

# GREEN LEGACY

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**GREENPEACE**  
FUND



Laila Williams: Congo Forest Campaigner

## Protecting Ecosystems in Africa

by Laila Williams

For me, environmental activism is about protecting ecosystems in the largest sense, where people, land, and wildlife are inextricably connected. There's no place on Earth where this is truer than Africa.

Many global corporations see Africa as the next frontier in "development." These corporations strip the forests of ancient trees to build enormous palm oil plantations. We have seen the terrible impact of this kind of rapacious deforestation in Southeast Asia, and we want to make sure to prevent it entirely in Africa.

That's why we are drawing a line in the forest to stop corporations from moving forward with plans for palm oil plantations in the Congo Basin. There's one land development project proposed by the U.S.-based company Herakles Farms that is the poster child for unchecked destruction that could set the worst kind of precedent.

Despite vocal opposition from local residents and a court order to stop, Herakles Farms has begun to clear trees in the Southwest Region of Cameroon's forests. The intention is to build a palm oil plantation the size of Manhattan sandwiched between five protected areas.



Credit: © Greenpeace/Flip Verbelen

Forest Elephant in Central African Republic

Put simply, this is the wrong project in the wrong place. Thousands of people could lose their homes and livelihoods without any say in the matter. The destruction of forested land in this area would decimate an important wildlife corridor that allows rare animals to migrate into and around the Congo Basin. Moreover, razing hundreds of thousands of acres of forest would release millions of tons of carbon pollution into the atmosphere, further destabilizing our climate.

International investors and other corporations are keeping a close eye on this project, waiting to see how development in the Congo will move forward. We're putting a spotlight on this particular project to tell investors that the destruction of dense, lush forest—and of the communities that rely upon them—is not development.

### Inside:

- The Living Trust: Partner to a Will
- How Sound Is Your Estate Plan?
- Meet Nature Lover Carol Steinhart

# The Living Trust: Partner to a Will

In recent years, the revocable living trust has become a popular means of transferring property between generations.

The concept is quite simple. In creating a trust, you designate an artificial “owner” to hold property for your own benefit or the benefit of your loved ones. With the trust in place, your assets and/or income are managed according to the terms you set up.

And the property in the trust needn't pass through probate because the trust documents specify who will receive any property remaining at your death.

You can change or even terminate your revocable living trust at any time. The trust manages the assets in it during your lifetime and distributes them at death. All transfers occur privately, unlike bequests by a will.

## WHAT ABOUT A WILL?

Some people believe a living trust will reduce the costs and delays of transferring asset ownership, but that isn't always the case. In some situations, a will is more effective.

In any event, a living trust should never be considered an adequate substitute for an updated will, which still is needed to pass on any assets not included in a trust or other plans.

Remember that trusts function as your instructions dictate. If, for example, you have placed assets intended for charity into the trust, you must specify in the trust that the assets are to go to charity in order for a gift to be made.

If you have a living trust as part of your estate plan, consider using it to make charitable gifts. Your attorney can advise you, and we will be happy to provide a confidential consultation on ways in which you can use a trust to make gifts to Greenpeace Fund.

## Estate Planning and Philanthropy Can Be Partners

Keep in mind that your desire to continue to benefit your charitable interests can be a vital part of your plans. Charitable gifts to Greenpeace Fund can be included in your estate plan, sometimes with welcome benefits to you and your loved ones as well. Call or write for more information.

The purpose of this publication is to provide general gift, estate, and financial planning information. It is not intended as legal, accounting or other professional advice. For assistance in planning charitable gifts with tax and other implications, the services of appropriate advisors should be obtained. Consult an attorney for advice if your plans require revision of a will or other legal document. Tax deductions vary based on applicable federal discount rates, which can change on a monthly basis. Some opportunities may not be available in all states. ©MMXIII RFSCO, Inc. All Rights Reserved. NOA2-03

A rainbow is seen above the coastal rainforest of Cameroon. This forest, at the fringe of the Congo Basin, is a biodiversity hotspot, home to endangered species including chimpanzees and forest elephants.

# Does a Trust Save Taxes and Expenses?

It is a common misconception that creating a living trust will save taxes in ways a traditional will and testament cannot.

Keep in mind that your probate estate and taxable estate bear little relationship to each other. Primarily, the probate process establishes ownership of property and satisfies any debts owed.

Estate taxes apply to all property in a person's estate, regardless of whether the property was owned outright, in trust, or in any other form.

Placing property in a revocable living trust does not necessarily shield it from taxes.

## MAKING GIFTS BY TRUST

Charitable gifts and marital transfers—the two leading estate tax planning tools—can be included in wills, revocable living trusts, retirement plans, life insurance policies, or other means of distributing owned property.

# How Sound Is Your Estate Plan?

A good estate plan provides security should one of four financial hazards occur: outliving your assets, financial emergencies, or mental or physical disability. Is your plan in shape and up to date? Take this brief quiz.

1. Do you have a will or living trust to help distribute property at death?  
 Yes  No
2. Are all the people and organizations that are important to you mentioned in your plans?  
 Yes  No
3. Have you executed appropriate powers of attorney to allow someone you trust to act for you, should it become necessary?  
 Yes  No

4. Have you designated who is to receive your insurance and/or retirement plan assets?  
 Yes  No
5. Is your life insurance coverage adequate?  
 Yes  No
6. Have you made plans for contingent beneficiaries, should designated heirs not survive you?  
 Yes  No

If you answered **no** to any of the above questions, you may need to review your plans. Professional advisors who specialize in such matters can offer advice and help to coordinate various parts of your plan.

## Please Remember Greenpeace in Your Will

If you are ready to name Greenpeace in your will or other plans, here are a few simple facts to note. Our full legal name is:

**Greenpeace Fund, Inc.**

and our federal tax ID number is:

**95-3313195.**

The Bonobo Chimpanzee, one of humankind's closest relatives, only occurs in the rainforests of the Congo and is threatened with extinction from destruction of habitat.





# Meet Nature Lover Carol Steinhart

Forests, and the creatures that inhabit them, are very important to Carol Steinhart, a plant physiologist, avid bird watcher and active Greenpeace supporter.

Carol is particularly interested in cranes. She studied black-necked cranes in China, saw crowned cranes on a birding trip to South Africa and recently watched two whooping cranes close to her home.

Carol also has a special memory of seeing the pileated woodpecker. This woodpecker lives in large, mature hardwood forests and is the largest woodpecker in North America. Seeing one had been on Carol's "bucket list" since she was in the second grade. Two of these birds flew by her at eye level during her backpacking honeymoon through 134,000 acres of boreal and hardwood forest at Isle Royale National Park. "You never forget the first time you see one," Carol recalled.

Carol's other indelible memory of Isle Royale is seeing moose and hearing them mill around her tent at night. Wolves also live on the island and help keep the moose population in check, but

this relationship is threatened because wolves are dying out. The warming climate prevents their migration to and from the mainland over ice bridges that once formed, causing problems from inbreeding.

Another interest of Carol's is the pitcher plant, a carnivorous plant that traps and digests insects in its liquid-filled tube. "I'd seen them on botany field trips, but the ones on Isle Royale were spectacular," said Carol. Some species of pitcher plants are also found in Africa's endangered rainforests.

Being a scientist, environmentalist and nature lover, Carol knows the importance of protecting African rainforests. When she heard of Herakles Farms' palm oil project, and the widespread destruction of the African forests, Carol said simply and eloquently, **"We don't need to destroy Africa."** Carol's longtime support and commitment to Greenpeace, including a bequest in her estate plans, will help Greenpeace protect the last ancient forests of the earth.



Carol Steinhart

## For More Information...

*For more information on how your plans can balance your own personal and financial goals with a desire to help Greenpeace in a substantial way, please contact, without obligation:*



## GREENPEACE FUND

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\*Greenpeace Fund is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization set up to continue the vital work of Greenpeace by increasing public awareness and understanding of environmental issues through research, the media, and other educational programs. Greenpeace Fund also provides grants to support Greenpeace's work around the world for activities that are consistent with its mission.



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