrating sustainable fishing practices and alternative livelihoods into conservation efforts.

In northern Nigeria, the Sustainable Farmers-Led Adaptation Strategy supported climate-smart agriculture, land restoration, and digital advisory systems to improve food security while reducing pressure on fragile ecosystems.

Collectively, these interventions contributed to large-scale restoration outcomes, improved ecosystem function, and enhanced community resilience.

B. Biodiversity Conservation and Landscape Protection

We continued to strengthen biodiversity conservation through both field-based interventions and governance support. In Cross River State, we supported forest governance systems and strengthened collaboration between government agencies, civil society organisations, and community eco-guards. This included enhanced forest surveillance, biodiversity monitoring, and coordinated action against illegal logging and wildlife threats.

Across multiple landscapes, we supported habitat restoration, species monitoring, and conservation awareness, contributing to the protection of 44 endangered species. These efforts reinforced the importance of integrated landscape approaches that combine enforcement, community engagement, and scientific monitoring.

C. Environmental Education and Youth Engagement

Environmental education remained central to our long-term

conservation strategy. In 2025, we expanded school-based engagement to 515 schools nationwide, reaching over 15,321 students and strengthening environmental literacy across multiple states.

Our flagship Summer Camp Programme provided immersive learning experiences in biodiversity, sustainability, and climate action, combining creativity, technology, and experiential learning. We also supported the establishment of conservation clubs in schools, enabling structured, student-led environmental action beyond one-off engagements.

These initiatives are helping to shape a generation of environmentally conscious young Nigerians equipped with the knowledge and motivation to act.

D. Pollution Management and Circular Economy

Addressing plastic pollution and waste management remained a key priority. Through initiatives such as the Walk for Nature, we mobilised public awareness and youth engagement on plastic pollution, reaching thousands of participants and strengthening behavioural change messaging in urban communities.

We also advanced partnerships with corporate actors and communities to promote recycling, waste reduction, and circular economy solutions, including support for school-based waste management systems.

Our Green Ball initiative further positioned conservation financing and circular economy investment as critical enablers for long-term environmental sustainability.

Flagship Programme Highlights

Several flagship initiatives defined our impact in 2025:

- The Green Recovery Nigeria Programme,

- which continues to demonstrate the power of ecosystem restoration to deliver both environmental and livelihood benefits
- The Niger Delta Mangrove Restoration and Climate Justice Initiative, integrating restoration, livelihoods, and community governance
- The Cross River Forest Governance Coalition, strengthening collaboration among 20 civil society organisations and government agencies to combat deforestation
- The Youth Climate Champions and Summer Camp Programme, which continues to build environmental leadership among young people
- The East Atlantic Flyway Programme, combining wetland restoration, biodiversity protection, and sustainable livelihoods.

These programmes demonstrate our ability to deliver integrated solutions that respond to complex environmental challenges.

Partnerships as the Foundation of Impact

Our achievements in 2025 were made possible through strong and sustained partnerships. We acknowledge the support of government agencies at federal and state levels, international development partners, corporate organisations, civil society actors, academic institutions, and community leaders.

In particular, partnerships with organisations such as UNDP, GEF, IKI, EU, WWF, BirdLife International, and numerous private sector partners have been instrumental in scaling our impact. These collaborations reaffirm a central truth: conservation success is only possible through collective action.

Institutional Strengthening and Organisational Learning

The year also provided important opportunities for institutional strengthening. We improved internal coordination systems, strengthened technical capacity, and enhanced our monitoring and evaluation frameworks. We also expanded the use of

digital tools and data systems to support programme delivery and decision-making.

Key lessons from the year include:

- The importance of long-term community ownership in sustaining conservation outcomes
- The need for stronger integration between conservation and livelihood systems
- The reality that behaviour change requires sustained engagement over time
- The continued importance of diversified conservation financing mechanisms

These insights will continue to shape how we design and implement programmes going forward.

Challenges and Constraints

While significant progress was achieved, important challenges remain. These include persistent funding gaps for conservation, weak enforcement of environmental regulations, fragmentation in institutional coordination, increasing pressure from urbanisation and industrial expansion, and the growing impacts of climate variability on ecosystems and livelihoods. These challenges reinforce the need for stronger partnerships, innovative financing mechanisms, and more integrated approaches to conservation delivery.

Strategic Shifts and Innovation in Delivery

During the year, we continued to evolve our approach to conservation delivery. We strengthened community-led models of conservation, expanded engagement with the private sector, and advanced nature-based solutions as a central pillar of our work. We also integrated digital tools into environmental monitoring, education, and planning processes.

Importantly, we are increasingly moving from isolated project implementation toward more systemic, landscape-level approaches that combine ecology, livelihoods, and governance.

Future Priorities

As we look to the future, our focus will remain on strengthening impact, deepening partnerships, and improving delivery systems across all programme areas.

We will continue to scale ecosystem restoration, expand youth engagement, strengthen policy influence, and enhance conservation financing mechanisms that support long-term sustainability.

We will also continue to invest in community ownership models that ensure conservation outcomes are locally driven and sustained over time.

Closing Appreciation

On behalf of the management team, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Board of Trustees and the National Executive Council for their leadership and guidance.

I also extend deep gratitude to our dedicated staff, whose commitment continues to drive the Foundation's impact across Nigeria's diverse ecosystems.

To our partners, donors, government collaborators, volunteers, and communities, we are deeply grateful for your trust, support, and shared commitment to conservation.

Together, we have achieved meaningful progress. Yet we recognise that much more remains to be done. With continued collaboration and determination, we are confident that we will build on this foundation and deliver even greater impact in the years ahead.

Thank you.

Dr. Joseph Onoja

Director-General

Nigerian Conservation Foundation



About us

The Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) is Nigeria's premier environmental non-governmental organization dedicated to nature conservation and sustainable development. The Foundation was founded in 1980 by the late Chief S.L Edu and registered as a Charitable Trust in 1982. The Foundation is the Birdlife International Partner in Nigeria, an Associate of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and a Member of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Other notable international partners are the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Wetlands International. NCF also maintains strong collaboration with governments at all levels, corporate organisations, communities, and individuals in the country.

Vision

A leader in creating sustainable societies where people and nature thrive.

Mission

To protect and restore natural resources, tackle emerging environmental threats in partnership with communities and other stakeholders, for the benefit of present and future generations.

Core Values

- Integrity
- Partnership
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Resilience
- Excellence

NCF Conservation Project Sites

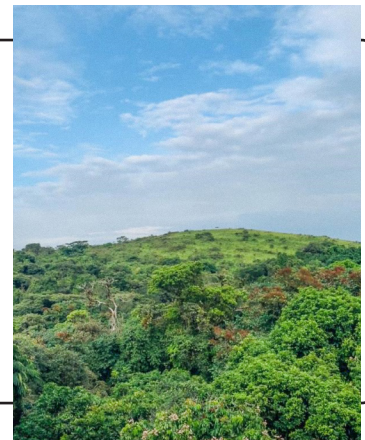


Lekki Conservation Centre, LCC, Lagos State.
(Size – 78 hectares)

LCC was established in 1990 and has become an icon of ecotourism and reforestation, boasting of a unique blend of native biodiversity in the Lekki Peninsula. The project is wholly owned by NCF and supported by Chevron Nigeria Limited. Amongst many exciting features, it showcases Africa's longest canopy walkway. It is an important wetland and forest reserve that plays a crucial role in urban biodiversity conservation and is home to diverse species. Prominent among them are the mona monkey and the tortoise.

Becheve Nature Reserve, Cross River State.
(Size – 120 hectares)

BNR is located on the Obudu Plateau in Cross River State. The Project is supported by the Leventis Foundation. The forest reserve is owned by local communities and managed by NCF since 1998. The holy and amazing mountain scenery, the thrilling canopy walkway, enchanting waterfalls, and horseback riding, give an unforgettable and breathtaking experience.



Finima Nature Park, FNP, Bonny Island, Rivers State.
(Size – 1000 hectares)

Established by the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company (NLNG) in 2001, the Finima Nature Park came from a consensus by the communities of Finima and Bonny in Rivers State to protect the forests. We have been managing the project since 2011. The park is home to a variety of wildlife which includes monkeys, crocodiles, and over 122 bird species.

Abuja Conservation Centre, FCT, Abuja.
(Size – 262 hectares)

This space was donated by the former President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, who was the Grand Patron of NCF. It was established to raise awareness among Nigerians on the need to conserve biodiversity. The centre serves as an education, research, and ecotourism site where people can interact, learn, and appreciate nature. It also serves to conserve biological and historical resources particularly species and habitat in the area.



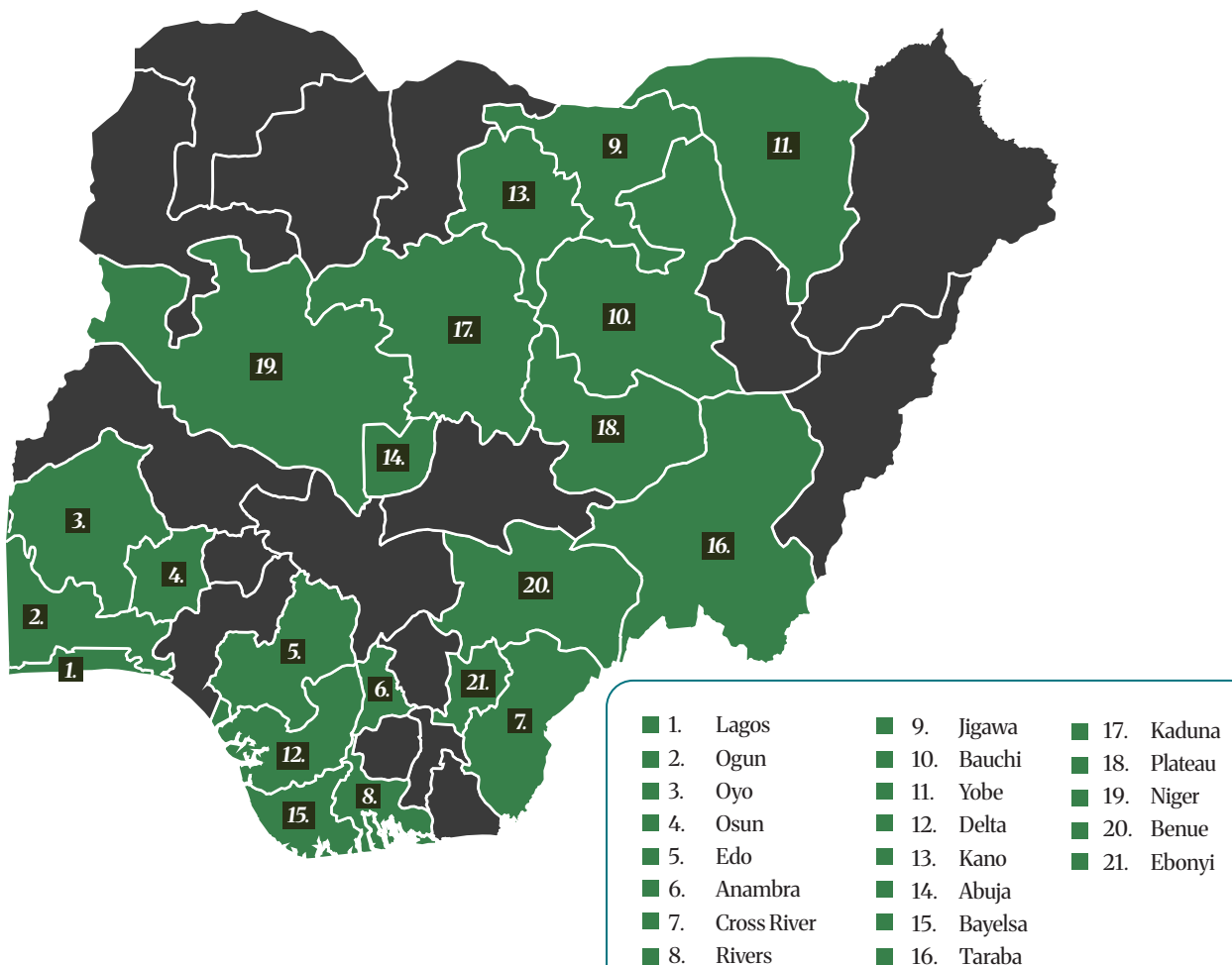


**Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands,
Jigawa/Yobe.**
(Size – 35,000 hectares)

The Hadejia-Nguru wetlands is NCF's flagship project that delivered improved livelihoods for people, and habitats for migratory birds. It attracted Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh who visited in his capacity as President of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) in 1989. The Ramsar site highlights the importance of wetland ecosystems for migratory birds and flood control.

**Omo Forest Reserve,
Ogun State.**
(Size – 55,000 hectares)

Omo forest reserve is one of the last remaining forests in South-West Nigeria. As Technical Partners, we helped establish a wildlife sanctuary within the reserve which we have been managing since 1989. Currently, there are over 200 tree species, 125 bird species, elephants, chimpanzees, and white-throated guenon monkeys among others in the reserve.





2025 Impact At a Glance

2025 -2030 STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Vision - A leader in creating sustainable societies where people and nature thrive

Vision

Mission

To protect and restore natural resources, tackle emerging environmental threats in partnership with communities and other stakeholders, for the benefit of present and future generations

Core values &

Core values: Integrity, Partnership, Accountability, Innovation, Resilience, Excellence

Competencies & Core Competencies: Technical and managerial expertise, Advocacy and policy influence, Agility, Enduring Stakeholder Management, Thought-Leadership

Strategic Pillars

Climate Change	Biodiversity Conservation	Pollution	Institutional strengthening
Establish at least one new conservation centre in one of the key regions (NC, NW, NE, SE, SS, SW) by 2030	Develop a national Red List and Species Action Plans for at least 10 endangered species to guide conservation efforts.	Make NCF environmentally friendly by 2030	Research and thought leadership: Build credibility and reputation to strengthen NCF's relevance to become the undisputed leader in environmental conservation conversations
Secure \$5m in climate funding to develop and implement 5 large scale carbon projects by 2030	Forge partnerships with key stakeholders to manage at least 15 protected areas	Partner with stakeholders to advocate for and secure the passage of legislation aimed at eradicating the use of single-use plastics across the federation.	Advocacy and policy influence: Be the voice that wields significant influence to convey critical stakeholders for policy intervention
Drive energy transition initiatives to impact 1.5 million households across the African region.	Plant/ support the natural regeneration of 10 million indigenous trees nationwide.	Advocate for policies that promote sorting, collection, and recycling, while linking at least 20 communities to plastic uptakers	Technical skills and capacity building: Develop the staff and strengthen the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources needed to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world
Promote Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and Regenerative Agricultural (RA) practices in 500 agrarian communities	Advocate for and provide technical support in the development and implementation of a forest landscape restoration masterplan to increase Nigeria's forest cover to 10% by 2030.	Promote sustainable policies on oil spill remediation that integrate biodiversity restoration methodologies, in collaboration with OPTS and IPPG	Governance and agile operations: Build a resilient and sustainable Corporate Governance that sets the direction for agile operations
Develop and implement NCF's own carbon footprint policy with the aim of making NCF carbon neutral by 2030		Deliver education and advocacy initiatives to engage and reach at least 100 million Africans.	

Focus Areas

Enablers

People

Technology

Funding

Members and Volunteers

Marketing and Visibility

Partnership and Stakeholder Management

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

Disciplined Program Execution and Change Management



Green Recovery Nigeria

The Green Recovery Nigeria (GRN) Programme is advancing nature-based solutions as a practical pathway for restoring degraded ecosystems, strengthening climate resilience, and improving livelihoods across Nigeria. Through large-scale afforestation, reforestation, assisted natural regeneration, and sustainable land management interventions, the programme is helping to rebuild critical landscapes while enhancing biodiversity, increasing carbon sequestration, and supporting community wellbeing. By working with government, communities, and development partners, GRN demonstrates how investing in nature can simultaneously address environmental degradation, climate change, and socio-economic challenges, creating lasting benefits for both people and ecosystems.

The overall goal of GRN project is to establish a reforestation scheme in 25% (230,942 sq. km) of Nigeria's total landmass (923,768 sq. km) from 2017 to 2047, while simultaneously promoting actions to curb deforestation and forest degradation. The goal will be achieved through 75% natural regeneration (173,206.30 sq. Km) and 25% afforestation (57,735.50 sq. Km).

Summary of GRN Achievements

2019-Date

233,600 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.



At the end of
2019/2020

At the end of
2020



1,713,750 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones with funding from NTF.

129,800 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.



At the end of
2020/2021

At the end of
2022



85,400 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.

275,840 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.



At the end of
2023

At the end of
2024



180,307 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.

265,561 trees were planted across the 6 geo-political zones.



At the end of
2025

TOTAL TREES PLANTED (2019 – 2025) = 2,884,258



NCF Partners With 17 Organizations to Plant 265,561 Trees Across 19 States

Nigeria continues to face increasing environmental challenges driven by deforestation, desertification, biodiversity loss, unsustainable land use, and the growing impacts of climate change. Across many communities, degraded landscapes are threatening livelihoods, reducing ecosystem productivity, and weakening the resilience of vulnerable populations that depend directly on nature for survival.

In response to these challenges, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) launched the Green Recovery Nigeria (GRN) programme in 2017 — an ambitious 30-year national restoration initiative designed to restore Nigeria's forest cover to 25% by the year 2047 through reforestation, afforestation, ecosystem resto-

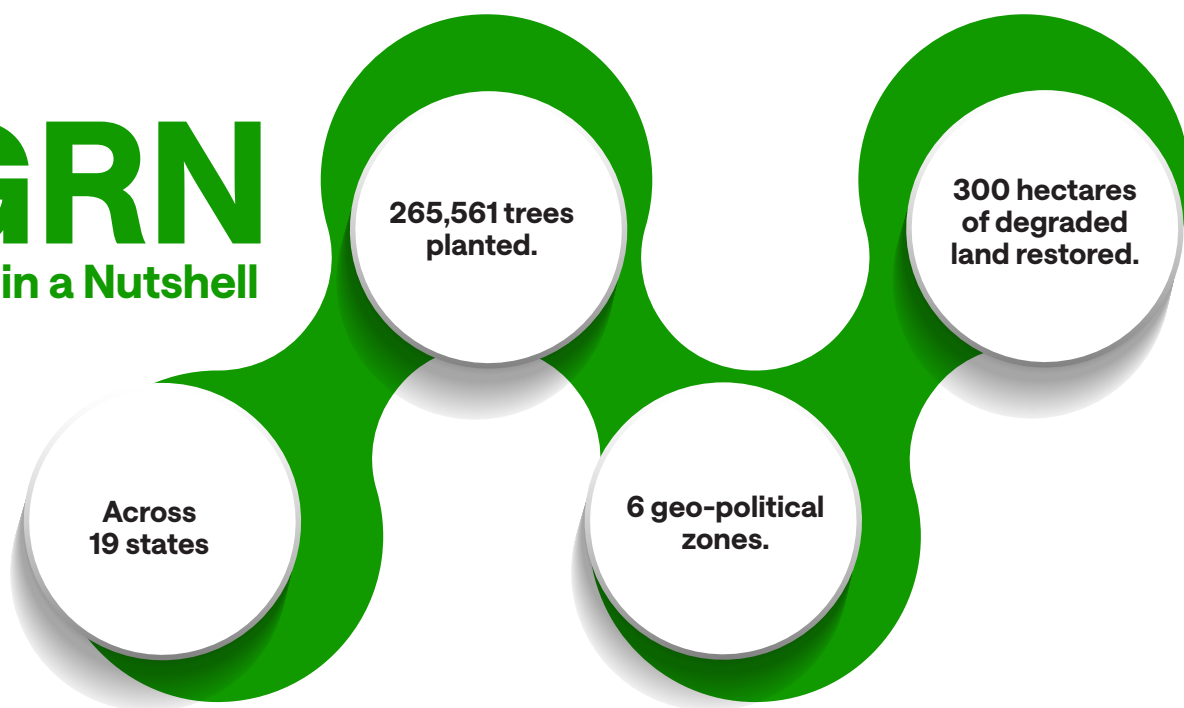
ration, and community-driven conservation actions. Beyond tree planting, the programme seeks to rebuild ecosystems, improve livelihoods, strengthen climate resilience, restore biodiversity, and reconnect people with nature.

Over the years, the GRN programme has continued to evolve into one of Nigeria's leading large-scale restoration movements, bringing together communities, governments, development institutions, corporate organizations, conservation partners, schools, youth groups, and volunteers under a shared vision for a greener and more sustainable Nigeria.

In 2025, the programme recorded another major milestone with the planting of 265,561 trees and the restoration of over 300 hectares of degraded land across 19 states spanning the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. These interventions contributed to ecosystem recovery, climate change mitigation, improved environmental awareness, and strengthened community participation in conservation action nationwide.

GRN

in a Nutshell



The achievements recorded during the year under review were made possible through strategic collaboration and shared commitment with several partners who supported restoration efforts across the country. These partners include:



Through these partnerships, the GRN programme continues to demonstrate the power of collective action in addressing environmental degradation while creating tangible social and ecological impact. From urban landscapes and community forests to wetlands and degraded ecosystems, each tree planted represents more than restoration — it represents hope, resilience, and a long-term investment in Nigeria's environmental future.

As the Foundation continues to scale restoration efforts nationwide, the Green Recovery Nigeria programme remains a strong symbol of NCF's commitment to building a future where people prosper while living in harmony with nature.



Becheve

Nature Reserve

Protecting Nigeria's Mountain Forests Through Community Stewardship

High on the Obudu Plateau in Cross River State lies one of Nigeria's most ecologically significant yet fragile landscapes — the Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR). Surrounded by six communities and wrapped in cool montane forests, rolling grasslands, waterfalls, and breathtaking natural scenery, the reserve stands as a powerful example of how conservation and community partnership can work hand in hand to protect biodiversity while supporting local livelihoods.

Established in 1997/1998 with technical support from the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) and sustained through collaboration with the

Leventis Foundation and host communities, the Becheve Nature Reserve has evolved into an important conservation landscape in Nigeria. The reserve is fragmented into four gallery forest patches: Old BNR, Izul-Vacha, Grotto, and Emba forests covering over 120 hectares of montane and regenerating forest ecosystems on the Obudu Plateau.

Beyond its scenic beauty, BNR is recognized as one of Nigeria's Important Bird Areas (IBA), supporting rare and ecologically significant bird species found within the Afro-tropical highlands biome. Species such as the White-throated Mountain Babbler,



Green-breasted Bushshrike, and Bannerman's Weaver underscore the reserve's global conservation importance. The forests also provide refuge for several primate species, including the rare Preuss's guenon, putty-nosed monkey, and olive baboon.

However, like many biodiversity hotspots across Nigeria, the reserve continues to face growing environmental pressures. Bush fires, livestock encroachment, unsustainable fuelwood extraction, habitat degradation, and human pressure on forest resources threaten the long-term survival of the ecosystem. Increasing economic hardship within surrounding communities has also contributed to greater dependence on forest resources for survival.

To address these challenges, NCF continued to implement integrated conservation interventions focused on habitat restoration, community engagement, environmental education, and biodiversity protection. During the year under review, routine patrols and fire tracing activities were carried out across the Old BNR, Grotto, and Emba forest perimeters to reduce the risk of bushfires and illegal activities within the reserve.

The project also prioritized restoration and reforestation activities through nursery establishment, indigenous tree seedling propagation, and enrichment planting across degraded sections of the reserve and surrounding communities. In 2025 alone, a total of 9,284 indigenous trees were planted, contributing to the restoration of over five hect-

ares of degraded forest landscape.

Community engagement remained central to the success of the reserve. Through continuous awareness campaigns, stakeholder meetings, and collaboration with traditional institutions, local communities were actively involved in protecting the forest and promoting sustainable resource use. Environmental education activities targeting schools, youth groups, women groups, and community leaders further strengthened awareness on the dangers of deforestation, bush burning, and habitat destruction.

The reserve also continued weekly bird monitoring and biodiversity data collection activities to support conservation planning and ecological monitoring efforts across the landscape.

The impact of these interventions is increasingly visible across the reserve and host communities. Cases of uncontrolled bush burning and illegal logging have reduced significantly following the establishment of stronger community-driven conservation measures and the total ban on logging by the BNR Stakeholders Consultative Platform.

"Working with the project as a volunteer over the years has earned me a job with the hotel as a gardener,"

shared Master Godgift Machel from Okwa-Amu Village, reflecting the livelihood opportunities conservation can create for local people.

For community leaders, the reserve has become more than a forest landscape, it is now a symbol of shared responsibility and environmental stewardship. HRH Chief Sunday Ichile elaborates, ***"The project has helped to create jobs for households and provided scholarship opportunities for our community youths."***

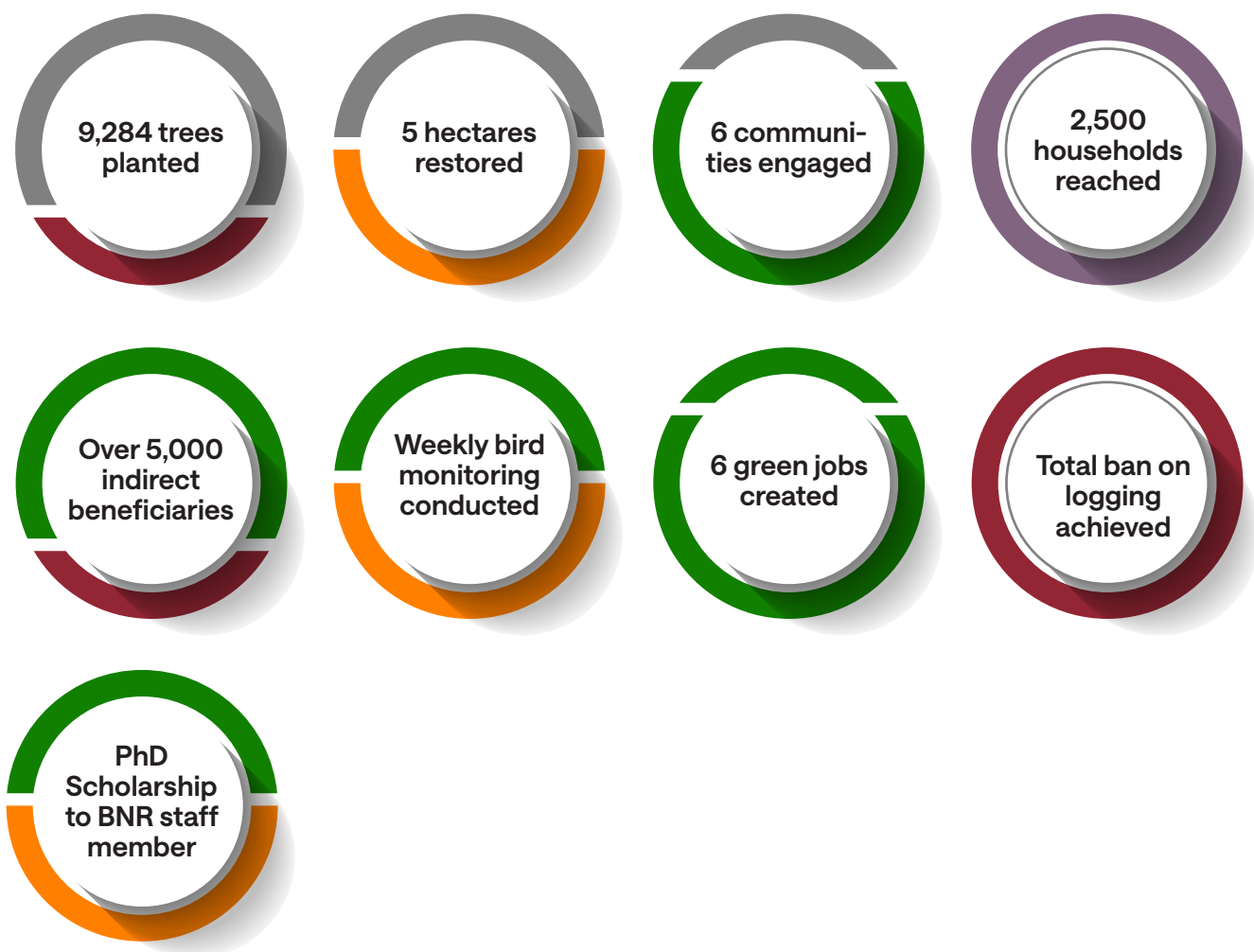
Another community member, Minge Keji from Keji-Ukwu Village, highlighted the growing shift in local attitudes toward conservation: ***"If we had keyed into preserving our forests earlier, we would not be strug-***

gling today for building materials and forest resources.”

During the reporting period, the project directly empowered six beneficiaries through green jobs while indirectly impacting over 5,000 people across six surrounding communities and approximately 2,500 households. A PhD scholarship was also provided to a BNR staff member, further strengthening local conservation capacity and knowledge development.

Despite ongoing challenges, the Becheve Nature Reserve continues to demonstrate the power of long-term partnerships, community ownership, and sustained conservation action. As one of Nigeria’s important mountain forest ecosystems, the reserve remains critical not only for biodiversity protection, but also for climate resilience, environmental education, eco-tourism potential, and sustainable community development.

Through continued collaboration with communities, partners, and stakeholders, NCF remains committed to ensuring that the forests of Becheve continue to thrive for both people and nature.



Case Study: Restoring Forests, Strengthening Livelihoods



Community Forest Management and Livelihood Improvement in the Buffer Region of the Cross River National Park, Nigeria.

Across the western buffer zone of the Cross River National Park, eight rainforest-dependent communities have lived for generations alongside one of Nigeria's most biodiverse forest landscapes. The forests support livelihoods, provide food and medicine, regulate local climate systems, and serve as habitats for globally significant wildlife including pangolins, forest elephants, drills, chimpanzees, and the critically endangered Cross River gorilla.

Yet by 2022, increasing pressure from unsustainable farming practices, illegal logging, overexploitation of forest resources, and weak community forest governance structures had placed both biodiversity and livelihoods at risk. Women relied heavily on low-income Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), youth unemployment was wide-

spread, and community-led forest patrol systems operated with limited equipment or institutional support.

In response, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in partnership with local communities and government stakeholders, implemented the "Community Forest Management and Livelihood Improvement Project" across eight buffer zone communities surrounding the Cross River National Park.

The project strengthened community forest governance, supported sustainable livelihoods, restored degraded landscapes, and empowered local people particularly women and youth to become active stewards of their environment.

By combining conservation with economic empowerment, the initiative demonstrated that protecting forests and improving livelihoods can go hand in hand.



Baseline Snapshot

A baseline study conducted in 2023 across the eight project communities revealed a combination of environmental degradation, livelihood vulnerability, and weak forest management systems.

Key Findings

- **Weak Forest Governance**
- Community by-laws for forest protection existed but were poorly enforced.
- Illegal logging by external actors continued across several forest areas.
- There was no systematic replacement planting after tree harvesting.
- Communities lacked technical knowledge on sustainable forest management.

- **Unsustainable Agricultural Practices**
- Slash-and-burn agriculture contributed to forest loss.
- Farmers had limited knowledge of climate-smart agriculture practices.
- Agricultural expansion into forest areas continued due to declining soil fertility and poor farming methods.
- Farmers lacked access to improved seedlings and sustainable farming techniques.
- **Vulnerable Livelihoods**
- Women relied heavily on low-income NTFP harvesting and informal trading.
- Lack of storage, processing, and packaging capacity reduced product value and income.
- Youth unemployment remained high across the communities.
- Most livelihood activities depended directly on natural resource extraction.
- **Under-Resourced Community Protection Systems**
- Community Eco-Guards operated voluntarily with little institutional support.
- Forest patrol teams lacked uniforms, communication tools, transport, and monitoring equipment.
- Patrol operations were difficult across vast and remote forest areas.

Despite these challenges, communities demonstrated a strong willingness to protect their forests and preserve them for future generations.

The Intervention

Building Community-Led

Conservation Systems

Between 2022 and 2026, NCF implemented an integrated conservation and livelihood model designed to reduce pressure on forests while improving economic resilience across the eight target communities.

The project focused on seven strategic areas:

1. Strengthening Forest Governance

- Establishment of Forest Management Committees
- Engagement of traditional rulers, women, and youth leaders
- Development of community forest by-laws
- Participatory land use planning processes

2. Community Eco-Guard Support

- Training and equipping community Eco-Guards
- Forest patrols and biodiversity monitoring
- Provision of safety kits, uniforms, and surveillance tools
- Capacity building on forest monitoring systems

3. Sustainable Agriculture and Agroforestry

- Training farmers on sustainable agriculture practices
- Promotion of agroforestry systems
- Distribution of improved crop varieties
- Capacity building on soil management and climate-smart agriculture

4. Women's Economic Empowerment

- Training women in green enterprises and value addition
- Support for mushroom farming, snail farming, and vegetable cultivation
- Processing and packaging training for cassava and plantain products

- Financial management and cooperative strengthening

5. Youth-Led Restoration Enterprises

- Nursery establishment and management training
- Native seedling production for restoration activities
- Youth participation in landscape restoration

6. Forest Landscape Restoration

- Restoration of degraded forest areas
- Community-led tree planting activities
- Biodiversity conservation initiatives

7. Public Awareness and Partnerships

- Radio programmes and community sensitisation campaigns
- Policy dialogue workshops
- Collaboration with government agencies and civil society organisations



Outcomes & Impact

• **Community Conservation in Action**

- The project contributed to measurable ecological, social, and economic outcomes across the project landscape.

• **Strengthened Forest Governance**

- Communities established stronger local governance systems for forest protection through forest management committees, community by-laws, and participatory land use planning. Traditional leaders, women, and youth became more actively involved in conservation decision-making processes.

• **Reduced Pressure on Forest Resources**

- Through sustainable agriculture training, livelihood diversification, and increased awareness, communities began reducing dependence on destructive forest practices such as slash-and-burn farming and unsustainable logging activities.

• **Improved Livelihoods and Green Enterprises**

- Women and youth gained new income opportunities through green enterprises including mushroom farming, snail farming, agro-processing, and nursery development. Access to training, micro-credit support, and value addition techniques improved household income resilience.

• **Restoration of Degraded Landscapes**

- Community-led restoration efforts supported the recovery of degraded forest areas while increasing native tree cover within the buffer landscape of the Cross River National Park.

• **Strengthened Biodiversity Protection**

- Enhanced community patrol systems and monitoring activities contributed to a reduction in illegal forest activities and improved protection for threatened wildlife species.

By the Numbers

Communities & Governance

- 8 buffer zone communities engaged
- Forest Management Committees established and strengthened
- Community land use plans developed
- Community forest by-laws adopted

Forest Protection

- 50 youth Eco-Guards engaged across communities
- Forest patrol and monitoring systems strengthened
- Biodiversity surveillance tools deployed

Restoration & Biodiversity

- 92,746 trees planted
- 120 hectares of degraded forest restored
- Native tree nurseries established
- Protection support for threatened species including pangolins and forest elephants

Livelihoods & Economic Empowerment

- 2,400 farmers trained on sustainable agriculture
- 400 women trained in green enterprises and value chains
- Over ₦18 million invested in micro-credit support
- 400+ green jobs supported through restoration and enterprise activities

Youth Engagement

- 120,000 native tree seedlings raised
- Youth-led nursery enterprises established
- Community-based restoration workforce strengthened

Reach

- Over 4,000 direct beneficiaries
- More than 15,000 indirect beneficiaries reached

Human Stories

Voices from the Forest Communities



“Now we are beginning to see wildlife return.”

“We have gained practical skills in using tools like camera traps, GPS devices, and other monitoring equipment, which have strengthened our work in the forest. During patrols, we monitor both wildlife and human activities, track locations, and report findings accurately. These efforts have helped us detect species presence and reduce illegal activities, and now we are beginning to see wildlife return to areas where they had long disappeared.”

**— Bassey Eyo,
Eco-Guard Commandant, Iko Esai Community**

“What used to go to waste has now become income.”

“NCF trained us in mushroom farming, snail farming, and how to process cassava and plantain into chips. Before now, cassava often went to waste because we only knew the traditional methods. Today, I process cassava into chips and earn additional income from it.”

**— Maria Erim Ekpe,
Farmer, Iko Esai Community**



“The training changed my life.”

“The training I received through the project changed my life. My first snail harvest produced over 400 snails, which I sold to support my children’s education in Calabar.”

**— Blessing Ikuvande Ukpo,
Snail Farmer, Agoi Ibami Community**

A Transformation Journey

Before the Project

- Weak community forest governance systems
- Voluntary Eco-Guards lacked equipment and support
- Illegal logging and forest degradation persisted
- Slash-and-burn agriculture increased forest pressure
- Women relied on low-income forest harvesting
- Youth unemployment was high
- Degraded forest landscapes continued to expand
- Limited livelihood diversification

COMPARISON

After the Project

- Forest governance structures strengthened across 8 communities
- Eco-Guards trained and equipped for forest patrol and monitoring
- Community monitoring systems strengthened forest protection
- Farmers trained on sustainable agriculture and agroforestry
- Women supported through green enterprises and value addition
- Youth engaged in restoration and nursery enterprises
- 120 hectares restored and 92,746 trees planted
- New income streams created through green enterprises

Community-Led Conservation for Long-Term Resilience (Theory of Change)

PRESSURES & CHALLENGES

- Unsustainable farming
- Illegal logging
- Weak forest governance
- Youth unemployment
- Low household income
- Forest degradation

PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

- Forest Governance Strengthening
- Eco-Guard training
- Sustainable agriculture
- Women enterprise support
- Restoration activities
- Public awareness campaigns

IMMEDIATE RESULTS

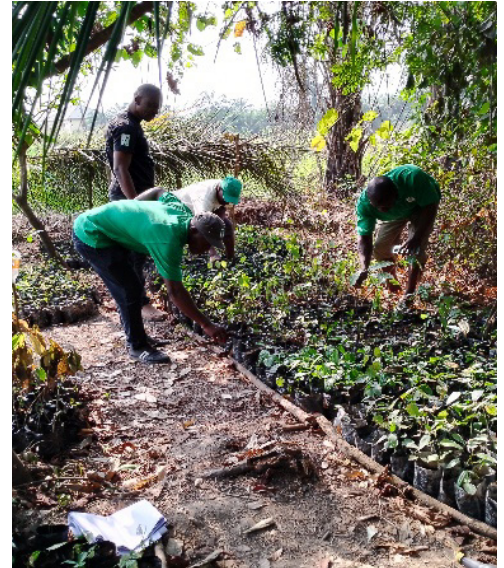
- Improved community capacity
- Increased forest monitoring
- Adoption of sustainable farming practices
- Expanded green enterprises
- Increased community participation

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Reduced pressure on forests
- Improved household resilience
- Stronger local conservation systems
- Restored landscapes
- Enhanced biodiversity protection

IMPACT

Community-led conservation systems that protect biodiversity while strengthening sustainable livelihoods across the Cross River forest landscape.



Policy and Advocacy Efforts in Taylor Creek Forest Landscape Leads to State-Wide Ban on Illegal Logging in Bayelsa State

The Gbaran Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Project is a multi-stakeholder conservation initiative implemented by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) in partnership with Renaissance Africa Energy Company Limited (formerly SPDC), SHERDA, Bayelsa State Ministry of Environment, and community stakeholders.

The project focuses on 23 communities across the Taylor Creek forest landscape in Bayelsa State, spanning Okordia, Zarama, Biseni, and Tarakiri clans. It is designed as a long-term biodiversity

conservation and community stewardship programme combining forest protection, capacity building, and livelihood support.

Sustained policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and community-level forest governance interventions under the Gbaran BAP Project have contributed to a significant shift in forest management policy in Bayelsa State. These efforts supported improved compliance mechanisms and ultimately informed the declaration and enforcement of a state-wide ban on illegal logging, marking a major milestone in landscape-level forest protection.



Highlights

Policy Advocacy and Influence

Through continuous engagement with traditional institutions, community leaders, and state authorities, forest governance structures were reinforced and awareness around illegal logging significantly improved, supporting compliance with the state-led ban on illegal logging. The activities of the project have also led to a drastic reduction in illegal logging activities.

Improved Forest Ranger Systems

A key milestone was the consolidation of Forest Ranger systems, supported through targeted training, improved patrol methodologies, and provision of uniforms, tools, and a dedicated operational office. These investments strengthened field presence and improved community-based surveillance of forest resources.

Community Led Forest Protection

The project also advanced ecological restoration efforts through the establishment of indigenous tree nurseries and the planting of over 11,300 seedlings across degraded areas in Biseni, Zarama/Okordia, and Tarakiri clans. Alongside this, sustained awareness campaigns improved community understanding of forest conservation, illegal logging risks, and stewardship responsibilities, contributing to gradual behavioural change. In parallel, 46 Forest Rangers were engaged in green jobs, reinforcing both conservation enforcement and local livelihood support.

Key Impact Metrics

Geographic & Community Reach

- 23 communities engaged across 4 clans (Okordia, Zarama, Biseni, Tarakiri)
- 2 LGAs covered (Yenagoa and Sagbama)

Forest Protection & Restoration

- 11,300 indigenous tree seedlings planted
- Approximately 7 hectares of degraded land under restoration
- Community-based forest monitoring systems strengthened

Human Capital Development

- 46 Forest Rangers (36 male, 10 female) engaged in green jobs
- Multiple capacity building sessions conducted for forest rangers

Livelihood & Social Impact

- Approximately 150 indirect beneficiaries supported through alternative livelihood pathways
- Over 8,000 indirect beneficiaries reached through awareness and ecosystem services

Institutional Development

- Ranger office established and furnished
- Ranger uniforms, kits, and field equipment provided
- Multi-stakeholder governance platform operationalised

Laying the Foundations for Landscape Forest Restoration in Omo Forest Reserve

Omo Forest Reserve is one of Nigeria's most important lowland forest landscapes, supporting globally significant biodiversity and providing critical ecosystem services for surrounding communities. However, decades of deforestation, forest degradation, unsustainable agricultural expansion, illegal logging, fuelwood extraction, wildlife hunting, and the growing impacts of climate change have placed immense pressure on the landscape.



These challenges have resulted in habitat loss, declining wildlife populations, reduced ecosystem functionality, and increasing vulnerability for forest-dependent communities. Addressing these interconnected threats requires more than isolated conservation interventions; it demands coordinated action across government institutions, local communities, civil society, and the private sector.

To respond to this challenge, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) is implementing the biodiversity conservation and restoration component of the FAO-GEF7 Project, which seeks to strengthen the conservation, sustainable management, and restoration of Nigeria's lowland forest landscapes, including Omo Forest Reserve and its surrounding communities.

Building the Framework for Long-Term Conservation

During the reporting period, project activities focused on establishing the institutional, governance, and stakeholder foundations necessary for successful long-term implementation.



A major milestone was the National Inception Workshop, which brought together key stakeholders to align expectations, clarify project objectives, and initiate coordination among implementing partners and government institutions.

This was followed by the inauguration of the National Project Steering Committee, providing strategic oversight and ensuring alignment between national priorities, project objectives, and implementation activities.

At the landscape level, extensive stakeholder engagement and sensitisation activities were conducted within Omo Forest Reserve to introduce the project to local actors, build awareness, and strengthen support for future conservation and restoration interventions.

To further institutionalise collaboration, a Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) was validated and inaugurated. The platform brings together representatives from government agencies, local communities, academia, civil society organisations, and other partners to facilitate inclusive dialogue, joint planning, knowledge sharing, and coordinated implementation throughout the project lifecycle.

Key Progress Highlights

- National Inception Workshop successfully convened to launch project implementation.
- National Project Steering Committee inaugurated to provide strategic direction and oversight.
- Stakeholder sensitisation and engagement conducted within Omo Forest Reserve.
- Multi-Stakeholder Platform established and operationalised to strengthen collaborative landscape governance.
- Partnerships strengthened among government institutions, communities, NGOs, and technical stakeholders.
- Foundations laid for future conservation planning, restoration activities, and sustainable livelihood interventions.

Long-Term Restoration Targets:

- 4,000–7,000 hectares targeted for forest restoration
- Priority conservation and restoration areas to be mapped and designated
- Site-level management plans to be developed and implemented

Geographic Scope:

- Omo Wildlife Sanctuary
- 14 support-zone communities within Omo Forest Reserve
- 4 states

Restoring the Ogun River: Strengthening Water Security and Ecosystem Resilience Through Corporate Partnership



The Unilever Water Stewardship Programme under the Ogun River Watershed represents a strategic intervention focused on restoring one of the country's most critical freshwater ecosystems. The Ogun River Basin, which supports millions of people and a wide range of economic activities, has in recent years faced increasing ecological stress driven by deforestation, sand mining, uncontrolled agricultural expansion, rapid urban development, and inadequate sanitation practices. These pressures have significantly degraded riparian habitats, reduced water quality, and weakened the watershed's natural capacity to regulate flow and recharge groundwater.

In response, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in partnership with Unilever, initiated a comprehensive watershed restoration and water security programme aimed at reversing degradation trends and strengthening ecosystem resilience. The intervention combines ecological restoration, watershed planning, and community-based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) actions to address both environmental and human dimensions of water insecurity.

Key activities implemented include baseline ecological and hydrological assessments, GIS mapping of degraded riparian zones, and the development of restoration plans targeting priority areas within the watershed. Community mobilisation and stakeholder engagement have also been central to the approach, ensuring local participation in stewardship efforts and long-term sustainability. In parallel, WASH interventions have been designed to improve access to safe water and promote better sanitation practices in underserved communities, reinforcing the link between ecosystem health and public wellbeing.

The project is targeting the restoration of approximately 30 hectares of degraded riparian habitat, with anticipated benefits including improved groundwater recharge, enhanced water quality, and increased climate resilience across the watershed. It is also expected to directly benefit about 2,000 people through improved water access and strengthened community stewardship structures.

Overall, the programme establishes a strong model for private sector-led ecosystem restoration in Nigeria, demonstrating how corporate partnership can drive measurable environmental recovery while advancing water security, biodiversity conservation, and community resilience within a shared landscape.

Rebuilding the Niger Delta's Forest Future: Community-Led Restoration, Livelihoods and Climate Resilience under the ALEC Project



The Niger Delta's coastal ecosystems have experienced extensive degradation driven by illegal logging, oil-related environmental pressures, coastal erosion, and unsustainable resource extraction. In the KEFESSO communities, mangrove and tropical rainforest loss has reduced ecosystem integrity, weakened natural flood protection systems, and disrupted fisheries that sustain local livelihoods.

As forest cover declines, communities face increasing exposure to climate shocks, including flooding, shoreline erosion, and biodiversity loss. These environmental pressures are compounded by limited livelihood alternatives, resulting in continued dependence on forest exploitation and accelerating ecosystem decline. Without intervention, the region faces further loss of biodiversity, reduced fisheries productivity, and deepening socio-economic vulnerability.



Understanding this, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the First Exploration and Petroleum Development Company is implementing the Afforestation/Reforestation, Livelihoods Enhancement and Carbon Sequestration (ALEC) Project across 11 KEFESSO coastal communities in Bayelsa State. The initiative is designed to restore degraded mangrove and tropical rainforest ecosystems while simultaneously strengthening community livelihoods, governance systems, and long-term climate resilience.

In 2025, implementation focused on laying the foundation for a scalable, community-driven restoration model anchored on nursery development, forest protection systems, and alternative livelihood pathways that reduce pressure on natural forests while improving household resilience.

2025 Key Impact Highlights

- 11 community nurseries established and operational across KEFESSO communities to support large-scale restoration efforts.
- 220,000 seedlings reaching transplant maturity, forming the early pipeline for ecosystem restoration planned for 2026.
- 500,000+ seedlings planned across the restoration cycle, positioning ALEC as a major landscape-scale reforestation initiative.
- 55 community forest rangers trained and deployed, strengthening local forest monitoring, patrol, and conservation enforcement capacity.
- Operational forest surveillance systems introduced, including patrol tools, safety equipment, and mobility support for field monitoring.
- 220 nursery volunteers trained and equipped to manage seedling production and nursery operations across all project sites.
- 2,000+ community members reached through environmental awareness programmes, reinforcing conservation behaviour change at scale.
- 17 schools engaged through conservation clubs, integrating biodiversity education into youth learning systems.
- 75% participation of women and youth in community engagement activities, strengthening inclusivity in restoration governance.
- Community livelihood systems initiated, including nursery-based enterprises and green livelihood options for youth and women.

Where Conservation Works: Finima Nature Park's 2025 Impact

For over two decades, Finima Nature Park has demonstrated the value of sustained conservation investment in safeguarding biodiversity, restoring ecosystems, and connecting people with nature. Situated on Bonny Island in Rivers State, the Park continues to serve as one of the Niger Delta's most important conservation landscapes, providing refuge for wildlife while delivering climate and environmental benefits to surrounding communities



In 2025, the Park reinforced its role as a thriving ecological asset through strengthened habitat protection, ecosystem restoration, biodiversity monitoring, and public engagement initiatives. Continuous conservation management helped maintain the ecological integrity of the forest, with regular patrols and surveillance activities preventing illegal exploitation and supporting the long-term protection of critical habitats. These efforts contributed to the preservation of a mature forest ecosystem that remains largely undisturbed despite increasing environmental pressures within the wider coastal landscape.

Scientific assessments conducted during the year further confirmed the Park's ecological significance. Findings from the 2025 Rapid Biodiversity Assessment revealed a stable and biologically rich ecosystem characterized by high species diversity, healthy vegetation struc-



ture, and increasing carbon storage capacity. The assessment also highlighted the Park's importance as a refuge for species of conservation concern and as a functioning wildlife habitat within the Niger Delta. While the study identified emerging threats such as coastal erosion and invasive species encroachment, it affirmed that conservation measures implemented over the years have been effective in maintaining ecosystem resilience and biodiversity value.

Beyond biodiversity conservation, Finima Nature Park continued to demonstrate the role of protected areas as nature-based solutions to climate change. Ongoing restoration efforts and forest growth are strengthening the Park's capacity to store carbon, enhance ecosystem resilience, and contribute to long-term climate mitigation objectives. These outcomes underscore the growing importance of healthy forest and mangrove ecosystems in addressing both biodiversity loss and climate challenges.

Project Highlights

- 81.76 hectares of degraded forest and mangrove habitat restored.
- 53,137 trees planted across 29 restoration plots in 2025.
- 188,000+ tonnes of CO₂ equivalent stored within the Park's Eastern Block.
- 209 schools engaged through environmental education programmes.

- 68 conservation clubs supported across Bonny Island.
- 25 faith-based institutions reached through awareness and outreach initiatives.
- 20,792 visitors welcomed through ecotourism, recreation, and educational activities.
- 85 participants engaged in the inaugural EcoFest awareness walk.
- 61 volunteers participated in community clean-up activities during EcoFest 2025.
- 2 illegal loggers apprehended, strengthening protection of biodiversity and forest resources.



"Finima Nature Park continues to demonstrate that when ecosystems are protected over time, the returns extend beyond biodiversity. It strengthens climate resilience, supporting environmental education, and creating lasting connections between people and nature."



Protecting species is at the heart of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem health. Across Nigeria, many plant and animal species face growing threats from habitat loss, illegal exploitation, climate change, and human-induced pressures.

Through targeted research, monitoring, habitat protection, community engagement, and strategic partnerships, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation works to safeguard threatened and endangered species while promoting coexistence between people and nature. These efforts contribute to maintaining ecological balance, strengthening ecosystem resilience, and securing Nigeria's rich natural heritage for future generations.

Saving Species





International Waterbird Census 2025: Monitoring Wetland Health Through Waterbird Populations Across 19 Sites

As BirdLife International's partner in Nigeria, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) continues to coordinate and participate in the annual International Waterbird Census (IWC), conducted every January across key wetland ecosystems. The exercise provides critical long-term data on waterbird populations, serving as a key indicator of ecosystem health and informing conservation planning, protected area management, and global biodiversity monitoring.

The 2025 census was conducted across eight states: Lagos, Ondo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Cross River, Yobe, Jigawa, and Bauchi, reflecting Nigeria's wide ecological diversity and the national scope of wetland moni-

toring efforts. These sites collectively contribute to global migratory bird tracking and ecosystem health assessment under the African-Eurasian Flyway framework.

Beyond data collection, the exercise enhances environmental awareness, strengthens field-based conservation capacity, and reinforces Nigeria's role in international migratory bird conservation efforts. Each annual count adds to a growing evidence base that links wetland health to broader environmental and climate resilience outcomes.

Threatened & Priority Species

- Grey Parrot – Endangered (IUCN)
- Eurasian Curlew – Near Threatened
- Black-tailed Godwit – Near Threatened
- Garganey – AEWA priority species
- White-faced Whistling Duck – AEWA monitored species

Key Results Snapshot

- Total birds recorded: **175,281**
- Total species recorded: **87 species**
- Total sites surveyed: **19 sites**
- Inland wetlands: **174,010 individuals**
- Coastal wetlands: **2,052 individuals**
- States covered: **8 states**

Top Species Recorded

- White-faced Whistling Duck – 83,941
- Ruff – 19,149
- Garganey – 16,307

Low Abundance Indicators

- Little Grebe – 3 individuals
- Damara Tern – 4 individuals
- Green Sandpiper – 2 individuals

Protecting Nigeria's Remaining Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches



Ibeju-Lekki remains one of the few known sea turtle nesting areas in Nigeria, yet the coastline faces increasing pressure from coastal development, sand mining, poaching, plastic pollution, and habitat degradation. Through the NCF-Lagos Free Zone Sea Turtle Conservation Project, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation worked with local communities to protect sea turtles and their habitats using a community-based conservation approach that combined scientific monitoring, environmental education, and stakeholder engagement.

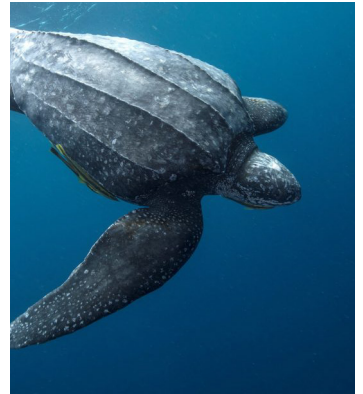
During the year, four of Nigeria's five sea turtle species were documented across 12 coastal communities: the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and the globally rare Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*). A total of 21 turtles were recorded, with 12 successfully rescued and returned to the ocean. One of the project's most notable achievements was the rescue and release of a rare Leatherback turtle after engaging local fisherfolk and replacing damaged fishing nets that had accidentally trapped the animal. Seven hatchlings were also safely released into the sea, contributing to the survival of future generations.

The project strengthened community participation in conservation by training 12 volunteers in beach patrols, nest monitoring, species identification, GPS mapping, bycatch rescue, and biodiversity data collection. These volunteers served as the front-line custodians of the coastline, while 162 fisherfolk received sensitisation on sustainable fishing practices and the importance of protecting sea turtles. Conservation education activities also reached approximately 3,250 students across seven schools, helping to build awareness among the next generation of environmental stewards.

Project monitoring also revealed critical conservation challenges. Severe coastal erosion, tidal surges, sand mining, and rising sea levels have resulted in the loss of nesting habitat in Apakin community, where no turtle sightings were recorded throughout the project period. The documentation of poached turtle eggs in Akodo further highlighted the continued threat of illegal exploitation. Despite these pressures, the project demonstrated that community-led conservation can improve local attitudes toward sea turtle protection and increase the successful release of accidentally captured turtles.

By combining science, education, community stewardship, and private-sector partnership, the project continues to provide

a practical model for protecting marine biodiversity while supporting Nigeria's commitments to biodiversity conservation and sustainable coastal management.



- 4 sea turtle species documented, including the globally rare Leatherback Turtle
- 21 individual sea turtles recorded across 12 coastal communities
- 12 turtles successfully rescued and returned to the ocean
- 1 rare Leatherback turtle rescued and released
- 7 hatchlings safely released into the sea
- 12 community volunteers trained in turtle monitoring and conservation techniques
- Approximately 1,460 km of coastline monitored annually per volunteer

- 162 fisherfolk sensitised on sustainable fishing and bycatch release protocols
- 3,250 students reached through conservation education activities
- 7 schools engaged through environmental awareness programmes
- 90 students trained in plastic waste upcycling and marine conservation practices
- Demonstrated the effectiveness of a private sector–NGO–community partnership model for species conservation and coastal ecosystem protection.

From Trade to Trust: Reducing Demand for Nigeria's Endangered Vultures

Nigeria's vultures remain among the country's most threatened bird species, facing severe pressure from belief-based trade driven by traditional medicine and spiritual practices. To address one of the root causes of their decline, NCF implemented a pioneering behaviour change initiative under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), combining research, stakeholder engagement, policy advocacy, and community action to reduce demand for vulture parts.

Building on a structured five-step behaviour change framework developed through the project, NCF worked directly with wildlife traders, traditional medicine practitioners, conservation authorities, and local communities to promote sustainable alternatives and shift attitudes toward vulture use.



The project recorded encouraging signs of change. Market monitoring across five major wildlife markets in Kano State showed a continued decline in the open sale of vulture parts. While all wildlife traders surveyed during the 2017 baseline assessment were involved in vulture trade, only three out of fifty stalls displayed vulture parts in 2025, down from five stalls in 2024. The reduction reflects years of sustained awareness raising, engagement with traders, and increasing acceptance of alternatives.

A major milestone was the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding with the National Association of Nigerian Traditional Medicine Practitioners (NANTMP), committing the association to prohibit the use of vultures in traditional medicine among its members, integrate plant-based alternatives into practitioner training programmes, support awareness campaigns, and collaborate on habitat restoration efforts. The agreement represents one of the most significant institutional commitments to vulture conservation in Nigeria.

To strengthen conservation at the community level, NCF established pilot Vulture Safe Zones in Anambra and Rivers States. Community conservation groups were formed, volunteers trained to monitor vulture populations, and alternative livelihood support provided to reduce dependence on wildlife trade. Engagement with traditional leaders and local authorities also laid the foundation for stronger community-based protection measures.

Through coordinated action across markets, communities, professional associations, and government institutions, the project demonstrated that behaviour change can be a powerful conservation tool. Beyond protecting vultures, it is helping build a national movement that addresses the cultural and economic drivers of wildlife exploitation while creating pathways for long-term species recovery.

Impact Highlights

- Developed and piloted Nigeria's first structured CITES-aligned behaviour change framework targeting belief-based vulture use.
- Reduced open vulture trade in surveyed Kano wildlife markets from 100% trader participation at baseline (2017) to only 3 of 50 stalls in 2025.
- Secured a landmark national agreement with the National Association of Nigerian Traditional Medicine Practitioners to phase out vulture use and promote plant-based alternatives.
- Institutionalised alternative remedies through practitioner training and awareness programmes.
- Established two pilot Vulture Safe Zones in Anambra and Rivers States.
- Trained and supported community volunteers to monitor vulture populations and report sightings.
- Provided alternative livelihood support to community members through sustainable goat farming initiatives.
- Strengthened collaboration among wildlife authorities, traditional practitioners, traders, communities, and conservation organisations to advance vulture protection.
- Advanced policy and stakeholder engagement aimed at strengthening protection for one of Nigeria's most endangered bird groups.

World Migratory Bird Day 2025: Bridging Science, Sound, and Youth Action

World Migratory Bird Day is a global awareness campaign dedicated to highlighting the importance of migratory birds and the need to protect the habitats and flyways they depend on across countries and continents. The 2025 celebration at the Lekki Conservation Centre advanced NCF's efforts to promote coexistence between people and migratory birds in increasingly urbanised landscapes. Marked under the global theme "Shared Spaces: Creating Bird-Friendly Cities and Communities," the event brought together 72 participants, including 50 students and 10 teachers from schools across Lagos.

The programme blended conservation science with creativity and technology to deepen environmental awareness among young people. Through a partnership with sound artist Axel Drioli under the Music Across Continents initiative, students explored migratory bird conservation through sound, art, and storytelling, making biodiversity education more immersive and engaging. Participants were also introduced to the Merlin Bird ID App, where they learned to identify birds using sound recognition tools, turning field-based conservation into a practical digital learning experience.



Creative performances by participating schools including poetry, spoken word, and mime—further reinforced key messages around shared habitats, urban green spaces, and the importance of protecting migratory routes. The session also provided clarity on migratory bird patterns and ecosystem connectivity, helping to correct common misconceptions about species such as the Eurasian Reed Warbler.

Overall, the event strengthened youth engagement in migratory bird conservation by combining science, creativity, and technology to foster a deeper understanding of shared ecological spaces and the urgent need to protect them in urban environments.

Building the Next Generation Conservation Leaders to Save Nigeria's Rarest Gorilla

Project Overview:

The Community Conservation Graduate Students' Scholarship Programme is a five-year conservation capacity-building initiative implemented by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo, University of Calabar, Cross River National Park, Cross River Forestry Commission, Afi communities, and the Centre for Biodiversity Conservation Research (CBCR). The programme supports postgraduate research focused on the conservation of the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla while building a new generation of Nigerian conservation leaders equipped with scientific, technical, and community-based conservation skills. Through field research, mentorship, international learning exchanges, and community engagement, the initiative strengthens both biodiversity protection efforts and long-term local conservation capacity within the Afi landscape of Cross River State.

In the forests of Cross River State where fragments of rainforest still cling to steep ridges and community farmlands press steadily against protected boundaries the future of one of Africa's most endangered great apes is being quietly shaped not only in the wild, but in classrooms, field stations, and across borders.



The Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*), with fewer than 300 individuals remaining in isolated pockets along the Nigeria–Cameroon border, sits at the center of a conservation challenge that is as ecological as it is human. Habitat fragmentation, land-use pressure, and limited monitoring capacity have made survival increasingly complex. Yet, within this fragile landscape, a new response is emerging one that invests not only in forests, but in people.

Through the Community Conservation Graduate Students' Scholarship Programme, implemented by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) in collaboration with the University of Calabar, Cross River National Park, Cross River State Forestry Commission, Afi Mountain Communities, the Centre for

Biodiversity Conservation Research (CBCR), and the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo, a deliberate effort is underway to build a pipeline of conservation scientists grounded in both field reality and global best practice.

The programme through scholarship intervention brings together postgraduate students from Forestry, Zoology, and Environmental Resource Management, embedding them in real conservation systems while exposing them to the policy, technical, and community dimensions of biodiversity protection.

At the University of Calabar, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) serves as the intellectual and operational backbone of this effort. Comprising representatives from Cross River National Park, Cross River State Forestry Commission, University of Calabar, Afi Mountain community and international partners, the PAC provides guidance that is both technical and strategic ensuring that student research is not only academically sound, but directly relevant to conservation outcomes in Cross River's protected landscapes



Over successive PAC engagements in 2025, a consistent theme has emerged: conservation in Cross River cannot succeed without integrated knowledge systems where GIS mapping, gender analysis, ecological monitoring, and community participation are treated not as separate disciplines, but as interconnected tools for survival.

This philosophy is already shaping the work of the students...

Conservation Philosophy Powering Practical Solutions



In the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary and surrounding buffer communities, one student is examining how gender-responsive education can influence conservation behaviour, recognizing that men and women engage differently with forest resources and therefore respond differently to conservation messaging. Another is using geospatial tools to map fragmented gorilla habitats, combining GPS data with community knowledge to identify pressure zones and movement corridors. A third is studying land-use dynamics in the Mbe Mountains, where annual deforestation continues to reshape the ecological future of shared landscapes.

These are not abstract academic exercises. They are applied responses to a living conservation emergency.

Peace Okokon, a scholarship awardee puts it better, ***“The Calgary Zoo project deepened my understanding of the importance of wildlife conservation. Through my research on gender inclusion and community involvement in protecting the Cross River Gorilla, I’ve learned that engaging local communities especially women is key to changing behaviours that threaten the species.”***

Field exposure has been central to this transformation...

Learning Beyond Classrooms

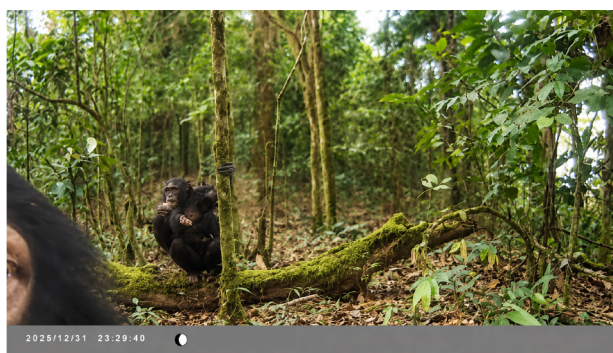
At the Cross River State Forestry Commission, students observed the operational reality of forest governance—from regeneration and agroforestry efforts to enforcement challenges in the face of illegal logging and weak compliance systems. They witnessed how Community and Private Forest structures attempt to balance participatory governance with the realities of resource dependency, and how GIS units are increasingly used to mediate land conflicts and track forest change.

“The Calgary Zoo project broadened my perspective on conservation by exposing me to practical tools like GIS and GPS for habitat monitoring and protection. More importantly, it gave me the opportunity to engage with diverse communities, reinforcing how critical collaboration and local knowledge are to achieving sustainable conservation outcomes.”

-Amidat Sotunde,
scholarship awardee.

On the Frontlines: Where Conservation Becomes Reality

At the Cross River National Park, the learning shifted into direct wildlife protection systems. Students engaged with anti-poaching patrol structures, legal prosecution frameworks, and field surveillance operations. They were introduced to ballistics and ranger safety protocols, not as abstract law enforcement content, but as part of the lived reality of protecting endangered species in contested landscapes.



In the forest itself, they encountered conservation at its most tangible form—elephant footprints in mud, camera traps mounted high in canopy platforms, and faecal evidence that signals the silent presence of wildlife in heavily human-impacted ecosystems.

But perhaps the most transformative dimension of the programme came beyond Nigeria's borders.

Rethinking Conservation Through Community Ownership: CREMA Model

In Ghana, students were immersed in Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) systems; a decentralized governance model where communities co-manage natural resources through elected structures, local by-laws, and benefit-sharing arrangements. From the Avu Lagoon wetlands to the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary, they observed how conservation can function not as exclusion, but as negotiated coexistence.



They saw sitatunga antelopes moving through floating vegetation, bird-rich wetlands sustained by community enforcement systems, and ecotourism models that translate biodiversity into livelihood security. They also observed the vulnerabilities such as agro-chemical pressures and ecological stressors that threaten even well-designed systems.

What emerged from Ghana was not replication, but reflection: how such models might inform conservation strategies in Cross River, particularly in buffer communities where livelihoods and biodiversity intersect.



This continental learning exchange reinforced a central idea; the survival of the Cross River Gorilla will not be secured by enforcement alone, but by systems that integrate governance, livelihood, science, and community ownership.

Investing in Skills, Tools, and the Future of Conservation



To strengthen this emerging cadre of conservation professionals, the programme also invested in practical tools. In September 2025, brand new HP laptops were provided to the students through the University of Calabar, presented on behalf of the project by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Florence Obi. The gesture directly supports data analysis, GIS modelling, and the technical capacity required to translate field data into conservation action.

Across PAC meetings, fieldwork, and international exposure, a pattern is becoming clear: this is not simply a scholarship programme. It is a structured attempt to redefine conservation capacity in Cross River State.

As Dr. Joseph Onoja of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation frames it:

“The real question is no longer whether we understand the threats to biodiversity in Cross River it is whether we are deliberately building the human capacity to respond at the scale those threats demand. This programme is one of the clearest answers to that question.”

The project officer, Emmanuel Owan, further buttresses the relevance and timeliness of the intervention,

“The project is not only strengthening research through tools like camera traps to better understand the distribution and behaviour of the Cross River Gorilla but also building a new generation of conservation leaders equipped to advance community-based, gender-inclusive approaches to protecting endangered wildlife.”

For the students themselves, the transformation is equally clear. Isaac Tawo Bessong, a scholarship awardee reflects,

“Before this programme, conservation felt like theory. Now, every dataset, every patrol route, every community conversation fuels my passion for conservation research and hope to contribute meaningfully to biodiversity conservation in Africa.”

Taken together, these experiences point to a deeper shift underway in Cross River conservation practice.

One that moves beyond isolated projects and toward an integrated ecosystem of learning, field practice, and community engagement.

Impact by the Numbers

- 5-Year conservation leadership programme
- 1 PhD scholar funded
- 5 MSc scholars supported
- 16 Afi landscape communities connected to the programme
- 25 estimated Cross River Gorillas protected within Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary
- 20,000 indirect beneficiaries reached through awareness activities
- 120 direct beneficiaries reached through conservation education
- Multiple camera trap deployments across gorilla landscapes
- Cross River Gorilla and Nigerian-Cameroon chimpanzee presence documented
- International study exchange completed in Ghana
- Partnership ecosystem spanning academia, government, communities, and international conservation institutions

Key Conservation Gains

01

Renewed evidence of Cross River Gorilla presence through camera trapping

02

Improved biodiversity monitoring capacity

03

Increased community trust in conservation research

04

Strengthened collaboration between research institutions and protected area agencies

05

Integration of traditional ecological knowledge into conservation planning

06

Emerging pipeline of young Nigerian conservation scientists

Climate change remains one of the greatest threats to people, nature, and sustainable development. Across Nigeria, rising temperatures, extreme weather events, ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss continue to impact livelihoods, food security, and economic resilience.

In response, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation is advancing climate action through nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration, policy engagement, environmental education, research, and community-led interventions. By strengthening climate resilience, promoting low-carbon development pathways, and championing the protection of natural ecosystems that serve as vital carbon sinks, NCF is helping to build a more sustainable and climate-resilient future for both people and nature.

Tackling Climate Crisis



Catalysing Community-Led Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Justice in the Niger Delta

The Niger Delta hosts one of Africa's most extensive mangrove ecosystems, providing critical services such as coastal protection, fisheries support, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation. However, this ecosystem is under severe pressure from climate change impacts, oil pollution, deforestation, invasive species such as Nipa palm, and unsustainable fishing practices. These combined drivers have led to declining fish stocks, accelerated coastal erosion, biodiversity loss, and increasing socio-economic vulnerability among coastal communities. Weak governance and limited coordination across institutions have further intensified ecosystem degradation, underscoring the need for integrated, community-driven climate solutions.



Intervention Model

In response, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), with support from the Ford Foundation and in collaboration with government, civil society, faith actors, and local communities, implemented a climate justice initiative anchored on nature-based solutions and inclusive governance. The project combined mangrove ecosystem restoration, sustainable livelihoods, renewable energy solutions, and participatory governance structures.



Key intervention components included:

- Large-scale mangrove restoration and invasive species management
- Promotion of climate-smart and sustainable fisheries practices
- Livelihood diversification through Nipa palm value chains
- Deployment of solar-powered cold storage to reduce post-harvest losses and mangrove dependence
- Establishment of Site Support Groups (SSGs) as community governance platforms
- Faith-based and traditional leadership engagement for behavioural change
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue to strengthen mangrove governance systems

Systems Change Layer

Beyond ecological restoration, the project deliberately strengthened local climate governance systems. Site Support Groups (SSGs) were established across all project communities, serving as inclusive grassroots institutions comprising youth, women, traditional leaders, and livelihood actors. These groups now function as the primary interface for implementation, monitoring, and coordination of local climate action.

In parallel, stakeholder engagement processes improved collaboration between government institutions, CSOs, and communities, strengthening shared responsibility for mangrove protection. Faith and traditional leaders were also mobilised as

climate advocates, significantly expanding the social legitimacy of environmental stewardship and embedding climate action within cultural and moral systems.

Big Wins / Impact Highlights

- Restoration of approximately 23 hectares of degraded mangrove ecosystems across Bayelsa and Rivers States
- Planting of 80,000 mangrove propagules and seedlings to support coastal regeneration and carbon sequestration
- Establishment of functional Site Support Groups across multiple coastal states, strengthening community-led governance of climate action
- Training of over 200 community members in sustainable fisheries, conservation practices, and climate-smart livelihoods
- Deployment of solar-powered cold storage systems, reducing post-harvest fish losses and dependence on mangrove wood
- Development of Nipa palm value chains, enabling livelihood diversification and invasive species utilisation
- Strengthened faith-based and traditional leadership engagement, expanding climate awareness and behavioural change pathways
- Enhanced multi-stakeholder coordination on mangrove governance, improving policy dialogue and ecosystem management coherence

Raising Climate Champions Through Creativity and Action



Climate change is increasingly shaping the lives of young people across Nigeria, yet opportunities for meaningful climate education and engagement often remain limited. To bridge this gap, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), with support from the Ford Foundation, implemented the Rising Champions for Climate Justice Initiative; a youth-centred programme designed to make climate justice accessible, relatable, and actionable.

Implemented across Ibeju-Lekki LGA and Lekki LCDA in Lagos State, as well as Sagamu LGA in Ogun State, the initiative used football, creative arts, essay writing, and drama as innovative tools to engage young people and their communities in conversations about climate change, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility.

Turning Awareness into Action

Rather than relying solely on conventional awareness campaigns, the project created interactive platforms that encouraged young people to learn, compete, create, and advocate. Through climate-themed football matches, essay competitions, artwork exhibitions, and dramatic performances, students explored environmental issues affecting their communities while developing leadership and communication skills.

The initiative also brought together schools, teachers, traditional leaders, community members, and local authorities, helping to foster broader ownership of climate action and strengthening local support for environmental education.

Emerging Outcomes

The project contributed to improved understanding of climate justice among participating students and communities, while helping young people build confidence as advocates for environmental protection. It also demonstrated the power of creative engagement in translating complex climate issues into messages that resonate with younger audiences.

Beyond direct participation, the initiative generated wider visibility for climate justice through community outreach and media engagement, amplifying awareness and encouraging conversations around local climate solutions.

Key intervention components included:

- Increased climate justice awareness among students and community members.
- Empowered young people to serve as climate advocates and champions.
- Engaged schools, traditional institutions, and local authorities in climate action.
- Strengthened collaboration between NCF, the Ford Foundation, schools, and host communities.
- Expanded public visibility for climate justice messaging through media and community engagement.

Key Impact Metrics

Youth Engagement

- 11 schools engaged
- 36 student finalists participated in the grand finale
- 198 teachers and community members directly reached

Forest Protection & Restoration

- 76 essay entries submitted
- 16 climate-themed artworks produced
- 7 football matches conducted

Human Capital Development

- Activities implemented across 3 LGAs/LCDAs in 2 states
- Thousands of indirect beneficiaries reached through media and digital platforms

Building Climate-Resilient Wetlands and Communities Along the East Atlantic Flyway

Nigeria sits on the East Atlantic Flyway, one of the world's most important migratory bird routes, supporting wetlands that provide critical habitat for millions of birds while sustaining the livelihoods of coastal communities. However, climate change, habitat degradation, invasive species, erosion, and unsustainable resource use continue to threaten these ecosystems and the people who depend on them.



Through the Climate-Resilient East Atlantic Flyway (CREAF) Programme, funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Government and implemented by a consortium of 15 partners across Africa and Europe, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) worked to strengthen wetland conservation, climate resilience, and community livelihoods across key flyway landscapes in Lagos, Ondo, and Rivers States.

Empowering Communities Through Sustainable Livelihoods

Recognising that conservation success depends on community participation, the project supported local people with practical solutions that reduce pressure on natural resources while improving livelihoods.

A total of 150 fisherfolk were trained on sustainable fishing practices, biodiversity-friendly fishing methods, and bycatch reduction across Idoluwo-Ile (Lagos State), Ayetoro (Ondo State), and Andoni (Rivers State). To further support sustainable fisheries, six solar-powered freezers were provided to three communities, helping reduce post-harvest losses while decreasing reliance on mangrove wood and fossil fuels for fish preservation.

The project also strengthened economic opportunities for women by training and supporting 20 women in the utilisation of the invasive *Nypa* palm to produce bags, hats, and decorative items, transforming an environmental challenge into a source of livelihood.

Restoring Wetlands for Birds and People

Mangrove ecosystems along Nigeria's coastline continue to face increasing pressure from degradation and the spread of invasive *Nypa* palm. To address this, the project trained community members in mangrove propagation, nursery establishment, and habitat restoration techniques.

Working with local stakeholders, approximately 10 hectares of degraded mangrove habitat were restored through assisted regeneration, including the removal of invasive *Nypa* and the planting of 2,000 mangrove seedlings. The initiative also established a community-supported restoration model that empowers local people to play an active role in protecting and restoring critical wetland habitats.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards

To ensure long-term conservation impact, the programme invested in environmental education and youth engagement.

Twenty-five teachers from 17 schools were trained on biodiversity conservation, climate change, and the establishment of school conservation clubs. Fifteen schools received support to establish and strengthen conservation club activities, while 232 students participated in environmental learning and stewardship programmes.

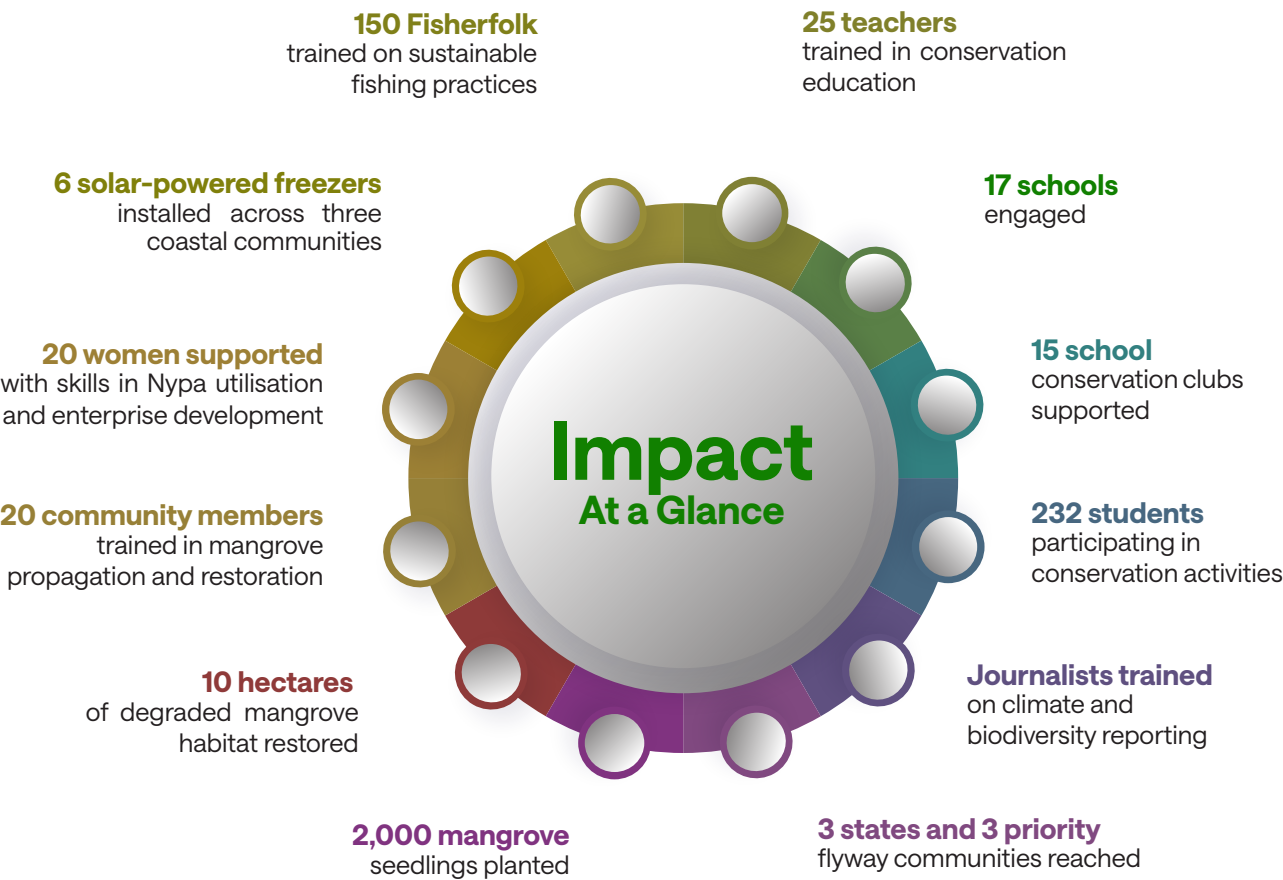
By equipping teachers and students with knowledge, resources, and structured platforms for action, the project is helping nurture a new generation of conservation champions within flyway communities.

Strengthening Environmental Advocacy and Awareness

Effective conservation depends not only on action in the field but also on informed public discourse. As part of the programme, NCF convened a specialised training for journalists focused on climate change, biodiversity loss, wetland conservation, and the

interconnected relationship between migratory birds and the communities that depend on healthy ecosystems.

The training strengthened the capacity of media professionals to communicate environmental issues in ways that connect science, livelihoods, and human wellbeing, helping to amplify conservation messages beyond project communities.





NCF and Other Partners Host Simon Stiell, UNFCCC Executive Secretary on a 4-Day Visit to Nigeria

In March 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), alongside government and development partners, hosted the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Simon Stiell, on a four-day strategic visit to Nigeria. The visit provided a high-level platform to review Nigeria's progress towards its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0) and net-zero emissions target by 2060, while strengthening dialogue on climate finance, clean energy investments, and nature-based solutions.

As part of the visit, NCF co-hosted a national symposium at the Lekki Conservation Centre in Lagos, convening policymakers, private sector leaders, development partners, and civil society organisations to explore pathways for accelerating climate action and economic growth through ecosystem restoration. The event spotlighted the critical role of mangrove conservation, climate-resilient development, and private sector participation in advancing Nigeria's climate commitments.

The engagement elevated national discourse on climate action, reinforced partnerships across sectors, and positioned nature-based solutions as a key component of Nigeria's climate resilience and sustainable development agenda. Through this milestone event, NCF further strengthened its leadership role in shaping environmental policy conversations and promoting collaborative action for a low-carbon future.



Strengthening Climate Action: NCF Appointed to Cross River State Council on Climate Change



In 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) strengthened its influence in subnational climate governance through its appointment as a key stakeholder to the Cross River State Council on Climate Change. Represented by its Director General, Dr. Joseph Onoja, NCF joined the Council's technical working group to support strategic direction, policy implementation, and multi-sector collaboration for advancing the state's climate and biodiversity goals.

Following this appointment, NCF participated in a stakeholder town hall on mangrove restoration, conservation, and protection in Calabar, bringing together national and international actors committed to ecosystem recovery. The engagement also included a high-level courtesy visit to the Governor of Cross River State alongside key climate leaders, further reinforcing coordination and partnership in the state's climate response agenda.

Sustainable Farmers-Led Adaptation Strategy (SFLAS) – Climate Resilience for Food Security in Maja-Kura

The Sustainable Farmers-Led Adaptation Strategy (SFLAS) project, implemented by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) with support from the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme, was initiated in July 2025 to address the growing climate pressures on agriculture in Maja-Kura Ward, Nguru LGA of Yobe State. The semi-arid landscape has been increasingly affected by erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, rising temperatures, and land degradation—conditions that continue to undermine food production, intensify resource scarcity, and deepen farmer-herder tensions in one of Nigeria's key agricultural corridors.

The intervention was designed as a community-led climate resilience model targeting 2,000 smallholder farmers across 10 communities. It combines climate-smart agriculture, agroforestry restoration, livelihood diversification, and digital advisory tools

to strengthen food systems while restoring degraded landscapes and reducing pressure on fragile ecosystems such as the Nguru wetlands.



Implementation began with a large-scale community entry and stakeholder engagement involving traditional institutions, local authorities, and over 200 community members. A 35-member Site Support Group was established across the 10 communities to anchor local ownership and ensure continuity beyond project funding. This was followed by an

exposure visit to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Kano, which strengthened farmer capacity in climate-smart agriculture and informed subsequent step-down trainings across all beneficiary groups.

The project delivered a comprehensive package of resilience-building interventions. Farmers were supported with over 2,500kg of improved, climate-resilient seed varieties including sorghum, millet, rice, cowpea, soybean, and wheat, enhancing both dry and wet season productivity. Training programmes reached farmers, women, and youth on compost production, crop residue utilisation for animal feed, land conservation practices, and agroforestry systems designed to restore soil fertility and reduce erosion. Youths were further trained in GPS-enabled farm monitoring and nursery management, enabling the establishment of indigenous tree nurseries across all target communities.

A key innovation under the project is the integration of digital climate advisory systems. Farmers are now being introduced to weather information tools that support planting decisions, reduce climate risks, and improve farm planning. In parallel, women were empowered through value chain development activities, including feed processing, packaging, and small-scale agribusiness skills that diversify household incomes and reduce dependence on fragile natural resources.

The project also advanced landscape restoration through agroforestry interventions and land rehabilitation activities. Training in watershed management and soil conservation techniques has strengthened local capacity to reduce erosion and improve water retention, while community nurseries are preparing thousands of indigenous trees for large-scale restoration efforts planned in the next phase.

Collectively, these interventions are already shifting farming practices toward more resilient systems. Early results show improved adoption of climate-smart practices, expanded access to quality seeds,

increased awareness of sustainable land use, and stronger institutional structures at community level to sustain adaptation efforts. The project is also contributing to reduced pressure on the Nguru wetlands by promoting alternative livelihoods and improving productivity on existing farmlands.

Project Highlights

- 2,000 farmers targeted across 10 communities in Maja-Kura Ward
- 2,573kg of climate-resilient seeds distributed (rice, wheat, millet, sorghum, cowpea, soybean)
- 35-member Site Support Groups established for community-led implementation
- 200 farmers trained in agroforestry and indigenous tree nursery establishment
- 125 women empowered through animal feed production and agribusiness skills
- 50 youths trained in GPS-based farm monitoring and nursery management
- 10 community indigenous tree nurseries established for large-scale restoration
- Climate-smart agriculture training covering composting, soil conservation, and land restoration
- Digital weather advisory tools introduced to support climate-informed farming decisions
- 10 communities engaged in integrated landscape restoration and resilience planning

19th Walk for Nature

Policy & Advocacy

Lasting conservation impact requires more than on-the-ground action—it depends on strong policies, effective institutions, and informed decision-making. Through strategic advocacy, stakeholder engagement, technical support, and evidence-based policy contributions, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation works to influence laws, regulations, and development frameworks that promote environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

In 2025, NCF continued to champion policies and partnerships that strengthen climate resilience, protect critical ecosystems, mobilise private sector participation, and ensure that nature remains central to Nigeria's sustainable development agenda. By bridging science, policy, and practice, the Foundation is helping to create an enabling environment for lasting environmental stewardship and nature-positive growth.



Lagos, Let's Beat Plastic Pollution!

500K 500 800 1.1K

ncfnigeria Join us this year to beat plastic pollution



The 23rd Chief S.L. Edu Memorial Lecture: Shaping Policy and Public Discourse

The Chief S.L. Edu Memorial Lecture is NCF's flagship advocacy platform, established to influence environmental policy, elevate public discourse, and convene decision-makers across government, academia, private sector, and civil society. Since inception, it has served as a high-level forum where environmental challenges are translated into actionable policy conversations. The 23rd edition continued this legacy, reinforcing its role as a key driver of thought leadership on sustainability in Nigeria and Africa.

Held on 14 January 2025 in Lagos, the lecture was convened under the theme "Greening Africa's Economies: Can Climate Positive Growth Deliver Prosperity?" in the context of accelerating climate risks and emerging global climate finance commitments following COP29. The 2025 discourse centered on Africa's development paradox—low emissions but high vulnerability—and its strategic opportunity to lead a climate-positive growth pathway anchored in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and inclusive economic transformation.



The keynote address by Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, SAN, GCON, positioned Africa at a critical development crossroads. He emphasized that Africa holds significant renewable energy potential and vast arable land, yet faces deep energy poverty and structural inequality.



Key messages included:

- Africa can emerge as a global leader in climate-positive industrialization.
- Energy poverty remains a major barrier to inclusive development.
- Low-carbon growth pathways are essential for long-term competitiveness.
- Policy harmonization and stronger financial systems are critical enablers.



“Africa has the potential to become the first true green industrial civilisation.”

- Prof. Yemi Osinbajo

“Africa is the least emitter of greenhouse gases but is warming faster than other continents.”

- Prof. Yemi Osinbajo

Impact Highlights

- Total estimated reach (direct + virtual + digital reach): 79212 people
- Two PhD research grant awards presented to two early-career researchers in forestry and plant ecology
- Strong youth participation, including student citation of the keynote speaker
- Interactive Q&A session with cross-sector stakeholders
- Media interviews and widespread press coverage across print, broadcast, and digital platforms

Key Advocacy Outputs & Recommendations

01

Accelerate renewable energy deployment and climate-positive industrial growth

02

Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable land use systems

03

Strengthen governance transparency and institutional accountability

04

Harmonize trade, environmental, and industrial policies across Africa

05

Deepen regional financial systems to unlock green investment





Walk for Nature 2025: NCF, LASG & Yabatech Mobilize Citizens Against Plastic Pollution in Lagos

The 19th edition of the Walk for Nature, Nigeria's flagship environmental advocacy movement, was held on Saturday, 1st November 2025, for the first time in a student environment at Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), Lagos. Convened by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) in partnership with the Lagos State Ministry of Environment and Water Resources and supported by Chevron Nigeria Limited, the event brought together over 1,500 participants including students, government officials, corporate leaders, civil society actors, and citizens.

With the theme "Lagos, Let's Beat Plastic Pollution!", the 2025 edition reinforced urgent calls for collective action to address plastic waste pollution in Nigeria's most populous city. It combined civic mobilisation, youth engagement, and policy advocacy to drive behavioural change and strengthen environmental responsibility across all sectors of society.



Key Actions and Highlights

- The 2025 Walk for Nature combined advocacy, education, and direct environmental action. Participants embarked on a symbolic route through key Lagos corridors taking the message of environmental responsibility into public space.
- Prior to the main walk, a motorised sensitisation campaign was conducted within the campus community, using music, engagement activities, and youth-friendly outreach methods to build awareness and participation momentum.
- A defining feature of the event was its strong youth focus and for the first time in the history of the event, it held in a student environment at YABATECH to engage students as critical drivers of behavioural change.
- In addition to advocacy messaging, NCF strengthened practical environmental action through the donation of six waste bins to YABATECH, reinforcing on-site waste management and supporting long-term behavioural change within the institution.

Impact and Reach

- The Walk for Nature 2025 achieved significant reach and visibility, mobilising over 1,500 direct participants and extending its influence far beyond the event through public engagement along major Lagos routes, institutional participation, and media amplification.
- The initiative strengthened public awareness on plastic pollution, deepened youth participation in environmental advocacy, and reinforced collaboration among government, private sector, civil society, and academic institutions. It also contributed to ongoing behavioural change efforts through visible interventions such as waste infrastructure support within the host institution.

Voices from Leadership



“Walk for Nature is not just a festive gathering or a symbolic walk. It is about inspiring sustained community action that leads to long-term environmental impact.”

- NEC Chairman,
Hon. Justice (Mrs.)
R.I.B. Adebisi

“Plastic pollution is not just an environmental issue; it is a lifestyle challenge that affects our health, our cities, and our future.”

- Director General, NCF,
Dr. Joseph Onoja



Why it Matters

- Lagos generates ~13,000 tonnes of waste daily
- ~15% of waste is plastic (~870,000 tonnes annually)
- Causes flooding, blocked drainage, marine pollution
- Threatens biodiversity and public health
- Linked to urban lifestyle and consumption behaviour
- Reinforced by Lagos State restriction on single-use plastics (<40 microns)

Strategic Values

- Bridges policy implementation and citizen action
- Strengthens multi-stakeholder environmental collaboration
- Advances youth-led environmental advocacy and stewardship
- Supports behavioural change for plastic reduction
- Reinforces national and state-level commitments to plastic pollution reduction
- Reinforces SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption) and SDG 17 (Partnerships)
- Positions NCF as a leading national environmental advocacy convenor

Outcome Statement

- Strengthened public awareness on plastic pollution
- Increased youth and institutional participation in environmental advocacy
- Reinforced behavioural change messaging across Lagos communities
- Expanded visibility of environmental responsibility campaigns

Strengthening Collaboration for Forest Governance and Deforestation Reduction in Cross River State

*Building a United Front Against Deforestation
Through Advocacy, Coalition Action, and
Community-Based Forest Governance*

The Challenge

Cross River State contains some of Nigeria's most ecologically significant tropical rainforests, including critical habitats surrounding the Cross River National Park. However, increasing pressure from illegal logging, weak enforcement systems, poor coordination among stakeholders, and limited public awareness continue to threaten biodiversity, forest integrity, and ecosystem sustainability across the landscape.

To address these challenges, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) implemented the Strengthening Collaboration Between CSOs, Community and Government Toward Deforestation Reduction in Cross River State Project in eight buffer zone communities surrounding the Cross River National Park. The project adopted a governance and advocacy-driven approach focused on strengthening collaboration among civil society organisations (CSOs), government institutions, communities, eco guards, schools, and the media to improve forest governance, environmental accountability, and biodiversity conservation outcomes.

Building a Coalition Against Deforestation

One of the project's most significant achievements was the establishment of the Civil Society Coalition for Environmental Justice and Forest Conservation in Cross River State — a coordinated advocacy platform bringing together 20 civil society organisations working across forest and coastal landscapes in the state.



The coalition was created to strengthen collective advocacy against illegal logging, improve coordination of conservation messaging, and support stronger environmental governance mechanisms at both community and state levels.

As part of this effort:

- A stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted to identify active environmental CSOs and define collaborative roles.
- Coalition members signed a Terms of Reference (ToR) and communique to guide coordinated anti-deforestation advocacy.
- A joint press conference was organised in Calabar to raise public attention around increasing deforestation threats in and around Cross River National Park.
- Advocacy strategies and campaign materials were developed and disseminated to coalition members and partner communities.

The coalition has helped create a more unified civil society voice on forest protection issues within Cross River State, improving visibility, coordination, and engagement on environmental governance matters.

Mobilising Public Awareness and Policy Advocacy

The project significantly expanded public awareness on deforestation, illegal logging, and biodiversity conservation through strategic media engagement and grassroots sensitisation campaigns.



A major component of the intervention involved the development and airing of conservation radio jingles in both English and Pidgin English through Hit FM, a station with coverage across all 18 Local Government Areas of Cross River State and neighbouring states. The broadcasts reached an estimated audience of over 3 million listeners.

In addition:

- Weekly 30-minute radio talk shows featuring government agencies, coalition members, and conservation actors were aired over a three-month cycle.
- Social media campaigns and national newspaper publications amplified conservation messaging to wider audiences.
- Community sensitisation campaigns were conducted across eight buffer zone communities to educate residents on the impacts of illegal logging and available reporting channels.
- Environmental conservation clubs were established in public and private schools within project communities to strengthen long-term environmental awareness among young people.

These efforts helped elevate deforestation and illegal logging into broader public discourse while improving community understanding of forest governance and environmental stewardship responsibilities.

Strengthening Community Forest Surveillance

The project strengthened frontline forest monitoring systems through improved collaboration between community eco guards, the Cross River National Park, the Forestry Commission, and civil society organisations.

A multi-stakeholder strategy workshop was convened to improve coordination on:

- forest patrol systems,
- biodiversity monitoring,
- information sharing,
- and community-based reporting mechanisms.

The project also supported capacity building for eco guards and frontline conservation actors on:

- forest monitoring,
- patrol techniques,
- biodiversity data gathering,
- environmental education,
- and human-wildlife conflict management.

Enhanced patrol coordination contributed to:

- interception of illegal wildlife hunters,
- seizure of power chainsaws used for illegal logging,
- and improved reporting of illegal forest activities within buffer zone communities.

Importantly, the project strengthened institutional relationships between government agencies and community actors, resulting in improved cooperation on forest surveillance and conservation response systems.

Improving Biodiversity
Monitoring and Data Systems

A major governance and conservation outcome of the project was the strengthening of biodiversity data collection and monitoring systems around the Cross River National Park landscape.

Through coordinated patrols and improved data sharing mechanisms, eco guards and park rangers documented several important wildlife species, including: African elephants, chimpanzees, pangolins, African grey parrots, buffaloes, and Cross River gorillas.

Some wildlife sightings included species observed with offspring, indicating important signs of habitat use and ecosystem continuity within the forest landscape.

The project also supported:

- training of eco guards and National Park rangers on biodiversity data collection,
- updating of the Wildlife/Biodiversity Database (WBDB),
- and development of stronger institutional platforms for data sharing between conservation stakeholders.

The updated biodiversity database continues to serve as an important evidence base for conservation planning, forest monitoring, and species protection efforts in Cross River State.

Big Win

A Unified Civil Society Platform for Forest Protection
The establishment of a 20-member CSO coalition created a coordinated advocacy structure for environmental justice and forest conservation across Cross River State, strengthening collective action against deforestation and illegal logging.

Large-Scale Public Awareness Reach
Through radio campaigns, talk shows, social media engagement, and press coverage, the project amplified conservation messaging to millions of people across Cross River State and beyond.

Strengthened Forest Governance Collaboration
Improved cooperation between the Forestry Commission, Cross River National Park, CSOs, and community eco guards enhanced coordination on forest patrols, biodiversity monitoring, and conservation reporting.

Improved Community-Based Forest Surveillance
Enhanced patrol systems and eco guard capacity contributed to increased detection and reporting of illegal logging and wildlife threats within forest communities.

Biodiversity Monitoring and Species Documentation
The project strengthened biodiversity intelligence systems and contributed to the documentation and updating of important wildlife records within the Cross River forest landscape.

By the Numbers

Coalition & Governance

- 20 Civil Society Organisations mobilised into a coordinated advocacy coalition
- 4 strategic multi-stakeholder workshops conducted
- Institutional collaboration framework strengthened between Forestry Commission, Cross River National Park, CSOs, and eco guards

Public Awareness & Advocacy

- Over 3 million people reached through radio programmes and awareness campaigns
- 3 national newspaper publications produced
- Multiple social media advocacy campaigns implemented
- 8 buffer zone communities sensitised on deforestation and illegal logging

Capacity Building & Surveillance

- Over 3 million people reached through radio programmes and awareness campaigns
- 3 national newspaper publications produced
- Multiple social media advocacy campaigns implemented
- 8 buffer zone communities sensitised on deforestation and illegal logging

Biodiversity Monitoring

- Wildlife/Biodiversity Database (WBDB) updated
- Key species documented including African elephants, pangolins, chimpanzees, buffaloes, African grey parrots, and Cross River gorillas

Community Reach

- Over 100 direct beneficiaries reached
- Over 15,000 indirect beneficiaries impacted
- More than 500 households reached across 8 communities



Mobilising Private Sector Leadership for Nigeria's Nature-Positive Economy: The Business Advisory Group Initiative

Nigeria's biodiversity is under increasing pressure from deforestation, land-use change, pollution, and climate change, yet private sector participation in biodiversity governance and financing has historically remained limited and fragmented. This gap has slowed the effective implementation of Nigeria's

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and constrained the country's ability to fully align with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Against this backdrop, the Business Advisory Group (BAG) was established as a structured platform to bridge policy ambition with corporate action, enabling businesses to move from passive awareness to active participation in shaping Nigeria's nature-positive future.

In 2025, the initiative formally took shape through a high-level national launch in Abuja, where government, development partners, and leading private sector actors came together to inaugurate the BAG alongside the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN). The launch established BAG as a formal coordination mechanism for business–government collaboration on biodiversity, while BIOFIN provided the complementary financial architecture to identify and mobilise resources for implementation. Together, these two pillars created a unified framework to close Nigeria's biodiversity finance gap and translate national commitments into measurable action. Key outcomes included the formal inauguration of BAG, alignment on the need for a structured Business Action Plan (BAP), and consensus on strengthening private capital mobilization, policy coordination, and cross-sector collaboration.

Building on this foundation, the first Lagos BAG meeting operationalised the platform by convening businesses, financial institutions, civil society, and government stakeholders to begin co-creating the Business Action Plan. The session deepened shared understanding of biodiversity as both an economic dependency and a risk factor for business continuity, while also identifying priority areas such as sustainable sourcing, green finance, waste reduction, and biodiversity integration into corporate strategy. Participants agreed on concrete next steps, including the formation of working groups, sector-specific action planning, and timelines for the development and launch of the BAP.

Together, the Abuja launch and Lagos workshop marked the transition of BAG from concept to implementation. The initiative has now established a functioning multi-stakeholder platform designed to mainstream biodiversity into business decision-making, strengthen accountability, and align corporate action with national and global biodiversity goals.

By embedding biodiversity considerations into business strategy and investment decisions, the BAG is laying the groundwork for a nature-positive economy where economic growth and ecological sustainability are mutually reinforcing.

Plastic Pollution and Biodiversity:

Generating Evidence for Action

- In 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in partnership with the National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) Nigeria and the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP), led a landmark assessment examining the impacts of plastic pollution on biodiversity across key ecological landscapes in Nigeria.
- The study, conducted across eight states representing coastal, freshwater, forest, wetland and urban ecosystems, revealed the growing scale of Nigeria's plastic challenge. Findings showed that Nigeria generates an estimated 2.5 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, with less than 12% recycled, resulting in significant leakage into rivers, wetlands, mangroves, forests and coastal ecosystems.
- The assessment established that plastic pollution is no longer merely a waste management issue but an emerging biodiversity crisis. Single-use plastics including PET bottles, sachet-water packaging, plastic bags and food wrappers were identified as the most prevalent pollutants across study sites, threatening wildlife through ingestion, entanglement and habitat degradation.
- Among the most vulnerable ecosystems identified were the mangrove forests of the Niger Delta, which act as natural traps for floating debris. The accumulation of plastics in these habitats was found to impede mangrove regeneration, degrade fish breeding grounds and undermine critical ecosystem services that support biodiversity, climate resilience and local livelihoods.



- Importantly, the research highlighted the role of nature-based solutions in addressing the challenge. The protection and restoration of mangroves, wetlands, riverbanks and other biodiversity-rich ecosystems were identified as practical pathways for reducing plastic impacts while strengthening ecosystem resilience and community well-being.
- To translate research findings into action, NCF convened a national stakeholder validation workshop in collaboration with NPAP Nigeria, bringing together government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organizations, research institutions, community groups and development partners. The workshop reviewed the findings, identified policy and governance gaps, and developed consensus-driven recommendations for reducing plastic leakage into biodiversity-sensitive ecosystems.
- The assessment has strengthened the evidence base for integrating biodiversity conservation into plastic pollution policy and management frameworks, while positioning NCF and its partners to advance coordinated solutions that protect nature, support livelihoods and build environmental resilience across Nigeria.

Naija Eco Vibes Podcast: Reaching 500,000+ People for Climate Awareness and Action in Nigeria



In 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) advanced its environmental communication and public engagement efforts through the continued production of the Naija Eco Vibes Podcast. The platform served as a dynamic storytelling space that brought together thought leaders, environmental influencers, practitioners, and creatives to explore pressing issues around biodiversity conservation, climate action, and sustainable living in Nigeria. Across seven episodes recorded during the year, the podcast amplified diverse perspectives from both expert and grassroots voices, translating complex environmental themes into relatable conversations that inspire awareness and action. By blending dialogue, lived experiences, and solution-oriented discussions, Naija Eco Vibes strengthened NCF's outreach to younger and digital-first audiences, reinforcing its commitment to making environmental knowledge accessible, engaging, and culturally relevant.



NCF Policy Footprint

NDC 3.0 – NCF provided technical support to the development of Nigeria's NDC 3.0 by advancing nature-based solutions, forest landscape restoration, biodiversity conservation, and climate transparency through the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT), strengthening the country's climate ambition and implementation framework.

NBSAP – NCF played a key technical and stakeholder engagement role in the review and development of Nigeria's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2025–2030, working alongside the Federal Ministry of Environment, UNEP-WCMC, and other partners to facilitate consultations, provide conservation expertise, and strengthen alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Business Action Plan – NCF is driving the development of the Business Action Plan as a national framework to guide private sector engagement in biodiversity protection, providing a structured policy pathway for businesses to integrate nature-positive practices, strengthen accountability, and contribute to the conservation of Nigeria's natural capital.

MOU with Traditional Medicine Practitioners on Wildlife Protection - In July 2025, NCF signed a landmark MOU with the National Association of Nigerian Traditional Medicine Practitioners (NANTMP) committing to eliminate the use of vulture parts in traditional medicine, promote plant-based alternatives, and support joint conservation, research, and reforestation efforts for vulture habitat recovery, with immediate action initiated to discourage illegal trade.





In 2025, NCF's capacity building and livelihood support interventions strengthened the link between conservation and community well-being by equipping individuals and groups with practical skills, knowledge, and tools for sustainable living.

Through targeted training, enterprise support, and engagement with local stakeholders, the Foundation advanced nature-positive livelihoods that reduce pressure on ecosystems while improving household resilience. These efforts reinforced the principle that long-term conservation outcomes are most effective when communities are empowered as active custodians and direct beneficiaries of natural resource stewardship.

Capacity Building & Livelihood Support

Building Skills, Livelihoods, and Local Leadership for Nature-Positive Development



Across Nigeria in 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) advanced a unified empowerment agenda embedded across conservation, climate action, education, and policy programmes. Rather than stand-alone training events, these interventions were designed to strengthen the ability of individuals, communities, and institutions to actively participate in biodiversity protection while improving livelihoods and resilience.

From coastal fishing communities in the Niger Delta to forest-edge settlements in Cross River and climate-vulnerable farming communities in Yobe, NCF's empowerment model combined skills development, institutional strengthening, youth engagement, and livelihood diversification. This approach reflects a core shift: from conservation for communities to conservation with and through communities.

Strengthening Skills for Conservation Leadership

In 2025, NCF invested heavily in building technical and field-based conservation capacity across multiple actor groups, including park rangers,

eco-guards, teachers, students, researchers, and community volunteers.

Key areas of training included environmental education, biodiversity monitoring, GIS and GPS mapping, patrol coordination, human-wildlife conflict management, climate change awareness, and conservation communication. These capacity-building efforts strengthened frontline conservation systems and improved the quality of data, enforcement, and environmental outreach across protected and community-managed landscapes.



A major outcome of this investment was the emergence of more coordinated and data-driven conservation practice, particularly in forest and wetland ecosystems where community actors now actively participate in monitoring, reporting, and protection activities.

Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods and Climate-Resilient Economies

NCF's empowerment approach also prioritised livelihood transformation as a pathway to reducing environmental pressure.

In coastal communities, fisherfolk were trained in sustainable fishing practices and bycatch reduction, supported by solar-powered cold storage systems that reduced post-harvest losses and dependence on mangrove wood. Women groups were supported in developing Nypa palm value chains, converting invasive species into economic products such as bags and household items.



In the Sahel and semi-arid regions, farmers were supported with climate-resilient seeds, agroforestry training, soil restoration techniques, and digital weather advisory tools. Youth and women were also trained in feed production, nursery management, and agribusiness skills to diversify income sources.

Together, these interventions demonstrate a clear shift toward nature-positive livelihoods, where income generation is directly linked to ecosystem restoration rather than extraction.

Building Community Ownership and Environmental Governance



A critical dimension of empowerment in 2025 was the strengthening of local governance systems for conservation. Site Support Groups (SSGs), community conservation clubs, eco-guards, and civil society coalitions were

established or reinforced across multiple landscapes. These structures now serve as local platforms for decision-making, monitoring, advocacy, and coordination of conservation action.

In Cross River State, the formation of a 20-member Civil Society Coalition for Environmental Justice strengthened collective advocacy against deforestation and improved coordination between government, NGOs, and communities. Similarly, in the Niger Delta, community-based governance structures supported mangrove restoration and climate justice implementation.

This shift represents a transition from externally driven conservation to locally anchored environmental governance systems.

Empowering the Next Generation of Conservation Actors

Youth empowerment remained a strong pillar of NCF's work in 2025. Across summer camps, school programmes, conservation clubs, innovation challenges, and environmental education initiatives, thousands of young people were introduced to practical conservation skills, digital tools, and environmental leadership opportunities.



Students engaged in activities such as GIS mapping, drone monitoring, upcycling, birdwatching, tree planting, creative arts, and climate advocacy. Conservation Clubs established in schools further institutionalised youth participation, ensuring continuity beyond one-off engagements.

These interventions are building a pipeline of future conservation professionals and environmentally conscious citizens.

Strengthening Institutional and Technical Capacity



Beyond communities and youth, NCF also strengthened institutional capacity across the conservation system. Rangers, park officers, journalists, researchers, and civil society actors received training in biodiversity monitoring, environmental reporting, enforcement systems, and data management. Tools such as camera traps, GPS devices, GIS platforms, and biodiversity databases improved the quality and reliability of conservation intelligence across landscapes.

This has contributed to stronger evidence-based conservation planning and improved coordination between institutions working in biodiversity protection.

Empowerment & Capacity Building 2025 Consolidated Key Impact Metrics

People Reached & Trained

- 2,000 farmers directly supported under climate-smart agriculture (SFLAS)
- 150 fisherfolk trained in sustainable fishing practices (CREAF)
- 162 fisherfolk sensitised on sustainable marine practices (Sea Turtle Project)

- 200+ community members trained in conservation and climate livelihoods (CREAF)
- 20 women supported in Nypa palm value chain development
- 12 community volunteers trained in sea turtle conservation
- 50 eco-guards engaged and strengthened in forest surveillance systems
- 11 park rangers and environmental officers trained (protected areas)
- 25 teachers trained in conservation education (Flyway programme)
- 232 students engaged in structured wetland learning programmes
- 1,283 teachers engaged through school environmental education programme
- 15,321 students reached through national school outreach
- 180+ students engaged through Conservation Clubs programme
- 100+ students engaged in Summer Camp Programme
- 36 student finalists in climate innovation challenge
- 72 participants in World Migratory Bird Day youth engagement

Institutional & Governance Strengthening

- 35-member Site Support Group established (SFLAS)
- Multiple Site Support Groups established across Niger Delta communities
- 20 CSOs formed into a Civil Society Coalition for Environmental Justice
- Conservation Clubs established in 10 schools
- 17 schools supported under Flyway education programme
- 508 schools engaged at nationally
- Biodiversity database (WBDB) strengthened and updated
- Cross-sector patrol and monitoring systems strengthened in Cross River

Systems Change Outcomes

- Transition from awareness to structured school-based conservation systems
- Shift from extraction-based livelihoods to nature-positive enterprises
- Strengthened community-led monitoring and enforcement systems
- Increased integration of digital tools in conservation (GIS, drones, apps)
- Improved collaboration between government, CSOs, communities, and private sector

Livelihood & Nature-Based Enterprise Support

- 2,573kg of climate-resilient seeds distributed to farmers
- 10 indigenous tree nurseries established
- 6 solar-powered freezers installed in coastal communities
- Nypa palm value chain enterprises established for women groups
- Agroforestry and land restoration systems introduced across 10 communities
- Alternative livelihood systems strengthened in mangrove and forest landscapes



STAFF RETREAT 2025: Building a Resilient Future for People and Nature

In preparation for the implementation of its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) convened a four-day Strategy Retreat in Abeokuta, bringing together staff to align priorities, strengthen institutional cohesion, and translate strategy into actionable plans.

Under the theme “Building a Resilient Future for People and Nature – Translating Strategy into Action,” the retreat provided a platform for staff to reflect on achievements and lessons from the previous strategic cycle, examine emerging conservation challenges, and build a shared understanding of NCF’s vision for the next five years.

Through strategic planning sessions, panel discussions, and collaborative workshops, participants explored NCF’s new strategic pillars: Climate Change, Biodiversity Conservation, Pollution Management, and Institutional Strengthening, while identifying the partnerships, resources, and systems required to deliver impact at scale. Directorate-level breakout sessions further translated these priorities into actionable workplans, performance indicators, and implementation roadmaps.

Beyond the strategic sessions and planning engagements, the retreat also created space for staff to unwind, reconnect, and strengthen internal bonds in a more relaxed setting. Participants took part in morning fitness sessions, group games, and informal networking activities that encouraged camaraderie across teams. The programme also included guided visits to iconic sites in Abeokuta, including Olumo Rock and the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library, offering a cultural and recreational experience outside the conference room.



Environmental Education

Environmental education remained a central pillar of NCF's conservation strategy in 2025, serving as a critical pathway for building long-term environmental stewardship across communities in Nigeria. Through structured school engagements, experiential learning programmes, and community-based awareness initiatives, the Foundation strengthened understanding of key issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and sustainable resource use.

By equipping young people, educators, and community stakeholders with practical knowledge and hands-on exposure to conservation practices, NCF continued to nurture a growing network of environmentally conscious citizens committed to protecting Nigeria's natural heritage for present and future generations.



Inside the NCF 2025 Summer Camp Programme

Every summer, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), through a specially designed Summer Camp Programme, opens a new chapter in environmental education. One that blends fun, creativity, and practical learning to inspire tomorrow's eco-champions. The 2025 edition of the NCF Summer Camp Programme, themed "Future Green Leaders," lived up to that promise and more. Held at the Lekki Conservation Centre (LCC) from August 11–29, 2025, and supported by Chevron Nigeria Limited and Manuchar Nigeria, the three-week programme brought together over 100 students from various schools to nurture a generation of environmentally conscious young Nigerians through hands-on experiences that sparked

Programme Highlights



Nature-Themed Art: Creative Climate Expression

Participants used art as a tool for environmental storytelling. Pupils created paintings inspired by forests, rivers, and wildlife. The sessions combined creativity with environmental awareness while also strengthening teamwork and expression.



Forest Adventure: Learning from the Canopy

At the 401-metre Lekki Conservation Centre canopy walkway, students experienced the forest from above while learning about biodiversity, ecosystems, and conservation. The activity built courage, curiosity, and a deeper appreciation for nature.



Sustainable Upcycling: Turning Waste into Value

Students transformed discarded materials into functional art and household items, learning the principles of the circular economy, innovation, and waste reduction through hands-on creation.



Gardening & Tree Planting: Growing a Greener Future

Participants established mini gardens using repurposed containers and planted vegetable crops while also planting 10 tree seedlings across LCC learning practical lessons on sustainability, food systems, and climate action.



Eco-Tech Workshop: Conservation Meets Innovation

Students explored how technology supports environmental protection through drone monitoring, GIS mapping, bird identification apps, and digital campaign design using Canva—linking STEM skills with conservation.



Green Cooking: Sustainable Living in Practice

Participants learned eco-friendly cooking using clean energy alternatives and prepared local meals, reinforcing lessons on renewable energy, nutrition, and sustainable consumption.



Environmental Music & Reflection

The programme ended with environmental music, storytelling, and reflection sessions where participants shared learning experiences and reaffirmed their commitment to environmental stewardship.

Participant Voices



"I enjoyed the experience on the canopy walk. Being so high among the trees was refreshing. I made new friends and would love to come next year."

— Annabel

"I learned about upcycling... using Ankara materials and plastics to make beautiful designs for our living rooms. It was mind blowing."

— Abigail



"I loved the drone session... I also enjoyed the green cooking because I love food."

— Olamide

"This is my third year at the summer camp. I enjoyed the activities and how they are fun for every age bracket."

— Tammy



By the end of the programme, the children demonstrated stronger environmental values, practical skills in conservation, STEM, and sustainability, and increased creativity through art and innovation.



Scaling Environmental Education Through National School Engagement

The Environmental Education Unit continued to strengthen environmental awareness and sustainability learning among young people through its School Visit Programme, an experiential learning initiative designed to complement classroom education with practical exposure to conservation, biodiversity protection, and climate change issues. During the reporting period, the programme expanded its national reach significantly, engaging 299 schools across Nigeria and directly reaching 11,981 students and 1,283 teachers.

This national effort was further reinforced through targeted outreach at Finima Nature Park, where structured environmental education programmes deepened community-level learning and conservation awareness. Finima Nature Park engaged 209 schools, alongside 25 faith-based institutions and 68 conservation clubs, focusing on key themes such as climate change, biodiversity conservation, plastic pollution, and sustainable waste management. These engage-

ments helped strengthen local stewardship and complemented national school-based learning through experiential, place-based conservation education.

Across both national and site-based interventions, students were introduced to core conservation concepts through guided sessions, interactive discussions, facility tours, and practical demonstrations such as tree planting activities. Teachers also gained hands-on exposure to approaches for integrating environmental education into classroom teaching, strengthening the multiplier effect of the programme within schools.

The combined interventions recorded strong interest and repeat engagement from participating schools, reflecting growing demand for experiential environmental learning and reinforcing the role of environmental education as a foundation for long-term behavioural change and sustained conservation awareness across Nigeria.



World Wetlands Day 2025: Youth-Led Action for Wetland Conservation and Pollution Reduction at the University of Lagos

World Wetlands Day 2025 was commemorated by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) at the University of Lagos under the global theme "Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future." The event brought together students, educators, and government representatives to spotlight the

ecological importance of wetlands in biodiversity conservation, water regulation, and climate resilience, while also promoting hands-on action for their protection.



The programme combined environmental education with field-based learning through an expert-led seminar, guided bird watching, and a wetland clean-up exercise along the Lagoon Front. Participants not only learned about wetland ecosystems but also actively engaged in restoring them, removing 96kg of waste from the site. The event created a practical link between knowledge and action, particularly for young participants drawn from secondary schools, tertiary institutions, and education authorities.

A total of 91 participants from 7 schools and institutions took part in the activities, strengthening awareness of wetland conservation and encouraging youth engagement in environmental stewardship. The intervention also helped reduce pollution pressure on the wetland while fostering collaboration between NCF, the University of Lagos, participating schools, and the Ministry of Education District IV.



Beyond the immediate environmental impact, the commemoration strengthened partnerships and deepened public understanding of wetlands as critical ecosystems under threat from pollution and poor waste management. The experience left participants with a stronger appreciation of biodiversity and a clearer sense of personal responsibility in protecting fragile ecosystems.

“This program helped me understand why wetlands are important to our future.”

Building School-Based Conservation Systems: Establishing 10 Conservation Clubs to Strengthen Youth Action

One of the key factors affecting the rapid uptake of conservation education across schools is a gap in teachers’ practical skills and confidence to deliver conservation education beyond the classroom, as well as limited student involvement in hands-on environmental stewardship. Conservation learning has largely been theoretical, with weak continuity of activities and no structured school-based platforms to sustain student-led conservation actions.

To address this, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) with support from the Eastern Atlantic Flyway (IKI) Project implemented a structured intervention combining teacher capacity strengthening, student engagement through interactive and field-based learning, and the establishment of Conservation Clubs as permanent school-based platforms. Teachers were equipped with practical tools to deliver



conservation education more effectively, while students participated in hands-on activities including environmental observation and birdwatching, linking classroom learning to real ecosystems.

A key systems shift was the transition from one-off awareness activities to institutionalised conservation structures within schools. Conservation Clubs now serve as permanent platforms for student-led environmental action, supported by trained teachers as coordinators. This has strengthened ownership, continuity, and school-based leadership in conservation.

The intervention reached over 180 students and 27 teachers across three states—Lagos, Ondo, and Rivers—with 10 Conservation Clubs successfully established. Notably, students independently marked World Migratory Bird Day through birdwatching activities, demonstrating early signs of behavioural change and ownership beyond programme delivery.

Participant Voices

“The Conservation Club has helped us continue learning and protecting nature.”

—
Agbeyihane Sunday,
Community School Aiyetoro.

World Environment Day: Scaling Collective Action Against Plastic Pollution Through Education, Partnerships, and Community Impact in Nigeria



In 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) commemorated World Environment Day through a series of high-impact, multi-stakeholder activities across Lagos and Bonny Island, centred on the global theme “Beat Plastic Pollution.” The campaign combined corporate partnership, school-based interventions, and community action to raise awareness on the growing threat of plastic waste and to promote practical behaviour change across different audiences.

In Lagos, NCF convened a flagship event at the Lekki Conservation Centre, bringing together strategic partners including TotalEnergies, Union Bank, FCMB, Nigerian Bottling Company, and Chevron to amplify advocacy on environmental stewardship. The Foundation also partnered with First City Monument Bank and Union Bank PLC to deepen grassroots impact through the donation of recycling bins to selected secondary schools, strengthening environmental education and encouraging responsible waste management practices among students.



At Finima Nature Park, the commemoration was marked by a more community-immersive approach, including the establishment of eco-gardens in ten schools using upcycled materials, creative competitions such as “Rhyme Against Waste,” and a plastic-free online engagement campaign. The programme culminated in a beach clean-up exercise at RA Beach, tree

planting activities, and a virtual convening with NLNG that featured over 130 participants engaged in learning and advocacy.

Strengthening Environmental Education Across Nigeria's Protected Areas



Environmental education extends far beyond the classroom. It also depends on the capacity of the people entrusted with protecting Nigeria's most important ecosystems. Recognising this, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), organised a three-day capacity-building programme to strengthen the environmental education and community engagement skills of frontline conservation practitioners working across Nigeria's protected areas.

Held at Old Oyo National Park, the training brought together park rangers and environmental officers from five National Parks, alongside representatives of the Ekiti State Ministry of Environment and Natu-

ral Resources. Through interactive learning sessions, peer exchanges, practical exercises, and the provision of educational resources, participants strengthened their knowledge of environmental education, climate change, conservation communication, human-wildlife conflict management, and community engagement. Thus, equipping them to deliver more effective conservation outreach within their respective landscapes.

By investing in the capacity of those who educate communities living around protected areas, NCF is strengthening the human infrastructure that underpins long-term biodiversity conservation. The programme reinforced collaboration among conservation institutions while ensuring that environmental education continues to reach beyond schools into protected areas, local communities, and the frontline of conservation practice.

Partnership & Membership

Conservation success depends not only on sound science and effective programmes, but also on the strength of the partnerships, supporters, and communities that make the work possible. Throughout 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation continued to mobilize resources, strengthen strategic alliances, expand its membership network, and engage individuals and organizations in support of nature conservation.

Through initiatives such as the Green Ball, targeted membership outreach, donor engagement, and collaborations with corporate, institutional, and development partners, NCF broadened its conservation movement while generating critical support for programmes that protect biodiversity, build resilience, and create lasting impact for people and nature.





NCF Green Ball 2025: Raising Finance to Beat Plastic Pollution

The 2025 edition of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) Green Ball was held on Saturday, 22nd November 2025 at the La Scala Hall & Terrace, MUSON Centre, Lagos. The annual fundraising event brought together partners, corporate leaders, policy-makers, and conservation advocates in a shared commitment to address one of Nigeria's most pressing environmental challenges—plastic pollution. With the theme ***“Raising Finance to Beat Plastic Pollution”***, the Green Ball moved beyond advocacy into a clear investment call for environmental action and circular economy solutions.

The evening combined elegance with urgency, featuring a green carpet reception, curated exhibition spaces, musical performances, and a powerful documentary screening titled “Beyond the Bottle: Battle Against Plastic Pollution.” The documentary provided a stark reflection of Nigeria's plastic crisis, while also spotlighting emerging recycling innovations and community-led solutions that demonstrate the potential of a circular economy.

A central message of the event was the scale of the challenge: Nigeria generates an estimated 2.5 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, much of which ends up in waterways, drainage systems, and coastal environments. Beyond environmental degradation, the

issue presents serious public health and economic risks, particularly in urban centres like Lagos. Speakers emphasized that addressing this crisis requires not only policy and awareness, but sustained financing and scalable investment in waste management infrastructure, recycling systems, and green enterprises.

Beyond awareness, the Green Ball served as a strategic financing platform for conservation. It connected partners and donors to tangible investment opportunities in recycling, waste innovation, environmental education, and ecosystem protection. It called on partners to move from dialogue to action. Funding solutions that reduce waste, strengthen circular economy systems, and protect Nigeria's ecosystems for future generations.



PachiPanda Challenge 2025: Scaling Youth-Led Environmental Innovation Through NCF-MTN-WWF-UNDP Partnership in Nigeria

In 2025, the Nigeria edition of the PachiPanda Challenge, delivered through a partnership between the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), MTN Nigeria, WWF, and the United Nations Development Programme, reached its most expansive and competitive cycle yet, further strengthening its position as a leading youth innovation platform for environmental sustainability.

The process began with a national call for entries, widely disseminated through digital platforms, partner networks, and youth engagement channels, inviting young Nigerians to submit innovative solutions addressing environmental challenges such as waste management, climate resilience, circular economy models, and sustainable livelihoods. This open call attracted a broad pool of applications from across the country, reflecting increased awareness and growing youth interest in green innovation.

Following the submission phase, shortlisted teams progressed through a structured selection and mentoring process, where they refined their



ideas with guidance from technical experts and sustainability practitioners. This phase culminated in the national pitching and grand finale event, where finalists presented their solutions before a panel of judges drawn from conservation, development, and

private sector institutions.

At the conclusion of the competition, Team OneGrid Energies emerged as the overall winner, securing a ₦3 million prize and the opportunity to represent Nigeria at the Africa PachiPanda Grand Finale in South Africa. The second and third positions were awarded to Ndaman Joshua Olayinka and Divine Agocho Peter, who received ₦2 million and ₦1.5 million respectively in recognition of their innovative solutions.

The programme reinforced the importance of youth-led innovation in addressing Nigeria's environmental challenges, while strengthening collaboration between conservation organisations, development partners, and the private sector to accelerate practical, scalable climate solutions.



Growing the Conservation Movement: Connecting People to Purpose

Conservation thrives when people move beyond awareness and become active participants in protecting nature. Throughout 2025, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation expanded its membership outreach through strategic engagements that connected students, professionals, businesses, tourism operators, and environmental advocates to the conservation movement.



From university campuses to industry events, NCF used every opportunity to inspire action and demonstrate the value of membership as a gateway to learning, volunteering, networking, and environmental leadership. At Lagos State University and the University of Lagos, students were introduced to conservation careers, wildlife protection, and opportunities to contribute meaningfully through NCF's Student Membership programme. These engagements strengthened youth participation and encouraged the next generation of conservation leaders to become active stewards of nature.

Beyond academia, NCF engaged a wider audience through platforms such as the Ibadan Travel & Tourism Expo, The Current Event, the Rome Business School Career Fair, and the Open Day for Gardeners. These interactions connected the Foundation with tourism professionals, private sector leaders, sustainability advocates, and environmentally conscious businesses, generating new membership and partnership opportunities while reinforcing the importance of collective environmental responsibility. Membership also translated into meaningful experiences.

During an educational visit to Omu Resort, students from Tai Solarin University of Education—already registered NCF Student Members—gained firsthand exposure to wildlife conservation, habitat management, and sustainable tourism practices. The experience highlighted how membership extends beyond affiliation, providing practical learning opportunities that deepen environmental knowledge and commitment.

Together, these engagements strengthened NCF's visibility, expanded its membership network, and fostered a growing community of individuals and institutions united by a shared commitment to conserving Nigeria's natural heritage.



Membership Outreach Highlights 2025

- University and student engagements
- Tourism and hospitality sector outreach
- Career and professional networking platforms
- Environmental advocacy events
- Hands-on conservation learning experiences
- New membership and partnership opportunities generated

Platinum Category



CORONATION

Gold Category



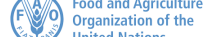
Silver Category



Bronze Category

- Ascal Design
- Ceteli Ltd.
- Mama Pride Grills
- Ebis Grills
- Saints Shalom Canteen
- Mimo Beverages
- Forest Treat Scoops
- Ummi Drinks & Fries
- Zero6 Enterprise
- Crunch Bead
- Delight Chops
- Opthirst Foods & Grills
- Solution
- Aliyu Umaru
- Studioloriz
- Sherpaverse Ltd
- International Bible Prophetic Ministry

2025 Partners & Sponsors



Partnering for Nature: Join the Conservation Journey



Protecting nature is a shared responsibility. Whether you are an individual, business, government institution, community leader, faith-based organization, academic institution, or development partner, there is a place for you in our conservation journey.

By partnering with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, you become part of a growing movement working to secure a future where people and nature thrive together. Choose the partnership pathway that best reflects your commitment and join us in creating lasting impact for Nigeria's environment and future generations.

Financial Partner

- Donor Partner
- Corporate membership partner
- Grant partner
- Coalition
- Institutional Support Partners
- Bequest
- Monthly donor
- Project support

Government Partnership

- Federal government ministries
- State government ministries and agencies
- Local governments

Non-financial Partner

- Land donor
- Community leadership partner (only for kings and paramount rulers)
- International partner
- Local NGOs
- Academic partner (universities and training institutes)
- Social enterprise

Faith group

- Church
- Mosque
- Traditional rulers
- Hindus
- Other faith groups (kindly specify)





Financial Statements

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Trustees of Nigerian Conservation Foundation

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of **Nigerian Conservation Foundation** set out on pages 4 to 41 which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December, 2025, the statement of income and expenditure and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of material accounting policy information and other explanatory disclosures.

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Nigerian Conservation Foundation as at 31 December, 2025, and its financial performance and cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board, Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020 and Financial Reporting Council Act of Nigeria (Amendment) 2023.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Foundation in accordance with the requirements of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' (IESBA) International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) (IESBA code) and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in Nigeria. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IESBA Code and other ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of Financial Statements in Nigeria.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the document titled "[Nigerian Conservation Foundation Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2025]", which includes the Trustees' Report, statement of Trustees' responsibilities for the preparation and approval of financial statements, the Certification of financial statements and other national disclosures (Statement of value added and Financial Summary) which we obtained prior to the date of this report. The other information does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements do not cover the other information and we do not and will not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed on the other information obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.



Responsibilities of the Trustees for the Financial Statements

The trustees are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board, and the requirements of Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020), the Financial Reporting Council Act of Nigeria (Amendment), 2023 and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the Foundation or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Foundation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide those charged with governance with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

In accordance with the requirements of other legal and regulatory framework, we expressly state that:

- i) We have obtained all the information and explanation, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of our audit.
- ii) The Foundation has kept proper books of account, so far as appears from our examination of those books.
- iii) The Foundation's financial position and its statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income are in agreement with the books of account and returns.
- iv) The Secretary/CEO and the Treasurer who certified the financial statements are not registered with the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN).



Chizoba Onyebuchi, FCA, FRC/2013/PRO/ICAN/004/00000000869
For: Deloitte and Touche (FRC/2022/Coy/091021)
Chartered Accountants
Lagos, Nigeria
29 June 2026



NIGERIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2025

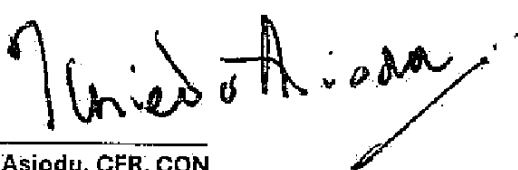
Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income

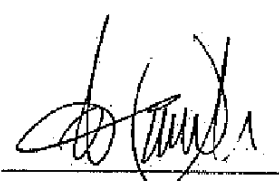
	Notes	31-Dec 2025 N'000	31-Dec 2024 N'000
Income			
Fees and subscriptions	6	581,090	400,962
Contributions from donors	7	730,674	582,380
Investments income	8	73,149	21,168
Other income	9a	287,169	364,712
Total income from operation		1,672,082	1,369,222
Non-monetary Government grant	10	268,611	268,611
Exchange Gain	9b	(16,030)	900,421
Total income		1,924,663	2,538,254
Expenditure			
General & administrative expenses	11	610,488	356,963
Personnel cost	12	533,217	324,997
Depreciation - Property, plant and equipment	13	79,175	58,039
Amortization - Intangible Assets	13a	2,161	2,126
Other expenses	14	276,289	289,921
Total Expenses from operation		1,501,340	1,032,046
Depreciation - Forest and Family park leasehold	13	272,579	270,573
Total expenditure		1,773,919	1,302,619
Surplus for the year		150,744	1,235,635

Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 December 2025

	Notes	31-Dec 2025 N'000	31-Dec 2024 N'000
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	15a	825,705	743,414
Forest and Eco park	15b	16,578,561	16,846,340
Intangible Assets	15c	12,472	14,633
Total non-current assets		17,416,738	17,604,387
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	16	485,964	327,284
Prepayment	17	7,507	9,274
Cash and cash equivalents	18	3,380,781	2,871,249
Total current assets		3,874,252	3,207,807
Total assets		21,290,990	20,812,194
Reserves and liabilities			
Funds and reserves			
Accumulated funds	20.1	2,634,123	2,483,379
Capital reserve	20	137,322	137,322
Capital funds	20.2	1,994	1,994
Total funds and reserves		2,773,439	2,622,695
Non-current liabilities			
Deferred non-monetary Government grant	19.1	16,653,899	16,922,510
Total non-current liabilities		16,653,899	16,922,510
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	22	40,374	48,124
Deferred non-monetary government grant	19.1	268,611	268,611
Deferred income	19	1,554,667	950,254
Total current liabilities		1,863,652	1,266,989
Total liabilities		18,517,551	18,189,499
Total reserves and liabilities		21,290,990	20,812,194

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 25 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

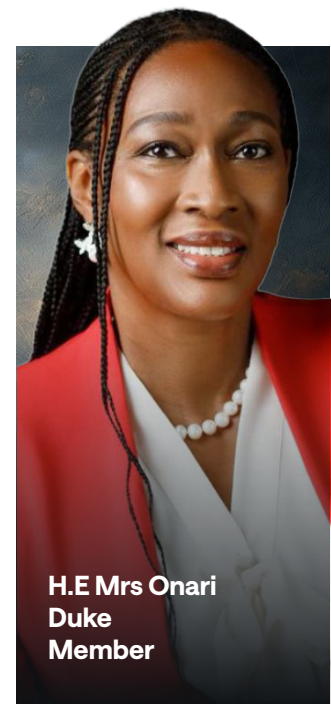
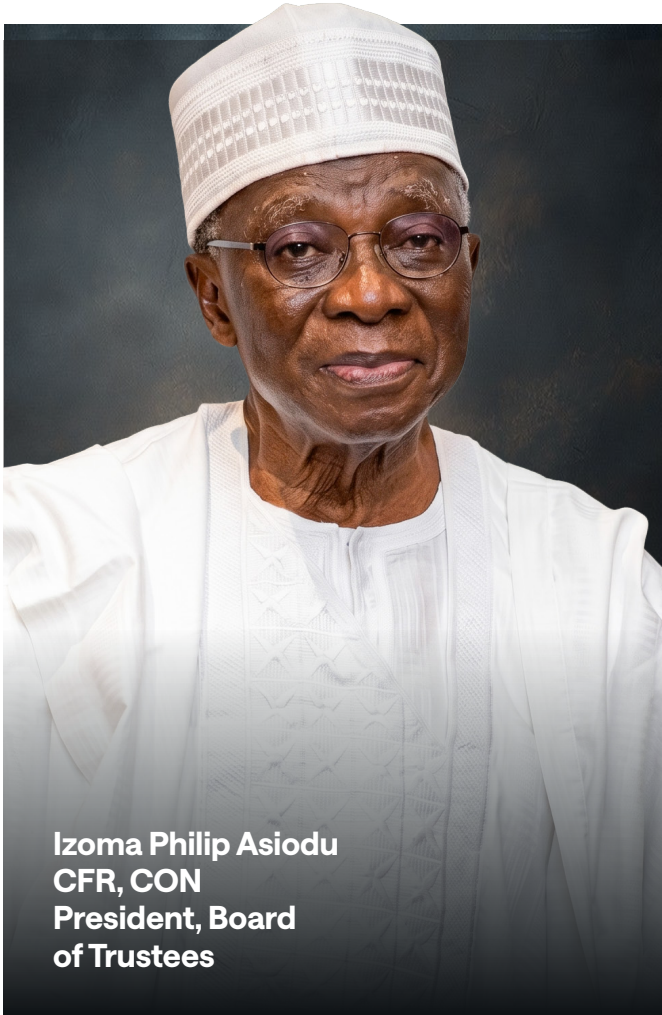

Izoma P. C. Asiodu, CFR, CON
President


Dr. Joseph Ohoja
Secretary

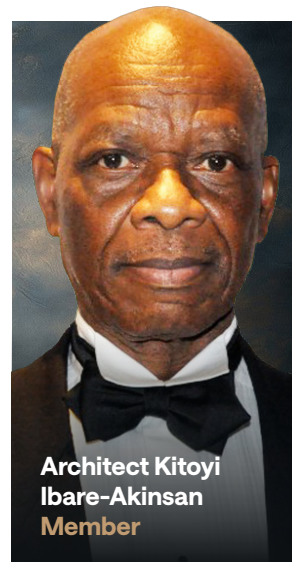
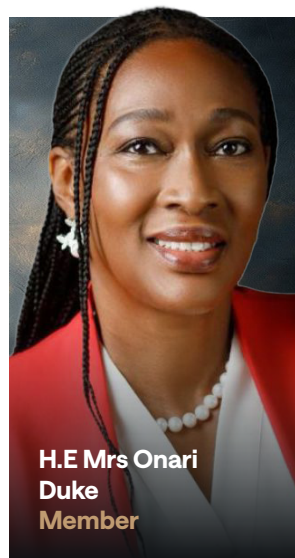
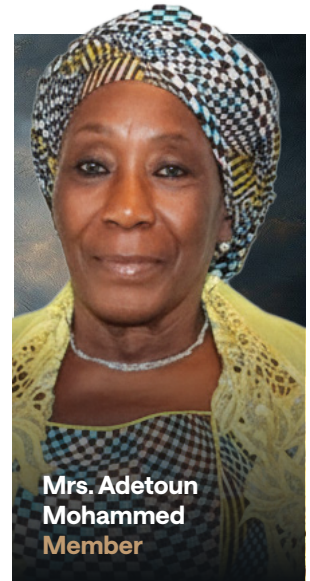
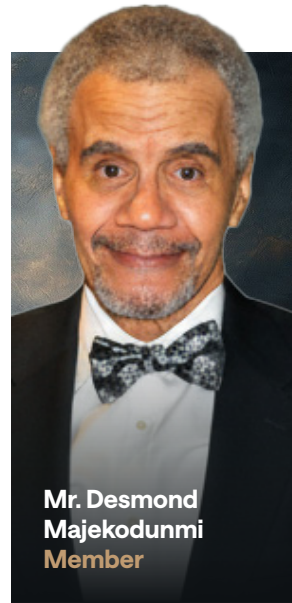
An open book lies flat on a dark wooden surface, its pages glowing with a warm, golden light. The background is a blurred bookshelf filled with numerous books, creating a sense of a library or study. The overall atmosphere is quiet and intellectual.

Governing Bodies

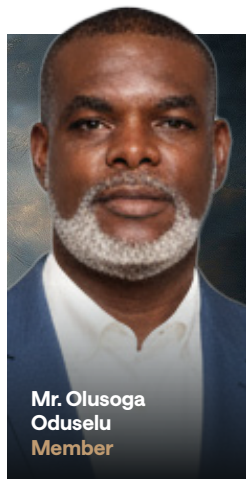
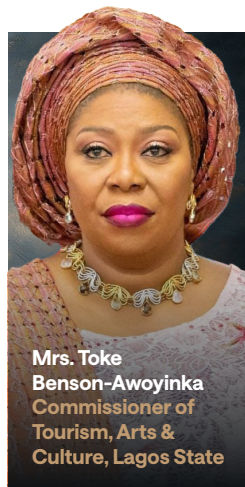
Board of Trustees



National Executive Council



National Executive Council



National Executive Council (NEC) Committees and Chairpersons

**Conservation &
Environmental Services**
Dr Muhtari Aminu-Kano

**Business Development &
Communications**
Dame Marie Fatayi-Williams

Human Resources
Mr. Ukpong
Edo-Abasi Bassey

Finance
H.E Mrs. Onari Duke

Project & Infrastructure
Arc. Kitoyi
Ibare Akinsan

**Ad-hoc Committee
on Constitution Review**
Mr. Adekoyejo Edu



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clean
because its in our
nature

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LAGOS NIGERIA**



HOME TO THE LONGEST CANOPY

WALKWAY

in Africa

- Nature walk
- Animal Sightseeing
- Treehouse
- Volley Ball

- Table Tennis/
- Lawn Tennis
- Large-sized board games
- (Chess, ludo, draft, scrabble, etc)
- Football Pitch
- Fish Ponds

Get in touch

National Headquarters

Lekki Conservation Centre
KM 19, Lekki-Epe Expressway,
Lekki, Lagos
0903 489 5750, 0903 473 5858

Finima Project Office

Finima Nature Park Resource Centre
Behind NLNG RA3
Finima, Bonny Island, Rivers State.
0803 905 2657

South-West Zonal Programme Office

C/O NACGRAB HQ, NCRI Compound,
Moor Plantain, Ibadan
0810 999 1271

Calabar Office

109A Marian Hill Road,
Calabar, Cross River State.
0803 503 0122

Omo Project Office

Omo Forest Reserve
Government Quarters
J4 Area, Ogun State
0802 589 3997

Abuja Office

Sarius Palmatum & Botanical Garden
Plot 3259, IBB Boulevard
Maitama, Abuja FCT.
0803 611 1821

Hadeija-Nguru Wetlands Project Office

Hadeija-Nguru Conservation
Nguru GRA,
Yobe State.
0813 336 4333

www.ncfnigeria.org
info@ncfnigeria.org

[in](#) [yt](#) [f](#) [ig](#) [x](#) @ncfnigeria