Biodiversity for a Livable Climate

Restoring Ecosystems to Reverse Global Warming

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2023
A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Dedicated Allies,

You don’t often hear this, but 2023 was a good year – at least for Bio4Climate – thanks to you. So many more of you really stepped up through our classes, activities and donations to put nature at the heart of climate action.

But it was definitely not a good year for the planet. 2023 was not only the warmest year on record, but it is now clear that we exceeded 1.5 degrees C of additional global heating. Extreme weather, crop failures, heat-related deaths, planetary tipping points reached: it is not easy to deal with these realities every day as part of our work.

And yet, my first year as the Executive Director of Bio4Climate has also been full of excitement, agency, hope, and action. I have been delighted to discover a community of scientists, ranchers, farmers, and hands-on eco-restorationists from around the world who understand that the most powerful response to climate chaos is to restore our biosphere so that it can stabilize the climate.

And our voice is being heard!

*The New York Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor* are two of the biggest names to cover our Miyawaki forests, but not the only ones. The documentary film *Regenerating Life* is helping to spread the science and stories of our message around the world.

I hope that the pages of this report fill you with hope as well, whatever hope looks like for you. It may be too late to avoid 1.5 degrees of warming, but it is not too late to restore and rebuild our ecosystems and our relationship with those ecosystems. We continue to work together for what we love, no matter what the future holds.

With heartfelt appreciation,

BECK MORDINI
Executive Director
PLANTING FORESTS, RESTORING NATURE

Our leadership role in bringing the Miyawaki method to the Northeastern US continues to expand. With an emphasis on reaching young people in underserved communities, we worked with community partners to plant our third and fourth Miyawaki Forests at schools in Natick and Somerville. These mini forests increase biodiversity, water retention, cooling, and access to the wonder of nature for neighborhoods in need of environmental justice.

- 3,000 students will benefit from the presence of these two forests.
- Over 200 volunteers have been involved in the planting, maintenance, and monitoring across four mini-forests.
- We held 15 presentations and consultations with organizations, schools, companies, and community groups.

Look for more forest plantings in 2024 as well as new community programs focused on native plants, soil, and water.

NATURE HEALS

“As a parent I’m always trying to think about how we involve our kids in taking steps towards a better climate so that it doesn’t become this big thing with anxiety but we feel engaged in solutions.”

– Stephanie Cardon
LIFTING UP VOICES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Our collaboration with the Post Carbon Institute brought together nearly 40 speakers from frontline communities on the Redesigning Our Communities conference tour. These conferences were held in Los Angeles, CA (January 21), Cleveland, OH (March 25), and Corvallis, OR (November 18).

In addition to wisdom from national speakers such as Richard Heinberg, these live-streamed events engaged 55 community partners, hosted 26 Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) presenters, and partnered with 28 community organizations that work in underserved and BIPOC communities.

The series could not have been successful without the 2 years of dedicated work by our event planning team of volunteers including Philip Bogdonoff, Glenn Gall, Jim Laurenson, Beck Mordini, and Shannon Scrofano; with additional support from Maya Dutta, Julia Eden, Cindy Laniewski, Jim Laurie, John Minkle, Tania Roa, Jon Schull and Natalie Wermers; and our partnership with Richard Heinberg and the entire team at the Post Carbon Institute.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TAKES CENTER STAGE

“Phenomenal job! Love how so many voices were woven into a coherent narrative. Superb!”

- Olé Ersson

Co-Founder, Kailash Ecovillage, Speaker and Partner at the Oregon Event
DEEP INQUIRY AND EDUCATION

Education about nature’s solutions has always been at the core of Biodiversity for a Livable Climate’s mission. Deep dives into the issues build understanding and create community. In 2023, we offered:

- **Biodiversity 8: Symbiosis in Evolution** taught by staff ecologist Jim Laurie, March 1 - May 12
- **Ecological Economics 2: Finding our Way to a New Understanding** taught by ecological economist Dr. Fred Jennings, April 23 - May 22
- **Sustainability and Humankind’s Dilemma: Life on a Tough New Planet** taught by Dr. Nancy Lee Wood, Professor of Sociology, April 21 - May 26
- **Biodiversity 9: Deep Dive Transformation to a Holistic Perspective** taught by staff ecologist Jim Laurie, September 20 - December 13
- **A New Climate Story** taught by Christopher Haines, AIA author of *Heat Planet*, November 13 - December 18

BY THE NUMBERS

5 courses
42 classes
2,000+ hours of learning

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

CYNTHIA CONTIE
YULIA ROTHENBERG
ANITA ROY DOBBS

THESE CLASSES ARE ENRICHED BY YOUR HARD WORK!
REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

In 2023, Biodiversity for a Livable Climate’s message about nature’s ability to cool the planet continued to reach more and more people. In addition to our weekly “Featured Creature” emails, our national profile was raised by feature stories in The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor, and The Boston Globe.

Tiny Forests With Big Benefits

Native plants crowded onto postage-stamp-size plots have been delivering environmental benefits around the world — and, increasingly, in the U.S.

The new feature length film, Regenerating Life, features many voices and ideas informed by Biodiversity for a Livable Climate’s work. We were thrilled to host the Boston Premiere at Tufts University before the film was released to the public at the end of the year.

Expert panelists at the premiere included the filmmaker, John Feldman, and insights from Dr. Anastassia Makarieva, Judith Schwartz, Dr. Tom Goreau, and Dan Kittredge. The panel was moderated by Didi Pershouse.
Our role as a field catalyst – to spark understanding and direct action – is fueled by the many ways we spread the word. In addition to our weekly email, quarterly newsletters and social media, 2023 brought a few new milestones.

Director of Regenerative Projects, Maya Dutta, gave nearly 20 presentations in 2023 to organizations including the Lesley Community of Scholars, MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Cambridge Community Television, and Aspetuck Land Trust.

The redesign of our website (bio4climate.org) put our message front and center with abundant resources for nearly every aspect of nature-based solutions. People are clicking more links and staying longer on web pages than ever before.

You can now add your own comments to our “Life Saves the Planet” blog and create a conversation with other bio4climate advocates.

I am grateful to all the students in our Biodiversity Deep Dive courses which averaged 35 participants per class in 2023. We were also very honored by zoom visits from authors Kristin Ohlson, Hannah Lewis, Judy Schwartz, & Fred Provenza who shared their thoughts and hearts in the often intense discussions with our growing "Symbiosis Team."
LIFE SAVES THE PLANET

Life Saves the Planet is a lecture series co-hosted with GBH Forum Network and available to public radio stations nationally. Bringing new science and a deeper understanding of how our planet works is one of the goals of this series. As John Perlin reminds us,

**Humanity needs trees more than ever before. But this time intact.**

The ability of trees to remove CO\textsuperscript{2} from the atmosphere and sequester it safely in soils and roots is now well known. But the role of trees in keeping the Earth temperate by emitting water into the atmosphere, reducing heat and supplying rain to distant areas, cannot be underestimated in a world where drought and warming increase rapidly. Featured events in 2023 included:

- **Developing Food Resilience for Hard Times Ahead** with Ridge Shinn and Lynne Pledger (January 26, 2023)
- **Dammed in a Hot Chaotic World** with Steve Hawley and David James Duncan (March 30, 2023)
- **A Forest Journey: The Role of Trees in the Fate Of Civilizations** with John Perlin and Paul Hughes (April 26, 2023)
- **Remembering Our Relationships with Forests - Modern and Ancient Agroforestry** with William Wildcat (Coakí) and Jessica Alvarez Parfrey (May 25, 2023)
- **An Inspiring Grassroots Ecorestoration Approach: Sahel Ecovillage Communities** with Dr. Ousmane Pame, Katrina Jeffries, Dr. Marie Nazon, and Dave Damm-Luhr (July 27, 2023)
- **Regenerating Life** with John Feldman and Judith D. Schwartz (September 27, 2023)
- **Are We Doing Solar Right?** with Michelle Manion, Jessica Rempel, and Beck Mordini (November 9, 2023)

Starting clockwise from the left, Dr. David Damm-Luhr, Dr. Marie Nazon, Paula Phipps (moderator), Dr. Ousmane Pame, and Katrina Jeffries, share their wisdom in the episode, **An Inspiring Grassroots Ecorestoration Approach: Sahel Ecovillage Communities** (July 27, 2023).
INSPIRING YOUTH FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Putting hands in the dirt and roots in the ground is inspiring for everyone, but is particularly important for young people. In the face of climate anxiety and hopelessness, we create ways to make a concrete difference. Our model of restoring nature to stabilize the climate is a path to action this is not waiting for political or corporate compliance, but is being done right now, by many hands around the world.

The 2023 cohort of our Global Youth Ambassador Program included young leaders from India, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, and the United States. Our South African intern, Linsey de Jager, has been developing a report on investment opportunities to regreen South Africa.

College students at Boston University, Lesley University, and Bristol Community College were among those who learned about eco-restoration with us.

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHAMPIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY

In October, 2023, farm owners Tim Jones & Chie Morizuka, Bio4Climate supporters and friends, held a Field Day at their farm in Hokkaido, Japan.
Global restoration of natural water cycles is essential for biodiversity and climate restoration. Zuzka Mulkerin is the Program Director of our Voices of Water program. The international team of scientists includes Michal Kravčík, Anastassia Makarieva, and Jan Pokorný. Work in 2023 included:

- Hosted the landmark webinar with Anastassia Makarieva, Global Cooling from Plant Transpiration: Mechanisms and Uncertainties
- Co-authored the Water for Climate Healing - a New Water Paradigm White Paper presented at the UN Water Conference by the authors of the New Water Paradigm.
- Facilitated and coordinated Bio4climate meetings during the 2023 UN Water Conference with Michal Kravčík, Rajendra Singh, Mooyoung Han, and Martin Kováč. The meetings were arranged by Zuzka Mulkerin, and attended by Maya Dutta, Sue Butler, and Jon Schull.
- Co-authored multiple chapters in A Blueprint for Urgent Action: Therefore Choose Life, a document prepared in cooperation with Bio4climate and the EcoRestoration Alliance.
- Coordinated several meetings with the authors of the Water for Climate Recovery - a New Water Paradigm.
- Worked on the book Beat the Heat! The Climate Solution, with Dr. Jan Pokorný.

As co-founders of the EcoRestoration Alliance (ERA) and members of the Steering Committee, we actively connect with over 200 scientists and regenerative activists around the world. The joint white paper, A Blueprint for Urgent Action, serves as a comprehensive collection of nature-based best practices to cool the planet and protect biodiversity. Together we are pursuing land restoration projects in the US and around the world.

Bio4Climate is also a Founding Partner of the Center for Regeneration and serves as a member of the Center’s Steering Committee.
FUNDRAISING PROGRESS

2023: $311,959.00
2022: $316,561.00
2021: $248,334.00

Cash In

2023: $281,969.00
2022: $296,361.00
2021: $248,334.00

DONORS AND TRANSACTIONS

Total Individual Donors

2023: 618
2022: 470
2021: 262

Total Number of Transactions

2023: 1604
2022: 1425
2021: 1323
WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR MAJOR DONORS AND COMMITTED PARTNERS WHO GAVE $1,000-$50,000 IN 2023

Barbara Bacon
Ann Barrett and Jeff Hicks
Paul Barringer
Philip Bogdonoff
Susan Farist Butler
Christian and Shelley Erickson
in loving memory of Lynus Erickson
John Feldman, Hummingbird Films
Franklin Philanthropic Foundation
Chris Fritsch
Katharine Harkins and David Finn
Doug and Nancy Beall Hendren
Joyce Keeley
Rebecca Ichord
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Loretto Community
Tom Wallace Lyons
Mathworks
Maryanne Mott
Ranganath Nayak
Overbrook - NY Community Trust
Paula Phipps
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Steve Rogers
Sacred Heart Charitable Fund
Judith Schwartz
DeCourcy Squire
Philip West
Marsh and Kay Youngbluth
Anonymous Donors
TRIBUTES FROM OUR DONORS

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Heidi Armonda  
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Diane Bennett  
Lynus Erickson  
Janice Lambert  
Clare McGuire  
William Rollow
As a monthly donor, speaker, and conference attendee since this organization’s inception, I have witnessed firsthand the far-reaching impacts that Bio4Climate has made in the climate, ecorestoration and regenerative agriculture communities.

There was no one else making the connections between climate and biodiversity like Bio4Climate did 10 years ago. It was the organization I was looking for! Many others who were seeking nature’s solutions to climate change were as well.

As a result, lesser-known thought leaders have now become connected, enabling them to lead land restoration initiatives, reversing climate impacts and restoring food, rain, and livelihoods in communities around the world.

Glenn Gall, Educator
Northeast Ohio Earth Restoration

FROM OUR DONORS

THANK YOU!

For helping to spread the word about nature's Climate Heroes!

"It is that range of biodiversity that we must care for - the whole thing - rather than just one or two stars." - David Attenborough

Bio4Climate.org

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank you to Marjorie Roswell for sponsoring the talented illustrator and cartoonist Tom Chalkley. His art helped us communicate key messages throughout the year.
THANK YOU FROM LOUISE MITCHELL

We deeply appreciate the donations of time our speakers and moderators, partners and sponsors, and our planning team and other volunteers gave to our series on Redesigning Our Communities - Thank You.

It has been a privilege to feature such incredible community and national leaders from around the country. These leaders are blazing new trails and establishing new models for life after fossil fuels. It is vital for us to follow them, support their work, and learn from them as they lead the way.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

A big thank you to our program volunteers: Aamrah Sayed, Cindy Laniewski, Daniela Barón Cruz, Deborah Fortson, Ed Barkley, Glenn Gall, Helen Snively, Jill Smith, Jim Laurenson, Julia Eden, Linsey de Jager, Luca Kunce, Maiyim Baron, Mike Conway, Natalie Wermers, Nathan Wolf, Nour Abdul-hadi, Penelope Holland, Sara Baitinger, Shannon Joyce, Shannon Scrofano, Tanvi Narvekar, Yaroslava Nikulina, Yewon Jeong, and Yulia Rothenberg

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!


THANK YOU FROM MAYA DUTTA

I am so honored and grateful to keep expanding our rewilding work across the region and the country. Working with others and watching the forests that we plant and steward grow and transform these settings gives me so much hope and drives me forward in working toward a greener, cooler, healthier future.
STAFF

Beck Mordini  Executive Director
Maya Dutta  Director of Regenerative Projects
Jim Laurie  Restoration Ecologist
John Minkle  Information Technology
Louise Mitchell  Outreach Programs Manager
Paula Phipps  Associate Director
David Creech  Development
Bill Myatt  Development

OUR TEAM WOULD NOT BE COMPLETE WITHOUT THESE KEY VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE HELPED LEAD FOR MANY YEARS:

Jed Katch, Director of Education
Fred Jennings, Ecological Economist
Christopher Haines, author of Heat Planet
BOARD MEMBERS

Philip Bogdonoff, Board President
Stephan Rogers, Board Clerk
Vicki Benjamin, Board Treasurer
Sue Farist Butler
John Lambert (joined in 2024)
Nancy Lee Wood
Sharon McGregor

Special Thanks to our Advisory Board
Tom Goreau, Pallavi Mande, Jeff Masters, Fred Provenza, Bill Reed, Judith Schwartz, Ridge Shinn, Helen D. Silver, Richard Teague, and John Todd.
Brent Blackwelder’s passing is deeply felt, and his contributions will be dearly missed.

FROM PHILIP BOGDONOFF, BOARD PRESIDENT

As board president, I am especially grateful to all those who supported us (often working behind the scenes) to facilitate our organization’s graceful transition from our founding director, Adam Sacks, to our new Executive Director, Beck Mordini, as well as to help her and our staff accomplish another remarkable year with Miyawaki forest plantings, a film premiere, yet more fascinating Featured Creatures, classes diving into Nature’s amazing evolutionary accomplishments, supporting the growth of the EcoRestoration Alliance, and reaching new communities around the world.
Look for more about #NatureCools in the coming months.
PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

We are grateful to these organizations for their partnership in our mission:

We are grateful to the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to our 2023 Redesigning Our Communities series:

**Conference Series Co-Host:** Post Carbon Institute  
**Keynote Speaker:** Richard Heinberg, Post Carbon Institute


**Speakers and Moderators:** Aleigh Lewis, Alison Frazzini, Andrew Millison, Angela Sayles, Artemio Paz, Arthur Shavers, Aura Vasquez, Briann Battle, Charlie Southward, Chris McClellan, Clare Strawn, Coakí, Elijah Willis, Glenn Gall, Ismail Samad, Jamel Rahkeera, Jennifer Eisele, Jenny Pell, Jeremy Raphael Ezra, Jessica Alvarez-Parfrey, Jessica Vallejo, Jim Laurie, John Wright, Jon Schull, Julia Eden, Kelly Clark, Laughing Helen Farrell, Lois Arkin, Malcolm Hoover, Marc White, Mari Keating, Marianne Wyne, Matthew Teutimez, Maya Dutta, Melanie Carlone, Mikki Smith, Monica Ibacache, Moses Massenburg, Nathan Lou, Ole Ersson, Philip Bogdonoff, Ras Solo (aka Benjamin Simmons), Sara Continenza, Shannon Scrofano, Tamra Duncan, Tania Roa, and Zuzka Mulkerin

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