
Protecting cultural and biological diversity is central to solving the climate crisis

It's almost Earth Day! This week we are celebrating the interconnections between cultural diversity, biodiversity, and climate change. We are also highlighting Leydey Pech, true environmental hero from Mexico, and an inspiring community-led project to restore the Itombwe Rainforest in the Congo. We hope these stories inspire you to get outside, connect with the land and to continue your efforts to honor the Earth.

News Spotlight



Protecting cultural and biological diversity is central to solving the climate crisis

We often think of nature as separate from people, but in reality, some of the ecosystems that are the richest in biodiversity are also the richest in cultural diversity. Take the Amazon region. To a visitor this immense rainforest may seem wild and untamed, but it is home to over 400 unique Indigenous peoples. Each group has their own language, dialect, style of dress, art, and music. For thousands of years these communities have tended and actively encouraged the diversity of plants and animals in the Amazon. By some estimates, as many as 3 out of every 10 species on Earth are found here. It is the cultural and biological diversity of the Amazon, and other regions of the world like it, that has created one of the most powerful engines to help rebalance our global climate system. Watch the video!

Featured Hero



Leydy Pech

Pech was born and raised in Hopelchén, a city in the Mexican state of Campeche where the practice of beekeeping rare native bee species is an essential part of the Mayan culture going back 3,000 years. As a member of an agroforestry cooperative run exclusively by Mayan women, Pech led the charge in the fight against genetically modified soybeans, which wreaked havoc on the environment, killing native bees and contaminating the local honey. Due to her efforts, the country's Supreme Court canceled industrial planting permits by unanimously ruling that the government must consult Indigenous communities before planting GM soybeans. In 2020 Pech won the Goldman Prize for her work. She continues to urge world leaders to develop financial models that recognize human rights for Indigenous peoples and their ancestral heritage. [Read more](#) about her inspiring story.

Featured Project



Restoring the Itombwe Rainforest through Community Action in the Congo

The Itombwe Rainforest is one of the most biodiverse places on our planet. However, its wealth of natural resources and conflict in the region has led to massive land degradation. Local women have joined the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network, in partnership with Synergie des Associations Feminines du Congo, to protect the natural forests, reforest previous clear-cut areas, and educate their communities about sustainable livelihoods. A major forest restoration project is underway, spanning more than 1200 square kilometers. The first project of this kind in the area, the project aims to empower women, by creating income and leadership roles within their communities, all while bringing back and conserving the lush, diverse Itombwe Rainforest. Explore this project and others in the [One Earth Marketplace](#).

Thank you for your commitment to solving climate change and creating a vibrant future!

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