



2023–2024
Annual
Report

UNWAVERING
COMMITMENT



ABOUT EARTH ISLAND:

Earth Island Institute is a global environmental-activist organization for grassroots campaigns that address some of the most pressing issues of our times, including climate change solutions, environmental justice, community resilience, and more. Our robust services include public education through our award-winning environmental publication, the *Earth Island Journal*, fiscal sponsorship for nearly 80 environmental projects, legal advocacy, and youth leadership and development through our New Leaders Initiative. Founded in 1982, Earth Island Institute is one of the leading environmental-activist organizations in the United States.

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EXECUTIVE LETTER

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the past few years, I am both humbled and inspired by the profound transformations we've experienced — within Earth Island and across the world. Change is inevitable, but how we respond defines us. Some changes ignite hope, others highlight the urgent challenges we face, and many reflect the natural evolution of our world. Yet, through all this flux, one thing remains steadfast: our unwavering commitment to protecting our planet and all who call it home.

In the face of escalating threats — climate crises, environmental degradation, and social injustices — our determination to build a just and sustainable future has only grown stronger. Together, we are a resilient community bound by a shared purpose, drawing strength from our collective efforts and from the relationships that sustain us. Now more than ever, we stand united, working towards a future where all life can flourish.

We are rising to meet this moment. The interconnected environmental challenges before us are daunting, but they are also a call to action—a guide that sharpens our focus and fuels our courage.

My own journey with Earth Island began in 2017, when I joined as the organization's first general counsel. In that role, I had the privilege of working closely with our expansive network of grassroots and community-based projects, pursuing mission-critical legal actions and supporting the courageous work happening on the ground. It was in these moments — collaborating with passionate, driven individuals—that I fell in love with

Earth Island's mission. Our project support services, youth programming, and independent journalism inspired me to believe deeply in the critical role Earth Island plays in addressing the environmental crises we face.

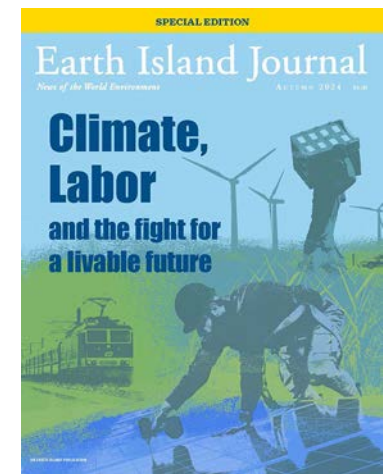
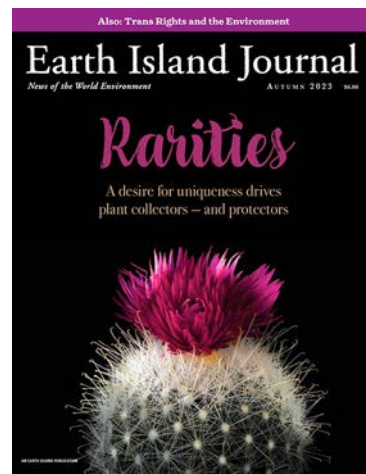
When the opportunity arose to step into the CEO role, I was honored and excited to deepen my commitment to this dynamic, cooperative approach to environmental protection and community partnership. What energizes me every day is the unwavering dedication of the people I have the privilege to learn from and collaborate with — individuals who remind me that hope is not passive; it's something we build together.

Looking ahead, I am excited to work more closely with our growing roster of projects — initiatives that inspire hope and demonstrate what's possible when we come together to build a regenerative, equitable world. Their work gives me confidence that, despite the challenges, a brighter future is within reach.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we will continue to rise, to persevere, and to nurture a world where all life can thrive.

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PROGRAM UPDATES

Earth Island Journal

Our award-winning international magazine combines investigative journalism, thought-provoking commentary, and art to highlight the subtle but profound connections between the environment and other contemporary issues.

Environmental journalism has never been more important, or dangerous. A 2024 UNESCO report, “Press and Planet in Danger: safety of environmental journalists; trends, challenges and recommendations,” found that between 2009 and 2023, about 70 percent of environmental journalists have been “attacked, threatened, or pressured” while reporting on issues ranging from mining and deforestation to climate protests

and land grabs. The report also mentions that the bulk of critical environmental journalism is being undertaken not by big media outfits, but by small outlets and independent reporters. Publications like the *Journal*.

In 2023 and 2024, our award-winning print magazine published hard-hitting features and articles from around the world, including a unique story about how researchers are using centuries-old whalers’ logbooks to inform our current understanding of whales and the climate crisis; a dispatch from Northern Argentina, where Indigenous communities are organizing against the lithium mining industry; a story from Europe, where wolf populations are recovering, and in the process, reviving old fears about living alongside

apex predators; a feature profiling Ukrainian activists working to conserve their country’s natural heritage amid the war with Russia; and a personal piece about how the war in the Middle East threatens a cherished repository of dry-adapted seeds.

Online, *Earth Island Journal* kept up with its watchdogging, publishing news and commentaries that have unearthed cases of corporate and government malfeasance, amplified the work of climate activists, and highlighted the many intersections between environmental challenges and other issues, including racial justice, women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and the right to protest.

Earth Island Advocates

Earth Island Advocates, in partnership with our fiscally-sponsored projects, uses the law to fight for justice for the planet's beautiful and varied ecosystems and inhabitants. With the combined knowledge and expertise of our grassroots project network and the pro bono resources of law firms, legal clinics, and nonprofit organizations, Earth Island Advocates is achieving tangible results for the environment. Earth Island's lawsuits cover a wide range of issues and often involve other organizations and individuals aligned with our work. The Advocates program has supported approximately 20 cases on matters ranging from challenging harmful wildlife practices, to halting destructive logging in CA forests, to ending the use of toxic dispersants. Furthermore, Advocates has helped coordinate non-litigation engagements with law school clinics at Georgetown, Stanford, and University of California, Berkeley law schools. These partnerships have resulted in petitions to federal agencies to strengthen

environmental and public health rules, among other advocacy efforts.

A particularly exciting development is that, in just the past year, Advocates has obtained victories against some of the biggest plastic-producing companies for their role in exacerbating the plastics pollution crisis and deceiving the public about the recyclability of their products. An appeals court recently gave a green light to our case against Coca-Cola, bringing us closer to holding that company accountable for its deceptive sustainability targets and affirming our ability to bring similar actions against other offenders. Here in California, our lawsuit about the negative impacts of plastic packaging is moving forward as we seek that companies move beyond hollow claims and be held legally responsible for their plastic use. Finally, as we predicted, our early successes have led the way for other corporate accountability actions, like California's landmark lawsuit against Exxon Mobil, which builds on the legal theories we have been developing.





New Leaders Initiative

Since 2000, the New Leaders Initiative has celebrated and supported young environmental leaders throughout North America. Each year the New Leaders Initiative produces the Brower Youth Awards program, which honors the work of six outstanding young environmentalists, ages 13 to 22, for their leadership and achievements. Our 2023 recipients led diverse projects, which

included advancing clean-energy solutions, tackling food waste at schools, promoting food sovereignty and mutual aid, advocating for mangrove restoration in coastal areas, getting Black and Brown girls outdoors, and speaking up for orcas.

In 2024, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Brower Youth Awards. Our 2024 recipients are working hard to protect our planet through projects such as saving salmon through art, helping

with radon remediation in Pittsburgh, supporting equitable climate education, empowering youth to achieve self-sustainability through gardening, helping restore Cuba's coral reefs, and empowering youth to push for policy change.

2024 Brower Youth Award winners: Austin Picinich, Asa Miller, Amelia Southern-Uribe, Yuki Qian, Raina Maiga, Vishruth Dinesh.



In addition to a cash prize and public recognition, the winners receive coaching, training, and peer support designed to provide them with the skills to advance their initiatives. More details about the winners and videos of their stories are available online at broweryouthawards.org.

And while Brower Youth Awards is Earth Island's flagship event, we strive to engage, grow, and support young activists all year long.

In collaboration with the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, the New Leaders Initiative hosts an annual youth poetry workshop and slam, which 40 young poets/ climate activists attended in both 2023 and 2024. New Leaders Initiative also collaborates with UC Berkeley to host a student-fellowship program. In 2023, four student fellows researched ways to further support and educate about organic land care for Re:wild Your Campus, and, in 2024,

five student fellows researched the social and physical landscape of one of Appalachia's coal field hollers with The Sludge Hub & Company.

2023 Brower Youth Award winners: William Charouhis, Maanit Goel, Riya Chandra, Katherine Martínez Medina, Angelina Xu, Muskan Walia.

Earth Island Project Support Program

Earth Island's Project Support Program provides essential services and support for new and established projects working across a spectrum of bold environmental initiatives. Since our founding in 1982, we have helped launch over 200 projects. Some have remained with Earth Island for the entirety of their existence, while others have spun off to become independent nonprofit organizations. In the fiscal year of 2022–2023, the Project Support Program provided services for 77 projects located across the United States and around the world. In 2023–2024, we served 74 such projects.

A designated program advisor works with each project to coordinate financial and administrative operations, technical assistance, and expert consultation that helps them succeed in the growth and development of their initiatives. By providing an institutional home with a robust infrastructure and systems, we have become a social-impact platform for community groups and activist leaders responding

to today's urgent environmental challenges.

Earth Island also welcomed several new projects to the Project Network over the past two fiscal years, including Law Students for Climate Accountability, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, and Tallgrass Institute.

In June of 2024, the Project Support Team hosted the Project Director Summit, which was the first Summit that Earth Island was able to host in seven years. The event brought together about 40 project directors from across the Project Network to share knowledge, build connections, and strategize for future success. In conjunction with the summit, the Project Support Team organized a well-received donor meet-and-greet to showcase the incredible work being done by projects, and to foster new opportunities for support and collaboration.

[Earth Island Network Services staff and project directors at the 2024 Project Director Summit \(this page and following\).](#)





EARTH ISLAND PROJECT NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

From fiscal years 2022–2023 and 2023–2024

RAPTORS ARE THE SOLUTION successfully litigated against the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), receiving an appellate court decision that the DPR must conduct a reevaluation of some of the most dangerous rat

poisons. Raptors Are the Solution co-sponsored a state bill that will crack down on one of the worst of those poisons. The bill was passed by the legislature on September 11, 2023.



In 2023, **ECOVET GLOBAL'S** *Women's EARTH Project* provided over 55 community women in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania with applied One Health training and connected them to a valuable resource: local and regional experts in public health, animal health, biodiversity

(Left) Northern Harrier; (above) Country Directors, Women's Earth Project of EcoVet Global.



conservation, and climate-resilient farming. With continued support, the women have transformed their training into real-world enterprises as community peer-to-peer trainers, technicians, and community leaders in the One Health space. As they shape their own solutions to strengthen environmental and species-wide health and community resilience, the results are tangible with self-reported improvements

(Above) Ms. Nice, Community Animal Health Leader from Itonya giving a chicken a vaccine against Newcastle Disease; (right) CalCAN staff outside of the California State Capitol Building on group lobby day.

in food security, animal health, human nutrition, soil and water health, and a positive shift in valuation of biodiversity. The beneficial impacts extend beyond the women to their communities (encompassing over a thousand households) and surrounding ecosystems.

Starting in 2021, **CALIFORNIA CLIMATE & AGRICULTURE NETWORK (CALCAN)** led a

coalition of 17 food and farming organizations to advocate for funding climate-smart agriculture, food hubs, farmland conservation, farmworker housing, and more. In July 2024, the state legislature passed a bill to put Proposition 4 on California's November ballot, asking voters to approve a \$10 billion climate bond. CalCAN's campaign resulted in the inclusion of over \$1 billion of the coalition's priorities.



The Biodiversity Carbon model co-created by **VIVA SIERRA GORDA** has helped Querétaro, Mexico become a climate leader by passing a carbon tax that specifically recognizes the carbon reductions from natural forest regeneration under a local climate action protocol. This model rebels against the global carbon market, and mobilizing financing through the obligatory tax on companies operating in the state territory. Companies can pay 20% of their tax liability for a 2020-2030 Inventory for Biodiversity Carbon, which in turn pays a fair price to local landholders

of high biodiversity areas. Under the rules of the local climate protocol, 120 landholders were paid for the carbon in their recovering forests in 53 transactions. Forty million Mexican Pesos have reached the pockets of ranchers turned rangers.

(Below) scenic view of mountains and valleys at dawn in Querétaro, Mexico.

(right) Amira Diamond and Melinda Kramer;
(following) student leader Amelia Keys
speaking at a protest at Harvard Law School.



The Heinz Family Foundation recently named **Amira Diamond** and **Melinda Kramer**, co-founders of **WOMEN'S EARTH ALLIANCE (WEA)**, as recipients of the 29th Heinz Award for the Environment. Amira and Melinda received the prestigious award for their work founding and leading WEA, which seeks to protect the environment, end the climate crisis, and ensure a just, thriving world by empowering women-led climate initiatives and eco enterprises. We are proud to be the organizational home for WEA for almost 20 years and can attest to the need for and impact of their work.

LAW STUDENTS FOR CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY released its 2024 Scorecard which ranks the “Vault 100” law firms according to how much fossil-fuels work they have engaged in over five years. It was designed to draw awareness to the indispensable role law firms play in creating, implementing, and safeguarding fossil fuel projects, as well as protecting the people who profit from them. It is through this awareness that law students can make informed and values-aligned choices about their future careers.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for FYEs 22–23 and 23–24

Assets and Liabilities

	2023	2024
Assets		
Cash	\$ 2,810,038	\$ 3,667,495
Accounts receivable	\$ 14,469,229	\$ 8,827,868
Fixed Assets	\$ 848,373	\$ 759,409
Operating lease right-of-use asset, net	\$ 1,209,467	\$ 906,995
Investments	\$ 18,647,910	\$ 20,960,682
Deposit for land purchase	\$ 4,100,000	\$ 4,100,000
Other assets	\$ 392,988	\$ 710,416
Total assets	\$ 42,478,005	\$ 39,932,865
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 533,439	\$ 2,108,253
Accrued vacation	\$ 672,482	\$ 792,254
Deferred revenue	\$ 137,578	\$ 84,396
Operating lease liability	\$ 1,237,831	\$ 923,451
Total liabilities	\$ 2,581,330	\$ 3,905,204
Net assets	\$ 39,896,675	\$ 36,027,661

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for FYEs 22–23 and 23–24

Statement of Income and Expense

	2023	2024
Income		
Grants	\$ 22,192,932	\$ 16,296,511
Contributions	\$ 9,732,701	\$ 10,112,812
Program service revenue	\$ 1,903,481	\$ 1,975,805
Investment income/(loss)	\$ 1,031,696	\$ 2,264,272
In-kind contributions	\$ 1,185,086	\$ 1,165,546
Other income	\$ 75,780	\$ 74,796
Total income	\$ 36,121,676	\$ 32,072,986
Expenses		
Program service expenses	\$ 21,892,548	\$ 30,798,299
Administrative expenses	\$ 1,935,554	\$ 3,030,165
Fundraising expenses	\$ 1,183,446	\$ 2,113,536
Total expenses	\$ 25,011,548	\$ 35,942,000
Revenue less expenses	\$ 11,110,128	\$ (3,869,014)

BOARD

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Associate Director of Programs

Raquel Trinidad, Director of Communications

List represents those who were staff members during fiscal years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

(Following) Community Water Conservation and Health Worker from Itonya.

“Together, we are a resilient community bound by a shared purpose, drawing strength from our collective efforts and from the relationships that sustain us.”

Photos: Cover Roberto Pedraza Ruiz; inside cover Freepik; 2 Ian Umeda; 4 Michael Judkins, Pexels; 5 Jessica Monroy Creative; 6 Amir Aziz; 7-8 Chantel Beam; 9 (raptor) Pamela-Rose Hawken, 9-10 (Ecove) Kate Sulzner; 10 (CalCAN) Kristine Reblero; 11 (Viva Sierra Gorda) Josué Rodríguez, Pexels, (WEA) Joshua Franzos; 12 Haley Czarnek; 13 Freepik; 15 Kate Sulzner.





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Print copies of this annual report are available upon request.