



**GLOBAL
FOREST
COALITION**



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**

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COVER IMAGE: Children learn about sustainable practices at the farms of local women partners in Armenia. By Armenian Forests NGO.

WHO WE ARE



The Global Forest Coalition (GFC) is a feminist and international coalition of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations, NGOs, and women's rights groups defending social justice and the rights of forest peoples in forest policies. The following is a list of key positions within GFC in 2023.

Board Members

Anna Kirilienko (Chairperson, BIOM, Kyrgyzstan)
Dil Raj Khanal (Secretary, FECOFUN, Nepal),
Lucy Mulenkei, (IIN, Kenya)
Christine Von Weizsaecker (Ecoropa, Germany)
Johanna Molina (Colectivo VientoSur, Chile)
Aydah Vahia (NIPS, Solomon Islands)

Regional Focal Points

Kwami Kpondzo (Friends of the Earth, Togo)
Africa
Inés Franceschelli (Heñoi, Paraguay) Latin America & the Caribbean
Elena Kreuzberg (CPAWS, Canada) Europe and North America
Andrey Laletin (Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia) North & Central Asia and Eastern Europe
Puspa Dewy (WALHI, Indonesia) South and South East Asia & the Pacific



Flowers of Narynkol. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg

The GFC Team

Policy Director: Wolfgang Kuhlmann
Operations Director: Janet Bastian
Unsustainable Livestock Campaign
Coordinator: Andrea Echeverri
ETI Campaign Coordinator: Kwami Kpondzo
Membership Coordinator: Andrey Laletin
Climate Campaign Coordinator: Coraina de la Plaza (replaced by Gadir Lavadenz in December 2023)
Gender Justice and Forests Campaign
Coordinator: Valentina Figuera Martínez
Senior Gender Advisor: Juana Vera Delgado
Climate, Biodiversity and Land Use Policy
Advisor: Souparna Lahiri
Strategic Communications Advisor: Ismail Wolff
Communications Coordinator: Chithira Vijayakumar
Social Media Coordinator: Allie Constantine
Web Designer and IT Specialist: Jake McMurchie
Media Coordinator and Language Justice
Adviser: Megan Morrissey
Financial Controller: Jeroen Berrens

GFC MEMBERS



As of 31 December 2023, GFC had 131 members from 75 countries.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends of the Global Forest Coalition,

As we gather to reflect on another year of collective efforts and challenges, I am compelled to convey both the urgency of our mission and the depth of gratitude for your unwavering commitment to safeguarding our planet's forests and biodiversity. The Global Forest Coalition stands as a beacon of hope amidst the looming shadows of environmental degradation, climate change, and social injustice.

Our world continues to grapple with the devastating consequences of deforestation and biodiversity loss. Each year, we witness the irreplaceable ecosystems of our planet dwindle, threatening the delicate balance upon which all life depends. The impacts ripple far and wide, touching every corner of the globe and affecting the most vulnerable among us, especially structurally oppressed and repressed communities, and Indigenous Peoples, whose livelihoods and cultures are intricately woven into the fabric of these forests.



The entrance to the agroecological farm of a member of the Oñoirũ Association, shows the vegetal wealth of the peasant farm. Photo: Sandino Flecha/Heñói

We must recognize the interconnectedness of these crises. Climate change, driven in part by deforestation and forest degradation, poses an existential threat to humanity. As temperatures rise and extreme weather events become more frequent, the urgency of our work intensifies. But our efforts must extend beyond mitigation; we must confront the root causes of these challenges and advocate for holistic solutions that prioritize the well-being of both people and the planet.

In our pursuit of solutions, we must remain vigilant against the allure of false promises and quick fixes. The proliferation of so-called "solutions" to climate change and biodiversity loss, such as large-scale monoculture plantations and carbon offset schemes, exacerbates the very problems they claim to solve. We must resist the commodification of nature and instead elevate the voices of those most impacted by these destructive practices, amplifying the wisdom of grassroots communities and the custodians of traditional knowledge.

Central to our mission is the recognition that environmental justice cannot be achieved without social justice. We must confront the systems of power and privilege that perpetuate exploitation and inequality, ensuring that our efforts are guided by principles of equity, inclusivity, and solidarity.

As we look to the future, let us draw strength from the collective resilience of our movement. Together, we have the power to affect meaningful change and create a world where forests flourish, biodiversity thrives, and all people live in harmony with nature.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our shared vision. Together, we can build a brighter future for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Anna Kirilenko

Anna Kirilenko

INTRODUCTION



2023 was a year of change at the Global Forest Coalition (GFC), with longstanding Director and co-founder of the coalition Simone Lovera departing at the beginning of the year. Despite the loss of such a central figure to all that is GFC, the coalition managed to guide a new path forward, with former Board Member Wolfgang Kuhlmann stepping in as interim policy director.

Work continued in earnest across our four main campaigns on GFC's long-term mission to advocate for the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems, through defending and promoting respect for the rights, territories, traditional knowledge and sustainable livelihoods of the Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women that co-exist with them. Simultaneously, considerable focus was also placed on building the strength of the coalition through supporting the Secretariat, fundraising, and increasing engagement between members.

GFC has been campaigning for ecosystem and rights-based solutions to the underlying and direct causes of deforestation since its establishment in 2000 as an informal coalition of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations, social movements, and NGOs. We will continue to do this, particularly through international alliance building and collaboration between diverse rightsholder and stakeholder networks, as well as analyzing case studies and policies at the national and international levels. We also examine the role of gender discrimination in our campaigns and how patriarchy and gender inequality pose a key structural barrier to achieving rights-based forest policies.



Biodiversity in Issyk-Kul. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg

There continues to be a strong need to monitor and act on international policy processes like climate and biodiversity negotiations, as these processes often play a key role in steering national policies and actions. The increasing corporate capture of these policy processes requires us to strengthen our efforts to raise awareness about the influence that corporations wield over decision-making, and how this is a barrier to the implementation of forest-related policies that are rights-based, gender just and socially equitable. Our campaigns reject the reformist, one-dimensional, business-as-usual solutions favoured by the corporate sector, which pretend to address deforestation but ignore or even negatively impact the social dimensions of forest policy, such as the rights and livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples.

Through our work, we have made significant progress towards achieving our mission, which is to advocate for the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems through defending and promoting respect for the rights, territories, traditional knowledge, and sustainable livelihoods of the Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women that coexist with them. In particular, the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative and the Women2030 program have helped raise awareness among key decision-makers at the national and international levels of the essential role that community conservation led by Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women play in conserving and restoring the world's forests.

GFC plays a vital role in amplifying the voices and experiences of marginalized communities – particularly Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women – in global policy dialogues surrounding climate change, inclusive forest and biodiversity conservation, and governance. As a coalition of diverse grassroots organizations and networks spanning 75 countries, GFC serves as a powerful platform for these often underrepresented groups to have their perspectives heard and their rights respected in international policy arenas.

In global discussions on climate change, biodiversity loss, and forest policies, the voices of those most affected by these issues must be fully integrated into decision-making processes. However, due to systemic inequalities and power imbalances, these voices are often marginalized or overlooked. The GFC and its member groups work tirelessly to address this gap by actively engaging with policymakers, advocating for the inclusion of community-led solutions, and championing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

One of the unique strengths of the GFC lies in its ability to bridge the gap between grassroots realities and international policy frameworks. By bringing together diverse perspectives from the ground level, the GFC ensures that global policies are informed by the lived experiences and traditional knowledge of those directly impacted by deforestation, environmental degradation and climate change. Through various advocacy initiatives, capacity-building efforts, and collaborative campaigns, the GFC empowers its member groups to effectively influence policy discussions and shape decisions that affect their communities and territories.

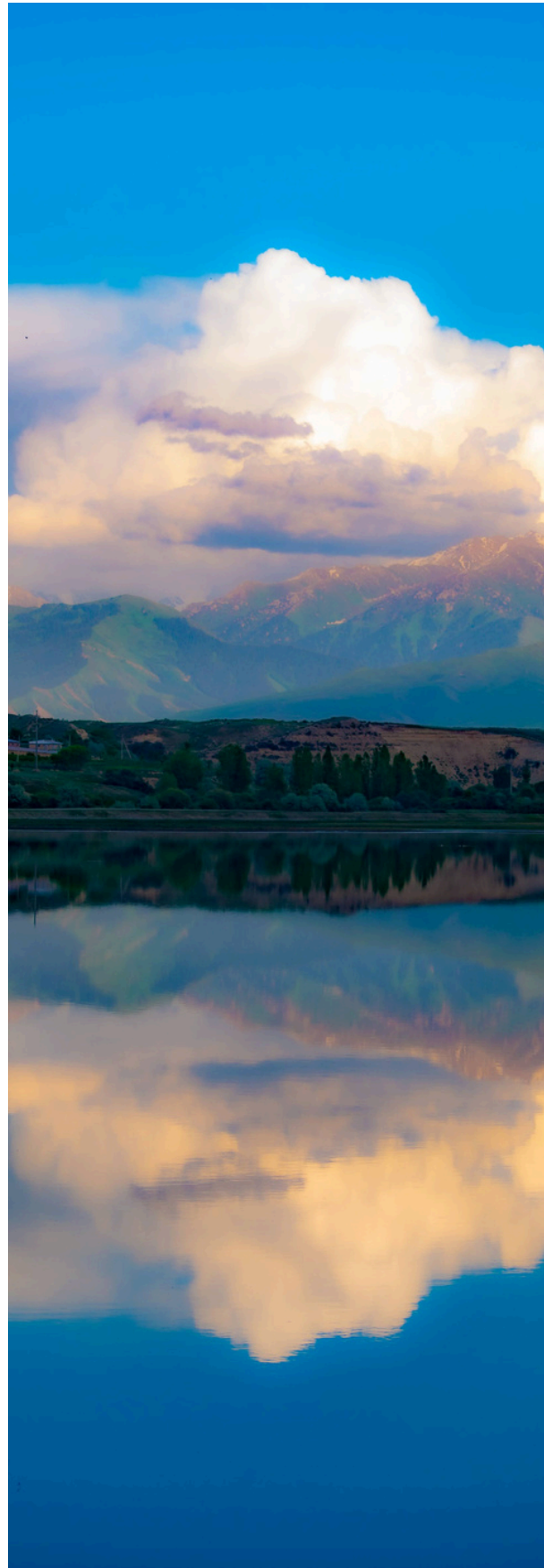
Over the year, GFC organised eight side events involving member groups across our Gender Justice and Forests; Unsustainable Livestock; Climate and Forests, and Extractive Industries, Tourism and Infrastructure campaigns as well as 11 press conferences and 12 webinars across four campaigns to demystify false solutions and their gender-differentiated impacts and build capacities of member groups to engage in these areas at the national, regional and global levels.

In particular, we held a 'Podcasting for Change' training for member organisations, tailored to empower GFC members and allies to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to create compelling audio content and effectively distribute it to a wider audience. The training was divided into two sessions on 25 July & 1 August, with interpretation in English, Spanish and French. We also made the training available on YouTube in [English](#), [Spanish](#) and [French](#).

As well as training GFC members on podcast production and marketing, GFC also produced our inaugural podcast, 'Roots of Resilience: On the Frontlines of Climate Justice' with the specific objective of amplifying the voices, stories, experiences, and policy recommendations of GFC member groups and allies on the ground to uphold and elevate real solutions to biodiversity loss, deforestation and climate change. We published a total of six episodes of Roots of Resilience featuring ten member groups along with four GFC team members.

GFC also continued to amplify the work of coalition members through support and joint publications of advocacy and research publications, hosting joint press conferences and report launches, and taking part in and amplifying their work through social media campaigns. Also, GFC held a range of events, highlighting successful examples of community-governed and gender-just forest conservation and restoration through coalition members. As mentioned above, GFC organised more than 11 press conferences across a range of relevant issues, providing a joint platform for member organisations.

GFC continued to provide opportunities for coalition members to engage with international alliances and networks in different capacities, from joining coordination calls to online events and writing briefers and submissions. For example, the Unsustainable Livestock Campaign continued to expand its involvement across a range of coalitions. The Forest and Climate Campaign, along with the other core campaigns of GFC and many GFC groups participated in international meetings and events at the UNFCCC SB meetings in Bonn and COP 28 in Dubai.



Forests and lakes of Issyk-Kul. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg

CAMPAIGNS

GENDER JUSTICE AND FORESTS



Scenes from the seed fairs of the Heñói Seed Network. Photos: Sandino Flecha/Heñói



GFC is a feminist organisation - so the Gender Justice and Forest (GJ&F) Campaign closely collaborates with the rest of GFC's campaigns to support the ecosystem and rights-based and gender-just approach that is included in the overall work. The GJ&F campaign led GFC's participation in the Intergovernmental Consultations on nature-based solutions, hosted by the UNEP in Nairobi. GFC delivered three submissions and several interventions during the regional and global consultations, including critical views to defend the rights of women in all their diversity, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and local and Afro-descendant communities, as well as denouncing highly questionable market-based, greenwashing and offsetting practises that don't address the root causes of biodiversity loss. GFC is also part of the Women and Gender Constituency of the UNFCCC. During SB-58 with colleagues of other organisations, the Climate and Livestock Campaign drafted and delivered two interventions during the agriculture negotiations.

In line with this effort to denounce harmful distractions and defend cutting carbon emissions, the GJ&F campaign continued co-leading advocacy efforts during the 25th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the CBD (SBSTTA 25) to denounce the powerful corporate lobby machine behind nature-based solutions and the need to close gender gaps through robust indicators to monitor progress of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

GENDER JUSTICE AND FORESTS

Outputs included successfully placing an op-ed in the Kenyan media during the final round of United Nations Environment Programme's intergovernmental consultations on nature-based solutions (NbS) in Nairobi in October. The op-ed, "Global polluters offering false solutions to the climate crisis," calls for closer analysis and rigorous scrutiny of the implementation of NbS and exposure of the threats they pose to resolving the climate and biodiversity crises. This was supplemented by the publishing of two articles in the ECO newsletter during the SBSTTA 25 meetings.

Our advocacy campaigns targeting the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) strongly promoted the respect for the rights and roles of women, Indigenous Peoples, and local and Afro-descendant communities ensuring gender equality in the implementation of the framework. GFC closely followed virtual and in-person CBD processes, actively engaging in meetings alongside CBD constituencies.

The campaign continued articulating with the CBD Women's Caucus and CBD Alliance, participating in online and face-to-face policy and capacity-building events as well as press conferences, writing articles, and delivering statements in negotiations to defend the gender-responsive implementation of the KMGBF. We presented at a virtual roundtable on 'How to gender-responsively monitor the implementation of the KM Global Biodiversity Framework?'. A Task Force on the Monitoring Framework was created under the CBD Women's Caucus and GFC's gender program led, guided and facilitated collective actions to improve gender-responsive language in the negotiated text at CBD SBSTTA 25. Other strategic topics that the campaign advocated for included gender-responsive resource mobilisation for the implementation of the KMGBF, biodiversity offsets, climate justice and false solutions.

In 2023 the GJ&F campaign also worked to support capacity strengthening of GFC members, community organisations, women's groups and their work related to gender justice and strategic regional and local priorities. The campaign hosted a webinar, 'The Power of Indigenous Women in Protecting Forests and Biodiversity,' to commemorate International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The session gathered three Indigenous women leaders from Bolivia, Colombia and Paraguay to exchange knowledge and strengthen the feminist leadership in community conservation and traditional knowledge as an effective response to forest and biodiversity degradation.

GFC, through the gender justice campaign, supported member group CCIMCAT for an event bringing together Indigenous women's groups and feminist collectives, networks, and organisations to share experiences and knowledge and support one another in their struggles against extractivism and other activities threatening their local environment, land sovereignty, and other rights. Following the support to Guaraní women's struggle to recover their land from 'hacendados' landowners, GFC also assisted in their work to harvest rainwater for drinking and food growing after monoculture plantations deforested their lands and devastated water sources.

The GJ&F campaign also supported regional initiatives by GFC members, including a webinar on feminism and the invisibility of gender inequalities in advocacy spaces, as well as the online regional Assembly with Latin American and Caribbean members.

Other global advocacy actions included a [web post and illustration](#) to commemorate World Environment Day from a feminist perspective, a [statement](#) to recall ongoing struggles on International Women's Day and an [article](#) on International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples to recognise the Indigenous women's contributions to preserving biodiversity, protecting their ancestral lands, and upholding cultural traditions that enrich humanity.

GFC also participated in the Forests and Communities Initiative's Conference, hosted in Monaco, and two of our campaign coordinators, Valentina Figuera Martinez and Andrea Echeverri were [speakers](#) at the panel "Effective forest conservation by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Rights-based and Gender-Just approaches." GFC also participated in the 'Target 2 workshop on developing a road map to support the implementation and monitoring of ecosystem restoration under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework', held at the FAO Headquarters in Rome in November 2023. GFC Senior Gender Advisor Dr. Juana Vera Delgado was invited by the FAO to review and provide inputs on gender and pervasive incentives for the Resource Manual for Target 2.

As part of the Green Livelihoods Alliance (GLA) activities, the GJ&F – as Gender Technical Partner – supports the mainstreaming of gender and intersectionality on inclusive forest governance in six GLA countries: Colombia, Bolivia, Liberia, Ghana, the Philippines, and Vietnam. We do this through mentoring, monitoring and coaching, capacity strengthening/building with country gender partners and consultants, and providing tools and guideline materials. GFC is part of two global policy dossiers working groups of the GLA: CBD and EU Deforestation Regulation, supporting 6 GLA alliance members (IUCN, Tropenbos Bos, Milieu Defensie, GAIA-Amazon, Sustainable Development Institute, and Non-Tropical Forms Products (NTFP)). Additionally, the campaign supports the gender and forest-related activities of two partners in Paraguay. Also, technical support is provided through three different key actors: a) GFC local partners, who are experts in gender and forest issues; b) local gender expert consultants; and c) direct mentorship from GFC gender senior experts. In 2023, the Mid-Term Review took place, and the evaluators acknowledged the valuable role of Gender Technical Partners in contributing to the inclusion of gender, making it visible in the implementation of GLA activities towards just and inclusive forest governance.



Traditional livestock rearing in Kyrgyzstan. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES, TOURISM AND INFRASTRUCTURE (ETI)



*The landscape and biodiversity of Kyrgyzstan.
Photo: Elena Kreuzberg*



Under the Extractive Industries, Tourism and Infrastructure Campaign, we continued efforts to protect forests and the rights of communities through advocacy around relevant mining, infrastructure and mass tourism mega-projects, with a specific focus on those financed through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In September 2023, GFC released its latest report, [“Debt, Displacement, and Biodiversity Loss: Assessing the Gender, Environmental, and Human Rights Implications of Extractivism and China’s Belt and Road Initiative”](#).

The report uncovers significant and severe negative impacts of BRI infrastructure projects on women, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, human rights, and the environment. The paper, which analysed BRI projects in Kenya, Indonesia, and Argentina, found that the initiative has led to human rights violations, and environmental destruction, and has been initiated without any gender impact analyses or consultations with affected communities.

Through this report and other activities, GFC continued to call for comprehensive impact assessments, gender-responsive policies, and inclusive decision-making processes to address these disparities and advocate for decisions that prioritise the well-being of affected communities and the environment.

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES, TOURISM AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Rendille Indigenous women during a CCRI meeting. Photo: Edna Kaptoyo/ Indigenous Information Network

The [briefing paper](#) also promotes rights-based, gender-just, alternative livelihood options for the affected communities, as well as economic models that are anti-capitalist. The launch of the briefing paper featured a webinar that included a presentation on the paper itself and another on the expansion of plantations in the Global South. Both sessions highlighted the similar impacts of extractivist models dominated by capitalist, imperialist, and colonialist systems.

Capacity building for GFC members is an ongoing process within the coalition. Regular information on initiatives like the BRI and other detrimental extractive and infrastructure projects is shared via GFC listservs to increase awareness and knowledge about ongoing developments. By checking in with member groups regularly, we are also able to actively oppose harmful projects being implemented in various countries.

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES, TOURISM AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Another key output was the article [The Dark Side of Technology: Coltan Mining in the DRC and its Human Rights and Environmental Impacts](#), which looked at the significant concerns around the mining of Coltan, short for columbite-tantalite, a crucial mineral in producing most modern technological devices such as cellphones, laptop computers, and cars. However, the extraction of coltan in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has raised significant concerns due to its severe human rights violations and environmental degradation. Increasing research and coverage of the mining has exposed an intricate web of issues surrounding coltan mining, shedding light on its impact on communities and ecosystems in the DRC.

The European Union's expected Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) was formally adopted in April 2023. This regulation aims to ensure that products sold in the EU market do not originate from deforested or degraded lands. Described as a "historic" moment in EU environmental policy, the regulation was shared with GFC member groups. It applies to products sourced from all types of forests, not just tropical ones. The GFC team disseminated invitations among its members for a webinar on the EUDR, scheduled for June 1st and organised by Fern and ClientEarth, GFC allies. Members were encouraged to attend to learn how to leverage the regulation to oppose extractive projects that harm forests and biodiversity.

In addition to the EUDR campaign, GFC, through its ETI campaign coordinator, participated in preparatory meetings with allies for the Global Campaign to dismantle corporate power, ahead of a mobilisation week in October against corporate impunity.

On September 25th, GFC and Stay Grounded co-hosted a webinar on tourism development and airport expansion. Presentations revealed that tourism development often mirrors extractivist models of exploitation, involving land grabbing, deforestation, forced displacement, and violations of community rights. Infrastructure developments associated with tourism include airport expansions, hotels, and roads. Clear recommendations included maintaining solidarity with affected communities and raising awareness about the impacts of mass and elite tourism.

The gathering in Nairobi in October–November 2023 for the CBD SBSTTA discussions provided an opportunity for GFC representatives to advocate for divestment from harmful extractive industries and infrastructure initiatives detrimental to forests and biodiversity. Key efforts included publishing an op-ed on Nature-based Solutions (NBS), advocating to exclude NBS from certain frameworks, and successfully negotiating for the removal of NBS links between UNEP and CBD in published ECO articles. GFC representatives also participated in side events, advocating for land-based carbon and biodiversity offsets.

FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE



The biodiversity of Bishkek. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg



In 2023, the Forests and Climate Change campaign initiated and moved with a strategic three-pronged approach while still opposing, exposing, denouncing and resisting false climate solutions, and the drivers of deforestation and biodiversity loss. We opened up the first strategic campaign on divestment of public finance from promoting false solutions and redirecting towards financing and supporting real solutions, the second being identifying false solutions as barriers to real solutions, and the third being promoting a non-market approach to real climate solutions through supporting Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement within UNFCCC and in outside climate justice spaces and movements with allies of the climate justice movements, Indigenous groups and Women and Gender groups and other forest networks and movements, in regional and global spaces.

This three-pronged campaign has brought out the need for an alternative pathway to carbon markets, Article 6.2 and 6.4 and to move forward to generate a global campaign to upscale real solutions driven by Indigenous Peoples, women, local communities, peasants and small-scale farmers and youth.

Over the year, we delivered a multifaceted approach to increasing awareness across a range of stakeholders through a series of webinars, briefing papers, reports, side events, media events, multimedia outputs – including a new podcast series and a comic book on false solutions – media articles and other outputs. These activities served to denounce carbon markets while advocating for non-market approaches to real climate solutions with a gender-just and rights-based pathway.

FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

A key output in this endeavour was the campaign briefer, [Divest Public Climate Finance from False Solutions: A Roadmap Towards Gender-Just & Real Climate Justice](#). The briefing paper, which was launched at a well-attended [press conference at SB58 in Bonn](#), outlined the need for an international campaign to halt the financing of false solutions to climate change by bilateral, multilateral and international development funds, including United Nations agencies. Rather, it called for climate finance to support real solutions to the climate crisis that recognise historical responsibility, a common but differentiated response, and the rights and traditional knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples, women in all their diversities, and local communities.

In May, we also held a webinar on [Gender-Just and Community Rights Perspectives on Pathways to 1.5](#). The IPCC reports, especially on adaptation and mitigation, recognize that support for gender-just community conservation and restoration of forests and other ecosystems, including by strengthening land tenure rights, is one of the most effective ways to mitigate climate change. The Webinar brought together members, allies and others in a bid to demystify and explain key IPCC issues related to land, forests, climate change and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as well as the many false solutions being put forth through the increasing corporate capture of climate policy-making.

A series of articles were also published in December 2023 providing an analysis of Bioenergy Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS) technologies and why they are among the most problematic in carbon removal geoengineering. The two-part series, [Delay, Distract and Deceive: BECCS Developments in South America, Africa, and Asia](#), analyses the status of BECCS in these crucial regions and shows that it is far from being the silver bullet to climate change that some actors portray it to be.

In collaboration with members and allies, we also documented the impacts of wood-based bioenergy, monoculture commercial tree plantations, carbon offsets and markets, corporate capture, NBS and other false solutions on forests, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women, especially in the Global South. For this, we continued to support and be part of the global and regional (Latin America, Africa and Asia-Pacific) biomass working groups. The work done under this group includes organising activities for the International Day of Action against #BigBadBiomass. We continue campaigning against biofuel, forest offsets and carbon markets, including CORSIA-Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation-, and engage in Stay-Grounded events such as the members' assemblies.

GFC Forests and Climate Change campaign, in collaboration with the Climate Land Ambition and Rights Alliance (CLARA), finalised and made two submissions to the UNFCCC on the Non-market Approach under Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement. GFC also made two presentations during the UNFCCC-organised in-session workshops on Article 6.8 during Bonn intersessional and COP28 in Dubai. GFC leads the Article 6 Working Group in CLARA. GFC has been, over the last few years, instrumental amongst the global CSOs to promote and support the operationalisation and implementation of the Non-Market Approach under Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement as a tool for international cooperation for real climate action as a growing alternative to the carbon market.

FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

We marked September 21, the International Day of Struggle against Monoculture Tree Plantations, with a webinar and discussion titled '[In the Shadow of Monoculture Plantations](#)', which delved deep into the havoc that monoculture plantations are wreaking on the human rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities around the globe, as well as their harrowing impacts on biodiversity and water sources. The webinar also served as a launch of the GFC briefing paper, "[The Devil's Totality](#)": Paraguay's Struggle Against Agribusiness and Monoculture," authored by Omar Yampey of Heñoi Centro de Estudios, Paraguay, one of GFC's member organisations. A distinguished panel of speakers included Hilde Stroot of Oxfam Novib; Omar Yampey; Anabela Lemos of Justicia Ambiental, Mozambique; and Coraina de la Plaza from GFC.

The webinar also discussed how so-called climate and green finance is contributing to the expansion of these harmful schemes and why the financing of false solutions and their support via subsidies and other incentives must be halted and shifted towards genuine, gender-just and rights-based solutions capable of tackling the root causes of the climate crisis.

This message was consistently delivered across multiple forums and in our private and public advocacy over the year. This included op-eds such as "[Carbon offsets don't work. It's time for the EU to change its approach](#)" and "[Nature-based solutions](#)" – [another false, corporate pathway in the great greenwashing of the climate and biodiversity crises](#)", side events such as [Climate-Just Pathways to Real Solutions & Real Zero: Taking stock of where we're at](#), at Bonn SB58, which brought together speakers from Brazil, Nepal, Belgium and Tasmania, as well as through news releases - "[Global Leaders Urged to Urgently Reject Corporate-Backed Deceptions and Redirect Funding to Real Climate Solutions](#)", statements and numerous other strategic outputs.

We continued our work in key climate policy forums, including the Bonn Climate Change Conference (SB58) in June 2023 and UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai in December 2023. Among numerous activities at Bonn SB58, GFC, together with Environmental Paper Network and Colectivo VientoSur, Chile, held a press conference to launch a new campaign calling for divestment of public climate finance from funding false solutions & redirecting climate finance and to support real solutions. GFC also continued to work closely with allies as a driver of the Global South Bioenergy network, including Friends of the Earth International (FoEI), Corporate Accountability, Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice (DCJ), and CLARA.

During [COP28 in Dubai](#), GFC worked with and supported numerous member groups, taking part in a range of side events, press conferences, interventions and other actions across our four main campaigns, focusing on our core policy messages, including that carbon markets promote false solutions, accentuate the climate crisis, and help big polluters and high-emitting countries to continue business as usual, impacting women, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples, facilitating land grabbing and violation of the rights of the communities, and perpetuating inequality and injustice. Key activities included five press conferences, and a jointly organised side event in COP28 on false solutions and real solutions, together with DCJ, FOEI, CA, IEN, and INESC. GFC also launched [The Carbon Conspiracy: False Promises, Real Threats](#), a comic book that exposes why the carbon market is a scam. GFC also participated as a speaker in the Road to Belem global launch event, as well as at the ICAR-CALI (International Centre for Agricultural Research) organised event on non-market approaches. We also held an event on bioenergy, and one on false solutions with the WGC.

FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Scenes from community meetings in Nairobi. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg

We also pointed out that IPCC analysis is clear that there is no room for offsets, and we must reduce global emissions by half by 2030 to keep within 1.5 degrees Celsius and we require an immediate and rapid halt to deforestation and forest degradation, and forests and land cannot be exploited to reap carbon credits. Instead, Indigenous Peoples, women, and local communities should be strongly and appropriately supported to conserve, protect, and restore forests and prevent biodiversity loss.

We also used our platforms to resist and reject false solutions and dangerous distractions and call upon governments to divest public finance from promoting false solutions and redirect such finance to promote and support community-driven and governed real solutions, stressing that gender-just, rights-based, and ecosystems approach is the real pathway to achieving real solutions.

Another key output for 2023 was the new GFC podcast – [Roots of Resilience: On the Frontlines of Climate Justice](#) – which sought to amplify the voices, stories, experiences, and policy recommendations of GFC member groups and allies on the ground to uphold and elevate real solutions to biodiversity loss, deforestation, and climate change.

UNSUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION



Scenes from Kassan-Sai. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg



Under our Unsustainable Livestock Campaign, we partnered with GFC member groups and allies to campaign against an IDB Invest loan of up to 20M USD for BANCOP for livestock expansion in Paraguay. For this campaign, GFC allied with two Paraguayan organisations, GFC members Amotocodie Initiative and Heñoï, who showed great concern about these loans, and based on a narrative coming from the experience of these CSOs from the Global South, GFC actively joined a campaign to avoid this financing. Specifically, an open letter and video that can be seen at [this link](#), and a social media campaign were made. Although IDB Invest responded to our communication, the loan was approved. The assessment of social organisations in Paraguay is that these actions can set a precedent to support future lawsuits if the anticipated damages occur.

GFC also participated in the Finance in Common (FIC) Summit (the largest global meeting of Public Development Banks), held in Cartagena, Colombia, from September 4th to 6th, where we were able to make an intervention from the audience and organize, with another CSO of the S3F Steering Committee, protests outside the convention and handing out flyers. These actions led to successful media coverage in national media: [[Activistas exigen a los Bancos de Desarrollo que desfinancien la ganadería industrial. Es el momento de que los bancos de desarrollo dejen de financiar la ganadería industrial.](#)]

UNSUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

We also pressed that any real progress in agriculture must take into account the roles, responsibilities, needs, perspectives, and interests of women, smallholder farmers, and food producers, calling for agricultural “gender-just and transformative” approaches, which would be a powerful lever to address gender inequality in agriculture and food security. In line with this, we stressed that Food System Transformation and agroecological practices and approaches must be central to the work on agriculture, and false solutions like Climate Smart Agriculture and “sustainable intensification” must be rejected. A full list of GFC activities at COP28 can be accessed here: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/gfc-at-cop28/>

Other key outputs developed over the course of 2023 included research and analysis into global food systems and the global livestock industry as a key driver of deforestation and biodiversity loss. GFC also took part in the La Via Campesina VIII International Conference, the Latin American and the Caribbean Platform for Climate Justice and Demand Climate Justice (DCJ) Latin America Assembly. As a steering committee member of the [Stop Financing Factory Farming Campaign \(S3F\)](#) campaign, GFC was central to efforts to launch the campaign and engage with organisations and communities, with a focus on those in the Global South. At the World Bank’s spring meeting in April 2023, GFC helped to organise a [Civil Society Policy Forum](#) panel titled “MDB-supported private sector livestock operations: Can they address food insecurity, climate change and the SDGs?”

Efforts were successful in drawing increased attention to the relevance of the livestock industry for communities and organisations in the Global South, and in some cases, managing to link it to concrete actions by GFC and member groups. The research and analysis presented in a range of outputs and meetings were able to successfully assess the conflicts derived from the expansion of factory farming and contribute to strengthening arguments against the expansion of industrial animal agriculture and its financing by public banks.

A webinar was held in April: [“Impacts of unsustainable livestock production in Latin America: from extensive cattle ranching to factory farming”](#) as a follow-up to a workshop and webinar held in October 2022 on [“The role of development Banks in Big Livestock and Implications for people and forests.”](#) The main objectives were to present the S3F campaign, connect more organisations to it, and increase awareness of the impacts of livestock trade on the environment and human rights. After these webinars, it was possible to capture the interest in S3F of some national organisations and GFC members, such as La Vicaria del Norte in the Colombian Amazon, the Amotocodie and Heñoi Initiative in Paraguay and FASE in Brazil to advance the purposes of the campaign and contribute to the construction of sustainable worlds.

[The impacts of Unsustainable Livestock production, focused on Africa](#), was held in November with the participation of regional and national organisations; specifically: Friends of the Earth Nigeria, African Alliance for Food Sovereignty -AFSA- and the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC). The reflections included the critical role of women, Indigenous peoples and local communities in food sovereignty and the threats derived from the expansion of factory farms.

UNSUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION



Women's consultation meetings of the Olulunga community, discussing womens roles rights and needs in community conservation in Narok County. Photo: Jeanette Sequiera

This series of virtual meetings allowed us to approach different political cultures and strategies to confront a globalised, multi-scalar food model with patriarchal and colonial features and the insertion of the Global South in it, evidencing challenges such as the need for articulation between Asian resistances and Latin America, due to the direct impacts on forests and forest dependent-peoples of the increase in meat consumption in Asia. Having a better understanding of the scope of the work of different CSOs paves the way for greater engagement with S3F.

GFC also produced a range of articles and analyses with these same objectives, including "[Gender Justice and its Crucial Role in the Fight Against Factory Farming](#)." All of this is critical to building strategic awareness-raising campaigns to target policymakers, and the wider public under Objective 4. This analysis also feeds into Objective 1 of the project.

We continue to monitor key multilateral international funding mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), to identify where and how finance is going to the aforementioned drivers. We are also part of the civil society established networks actively following the GCF and providing support and inputs for potentially problematic forest and land-based projects, particularly those that, if approved, will impact countries where there are GFC members.

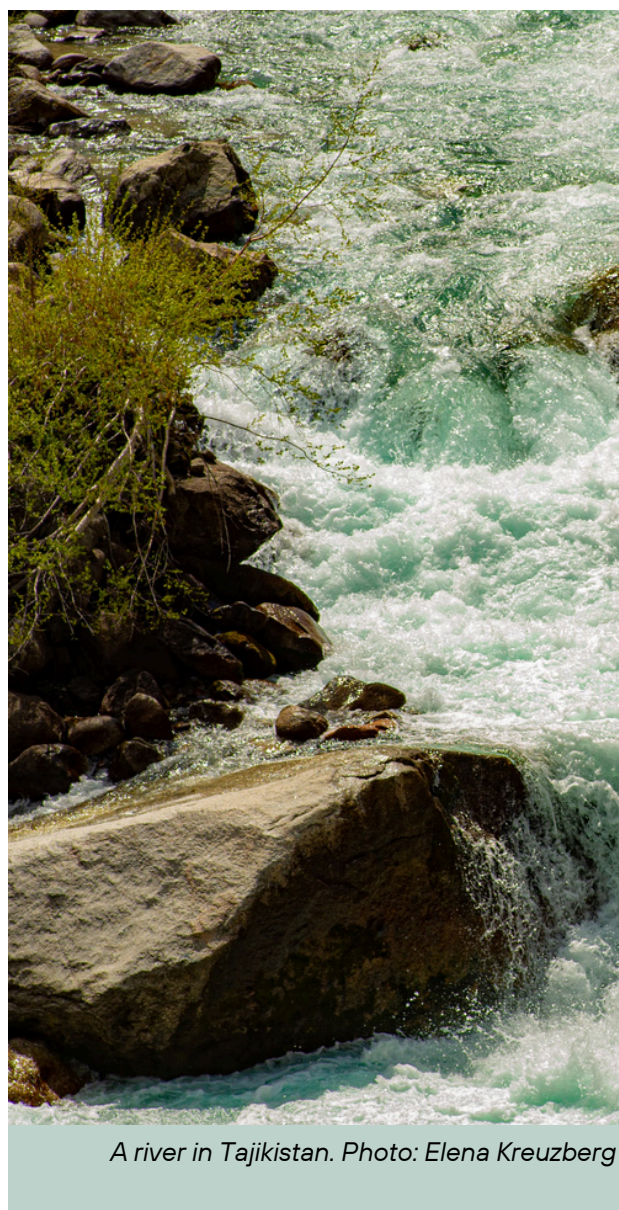
QUALITY MANAGEMENT & PLANNING



GFC started the year with a series of strategy meetings by the steering committees of the four campaigns. In March, a Monitoring, Evaluation and Planning (MEP) meeting was held over four virtual sessions attended by the members of GFC's Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council consists of senior staff members and five regional focal points elected by GFC members. It oversees the coalition's day-to-day work. Board members and other member group representatives may participate in these monthly meetings. Some important lessons and 'actions' were:

- We need to take better care of ourselves. Taking collective care as a political strategy with its roots in the feminist movement.
- There is tremendous potential within GFC for creating more cooperation between the regions.
- We need a thorough membership review, including an audit of existing members and adding new members, which responds to the needs of GFC's members.
- Develop or provide funding for more case studies for GFC members
- Develop fundraising, membership, and other materials to be shared with allies and at events.



A river in Tajikistan. Photo: Elena Kreuzberg



Paraguayan native corn varieties at the Heñoi Jey National Fair of Native and Creole Seeds. These corn, grown by peasants and Indigenous people, represent the resistance to the extractive advance of transgenic corn. Photo: Sandino Flecha/Heñói

After the virtual MEP meeting, it was decided to use the chance to have a face-to-face meeting with at least part of the staff, as some were going to be in Bonn for the UNFCCC intersessional meeting in the first week of June 2023.

The main aim of the meetings was to consolidate GFC's budget and to review the analysis of the cost-effectiveness of planned activities conducted by the Policy and the Operations Director. It helped to make sure GFC can fulfil all the obligations towards its program, allocate the remaining budget in a clear way, and make sure to use the budget in the most efficient way.

On this basis, it had to be decided that an MEP with full participation or a member's assembly could not take place this year. In the current situation, the special focus would be on regional meetings. They require solid funding and planning, especially if they are linked to specific projects or are integrated into current campaigns.

Over the year, the activities under the four campaigns were monitored and evaluated during the monthly Advisory Council calls. Members were informed about the results in three issues of our internal newsletter 'Roots', which provides a regular, brief report on key activities.

CONCLUSION



This Annual Report provides an overview of the main organisational activities and achievements of GFC over 2023, as well as how we continue to navigate global power imbalances and inequities.

Over 2023, GFC made progress towards strengthening membership engagement, capacity, and alliance building through a range of activities across its campaigns and specific membership-targeted activities. GFC also strengthened communications, collaboration, and consultations between coalition members.

Funding and post-COVID restrictions meant that we were unable to hold an in-person members assembly in 2023, but several online meetings were held and several members were able to meet and strategise together on the sidelines of key events including UNFCCC SB59 in Bonn and COP28 in Dubai. We strengthened collaboration and communication between coalition members, especially in the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In 2023, GFC also continued its work to strengthen the reach and capacity of member groups in Central Asia under a project supported by the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF).

Over 2023 we welcomed seven new members to the coalition (AKMENA, Kyrgyzstan; Dana Cooperative, Jordan; Ecolog and Ecomaktab, both from Uzbekistan; Eco-Tiras, Moldova; Foundation to Support Civil Initiatives, Tajikistan and Yanus, Armenia), increasing overall membership to 131 members across 75 countries.

We remain deeply appreciative of the collective force of our members and are proud of all that we have been able to achieve together as a team, on international, national as well as regional platforms. Together as a coalition, we stand united in the face of continued threats faced by Indigenous Peoples, environmental defenders, and custodians of our forests and Mother Earth, especially women in all their diversities.

We are incredibly grateful to all the individuals, funders, organisations and communities that support our work, and we look forward to persevering together for a gender-just, ecologically secure future for the planet as a whole.

GFC's work and that of its members would not have been possible without the generous support from private donors and the Agroecology Fund, American Jewish World Service (AJWS), Bread for the World, Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), Environmental Paper Network (EPN), Friends of the Earth US, Green Livelihoods Alliance (through WECF), Indigenous Information Network, Miseror, Patagonia Foundation (through CEF), Pivot Point, Siemenpuu, the Agroecology Fund, Urgent Action Fund and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC).

ABBREVIATIONS



- AFR100 - African Forest Restoration Initiative
- BRI - Belt and Road Initiative
- CBD - Convention on Biological Diversity
- CBDA - Convention on Biological Diversity Alliance
- CLARA - Climate Land Ambition and Rights Alliance
- COP - Conference of the Parties
- CORSIA - Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation
- DCJ - Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice
- ETI - Extractive Industries, Tourism and Infrastructure
- FARN - Natural Resources and Environment Foundation
- FECOFUN - Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal
- GBF - Global Biodiversity Framework
- GCF - Green Climate Fund
- GFC - Global Forest Coalition
- GJ&F - Gender Justice and Forests
- GLA - Green Livelihoods Alliance
- GTP - Gender Technical Partner
- HLPF - High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- IPLCs - Indigenous Peoples and local communities
- LAC - Latin America and the Caribbean
- MEP - Monitoring, Evaluation and Planning
- NbS - Nature-based solutions
- NGO - Non-governmental organisation
- S3F - Stop Financing Factory Farming Coalition
- SBI - Subsidiary Body for Implementation
- TNCs - Transnational corporations
- UN-CBD - United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
- UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- WECF - Women Engage for a Common Future



FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT

INCOME

DONOR	AMOUNT
Green Livelihoods Alliance through WECF <i>Contribution to Forests for a Just Future program and Gender Justice campaign</i>	€363,012
Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund <i>Strengthening Conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan</i>	€70,495
Swedish Society for Nature Conservation <i>Core Funding</i>	€69,438
Misereor <i>Contribution to campaigns against unsustainable livestock farming</i>	€42,695
Bread for the World <i>Raising awareness and demystifying false climate solutions and their impacts</i>	€21,500
American Jewish World Service <i>Contribution to skillshare on China's BRI Impact on Forests</i>	€19,081
Action Aid <i>Contribution to collaboration with the Climate Land Ambition and Rights Alliance</i>	€17,423
EPN Packard <i>Contribution to climate campaign and biomass working groups</i>	€17,146
Divest Factory Farming <i>Contribution to industrial livestock farming campaign</i>	€15,227
Oxfam <i>Redirecting Climate Finance away from False Climate Solutions</i>	€12,640
Agroecology Fund AF <i>Increasing Global South Engagement in the Stop Financing Factory Farming campaign</i>	€9,351
Indigenous Information Network <i>Contribution to Tourism and Biocultural Community Rights project</i>	€7,870
Urgent Action Fund <i>Indigenous peoples and women in forest and climate-related policy making</i>	€7,449
Pivot Point <i>Contribution to the Carbon Conspiracy project</i>	€4,611
Other <i>Including Heinrich Boell Foundation, Patagonia and private donations</i>	€13,494
TOTAL	€691,432

EXPENDITURES

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Small grants and third party assignments	€133,602
Staff costs	€279,280
Travel expenses	€55,031
Publications and other communication	€192,292
Administration costs	€21,119
Office costs	€8,508
TOTAL	€689,832

