

An aerial photograph of a tropical island. The top half of the image shows clear, turquoise water with a sandy beach and a few people. The middle section is dominated by a dense, lush green forest. The bottom half shows more turquoise water with some darker patches, possibly coral reefs. The text 'Mongabay' is centered at the top, '2023' is centered below the forest, and 'Annual Report' is centered at the bottom.

# Mongabay

2023

Annual Report

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# From the Founder and CEO

We live in a world grappling with complex environmental challenges. As a journalist, I've always believed in the power of words and stories to make a difference. Journalism is not just about reporting facts; it's about shining a light on issues that are often hidden in the shadows.

In the context of environmental crises, journalism plays a crucial role. By raising awareness, informing key decision-makers, improving transparency and accountability, and inspiring action, journalism acts as a catalyst for change. Mongabay's strategy is to assemble a collaborative journalism network at national, regional and global scales to help meet the challenge during this pivotal decade.

Our journalism is most impactful when audiences understand new information and use it to make better decisions. In this way, each of the tens of thousands of stories we've published is an opportunity to have an impact from the individual level, such as a personal choice, to as big as a societal response to halt imminent deforestation.

When I started Mongabay, my goal was simple: to inform people about tropical rainforests and inspire them to care about the fate of these ecosystems. In short, I wanted to make an impact, not money. And I quickly discovered that I'm not alone in this because sharing knowledge through stories can inform, inspire and sustain effective action worldwide.

But I certainly never imagined the scale of growth that would unfold over the next 25 years and the impacts that we would collectively achieve.

Mongabay has expanded well beyond a guy with a laptop writing about tropical forests. Today, we have more than 100 staff across nearly 30 countries and 1,000-plus contributors around the world who report from Nature's frontline. As a global newsroom, Mongabay makes science accessible on a wide range of environmental topics and elevates the voices and knowledge of people directly impacted by environmental change.

From this vantage point, we can see that addressing the global environmental crises of climate

change and biodiversity loss is daunting. We are bombarded with alarming statistics and predictions that often lead to despair. 2023 was the hottest year on record, there are severe droughts from the Amazon to Sumatra, and species are dying out at a rate at least 1,000 times the norm. These numbers are staggering and can easily lead to feelings of hopelessness and inaction.

Mongabay documents this degradation and destruction daily. It can take a toll. In fact, in the past, I was told that "Mongabay is the most depressing site on the internet." However, every problem presents an opportunity for a solution. Responding to the planetary emergency necessitates sustained and collective action worldwide premised on accurately conveyed facts.

At Mongabay, we are increasingly using solutions journalism as a mechanism to approach these environmental crises through the lens of potential solutions. We need stories that go beyond the doom and gloom to explore effective, innovative strategies that make a real difference.

Hope and optimism are powerful motivators, and maintaining them in the face of daunting environmental challenges is crucial because they fuel the creativity required for new technologies, strategies and approaches.

An example that demonstrates how journalism can directly contribute to positive change in the world comes from Gabon, after Mongabay reported on the plight of the Massaha community, whose ancestral forest was slated to be logged by a Chinese company.

Our story rallied public awareness of the situation, garnering the attention of the country's environment minister, who visited the site and revoked the company's permit, setting in motion the forest's permanent protection. The decision was important because it was the first time an area will be declared protected in Gabon at the request of the resident community.

Now in our 25th year, I'm more optimistic than ever before about our capacity to contribute to real-world progress, whether it's inspiring action or shedding light on the often uncomfortable truths that are necessary for change.

As we continue to tell these stories, let us remember that there is no wealth, no life truly worth living on our planet without the abundance of nature.

We, as journalists, as storytellers, as guardians of truth, have an elemental role in supporting efforts to preserve life on Earth as we know it. Let's embrace this responsibility with hope, courage and relentless determination.

*Rhett Butler*

Rhett Butler  
Mongabay Founder and CEO

*"One of the things that I and others so appreciate is that Mongabay not only highlights the problems in the world, but also discusses solutions from the ground up. Congratulations Mongabay!" - **Jane Goodall** said in response to Mongabay winning the 2023 Biophilia Award for Environmental Communication from the BBVA Foundation.*



## 2023 Highlights

With our 2023-2030 Strategic Plan as a roadmap, the organization expanded into new geographies and deepened its commitment to independent environmental news through innovative storytelling and capacity building around the world.

**Africa expansion:** In late 2023, Mongabay launched a bilingual news bureau, [Mongabay Africa](#), to cover environmental and conservation news across the continent in French and English. This expansion aligns with Mongabay's efforts to provide credible independent journalism, make science accessible, elevate voices impacted by environmental change, and serve a diverse audience with free news in various languages and formats.

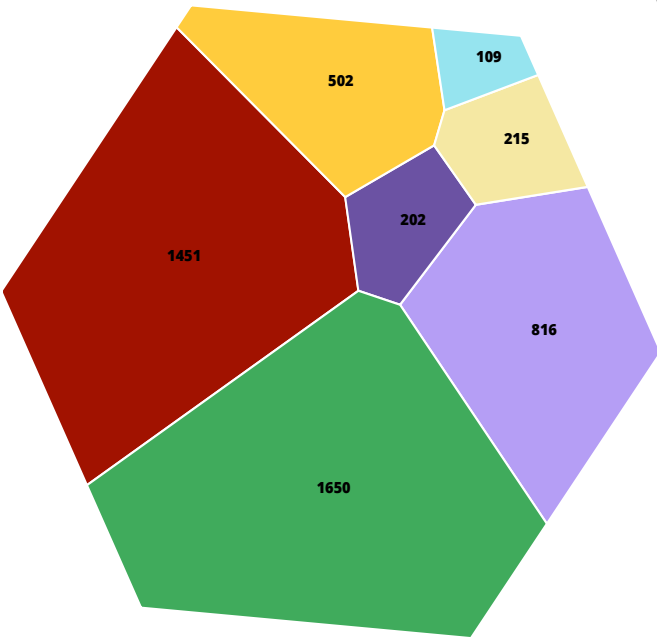
**Inspiring impacts:** Throughout the year, Mongabay's coverage informed decisions and inspired significant action. For instance, the Council of Ethics of the Norwegian state pension announced its recommendation to exclude investments in the Chinese state-owned multinational Power Construction Corporation of China Ltd. due to its association with a dam in Indonesia that threatens the world's rarest great ape, the [Tapanuli orangutan](#). The ethics council concluded the project will "have a destructive and permanent impact on the environment, which will pose a serious threat to the survival of this orangutan species as well as other critically endangered species." The council's investigation cited five different Mongabay articles on the case.

**Mobilizing a global network of communicators:** Enabling career opportunities within the environmental journalism sector, Mongabay's staff grew by nearly 30%, which bolstered our Africa team as well as our research, investigations, visual media, and Indigenous news desks. Furthermore, Mongabay supported early-career journalists by offering three internships in addition to 12 fellowships with participants from 13 countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Suriname and Venezuela.

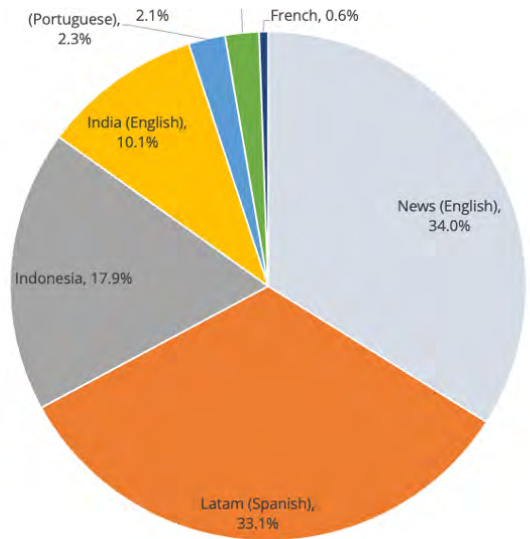
**Award-winning reporting:** The quality and impact of Mongabay's reporting was recognized with a number of awards in 2023, including the prestigious [Biophilia Award for Environmental Communication](#). Mongabay was recognized for its "outstanding track record" in communicating issues related to nature and biodiversity, especially in countries in the Global South.

# Mongabay by the Numbers

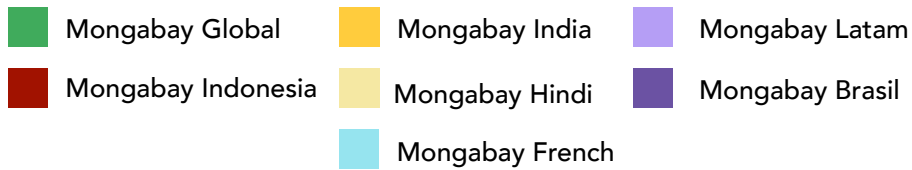
In 2023, Mongabay published more than 6,500 articles and videos in seven languages. Collectively, Mongabay served an average of some 6 million people per month on its websites.



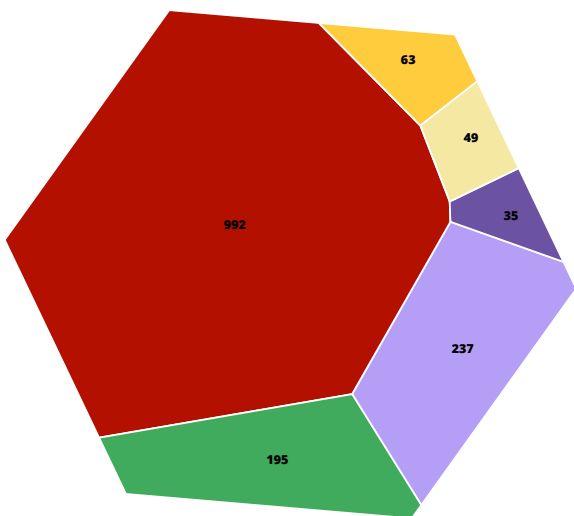
**ARTICLE PRODUCTION**



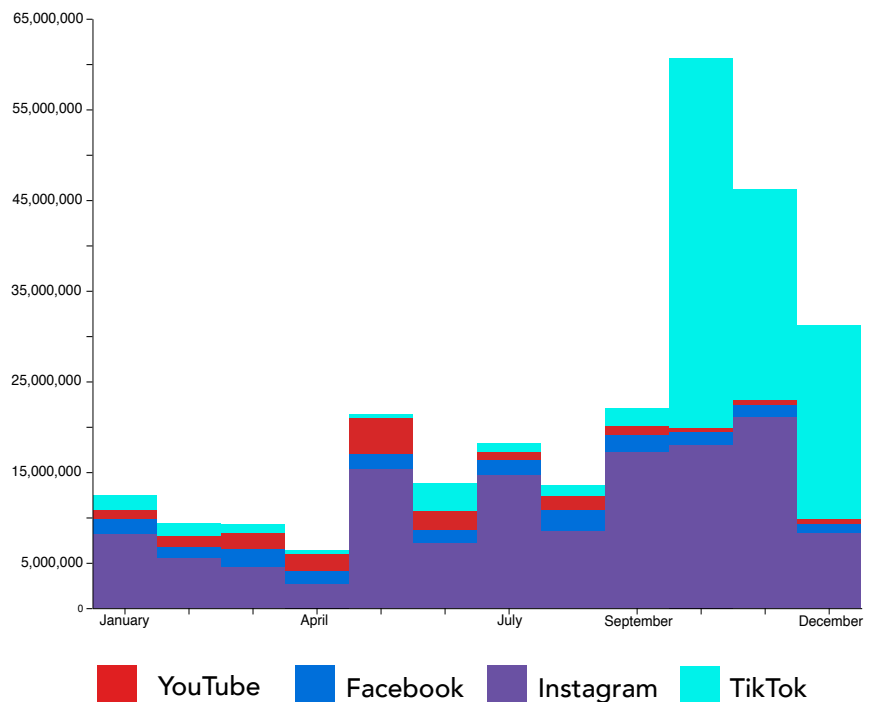
**WEBSITE AUDIENCE**



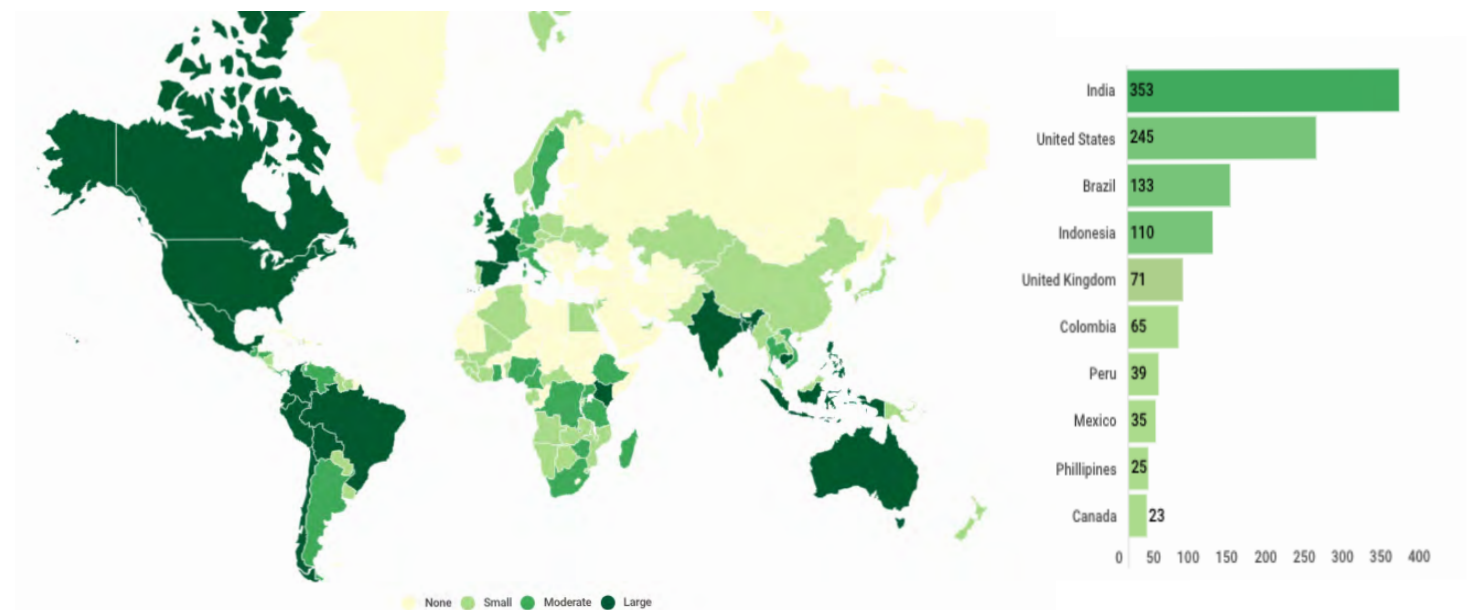
The more than 1,500 new videos Mongabay published in 2023 were viewed over 200 million times. TikTok emerged as a meaningful channel for the first time in Indonesia.



**VIDEO PRODUCTION**



# Staff, Contributors, Board and Advisers



The map shows all of Mongabay's staff and contributors by their country. A small presence is under 5 contributors, while a moderate presence is between 5 and 10. A large presence is more than 10 people. The chart shows the top 10 countries where Mongabay journalists are present.

## Staff

### **Abhaya Raj Joshi**

Staff Writer - Nepal, Mongabay

### **Abhishyant Kidangoor**

Staff Writer and Video Producer, Mongabay

### **Abu Siddique**

Bangladesh Editor, Mongabay

### **Aditi Tandon**

Production Editor, Mongabay India

### **Aimee Gabay**

Staff Writer - Indigenous News, Mongabay

### **Akhyari Hananto (Arry)**

Multimedia Manager, Mongabay Indonesia

### **Akita Arum Verselita**

Data Analyst, Mongabay Indonesia

### **Alana Linderoth**

Senior Program Associate, Mongabay

### **Alejandro Prescott-Cornejo**

Marketing Associate, Mongabay

### **Alex Shaw**

Reporter and Researcher, Mongabay

### **Alexa Vélez Suazo**

Managing Editor, Mongabay Latam

### **Alexandra Popescu**

English Editor - Latin America, Mongabay

### **Alexandre de Santi**

English Editor - Brazil, Mongabay

### **Andrés Alegría**

Graphics Editor, Mongabay

### **Antonio José Paz Cardona**

Senior Contributing Editor, Mongabay Latam

### **Arathi Menon**

Senior Staff Writer, Mongabay India

### **Ashoka Mukpo**

Features Writer, Mongabay

### **Astrid Arellano**

Staff Writer, Mongabay Latam

### **Basten Gokkon**

Senior Staff Writer, Mongabay

### **Beverley Choo**

Foundation Relations Assistant, Mongabay

### **Carolyn Cowan**

Staff Writer, Mongabay

### **Dalia Medina**

Outreach Editor, Mongabay Latam

### **Daniel Pye**

Investigations Editor, Mongabay

### **David Akana**

Program Manager, Mongabay Africa

### **David Brown**

Editor, Mongabay Kids

### **David Martin**

Partnerships Director, Mongabay

### **David Tarazona**

Editor, Mongabay Latam

### **Desire Nimubona**

Africa Editor, Mongabay

### **Dilrukshi Handunnetti**

Staff Writer, Mongabay

### **Dora Montero**

Fellowship Editor, Mongabay Latam

### **Elizabeth Claire Alberts**

Senior Staff Writer - Oceans, Mongabay

### **Elodie Toto**

Staff Writer, Mongabay Africa

### **Erik Hoffner**

Editor and Content Strategist, Mongabay

### **Gerry Flynn**

Features Writer, Mongabay

### **Glenn Scherer**

Editor-at-large, Mongabay

### **S. Gopikrishna Warriar**

Managing Editor, Mongabay India

**Hagen Desa**

Video Coordinator, Mongabay India

**Hans Nicholas Jong**

Senior Staff Writer, Mongabay

**Hayat Indriyanto**

Senior Copy Editor, Mongabay

**Hidayaturohman Suri**

Multimedia Producer, Mongabay Indonesia

**Isabel Esterman**

Managing Editor - SE Asia, Mongabay

**John Cannon**

Features Writer, Mongabay

**Julia Lemos Lima**

Video Coordinator, Mongabay

**Karen Coates**

Fellowship Editor, Mongabay

**Karla Mendes**

Features Writer, Mongabay

**Kartik Chandramouli**

Digital Editor, Mongabay India

**Kundan Pandey**

Contributing Editor, Mongabay India

**Latoya Abulu**

Editor - Indigenous News, Mongabay

**Laurel Sutherland**

Staff Writer - Indigenous News, Mongabay

**Liz Kimbrough**

Staff Writer, Mongabay

**Lucia Torres**

Digital Editor, Mongabay

**Lusia Febriana Arumingtyas**

Youth Outreach Officer, Mongabay Indonesia

**Maichue Khang**

Operations Manager, Mongabay

**Malavika Vyawahare**

Staff Writer, Mongabay Africa

**Manish Kumar**

Staff Writer, Mongabay India

**Manish Mishra**

Assistant Editor, Mongabay India

**María Ángeles Salazar**

Content Production Manager, Mongabay

**Maria Isabel Torres**

Program Manager, Mongabay Latam

**Matthew Boyer**

VP of Strategic Initiatives, Mongabay

**Maxwell Radwin**

Staff Writer, Mongabay

**Mayra Castillo**

Content Coordinator, Mongabay Latam

**Megan Strauss**

Editor, Mongabay Kids

**Michael DiGirolamo**

Audience Engagement Associate, Mongabay

**Michelle Carrere**

Contributing Editor, Mongabay Latam

**Morgan Erickson-Davis**

Senior Editor, Mongabay

**Nanditha Chandraprakash**

Content Coordinator, Mongabay

**Niko Dwi Wicaksana**

Multimedia Producer, Mongabay Indonesia

**Nivetha Muthumani**

Accountant, Mongabay

**Nur Rochmani Fajar (Jay)**

Senior Writer & Editor, Mongabay Indonesia

**Philip Jacobson**

Senior Editor - SE Asia, Mongabay

**Priyanka Shankar**

Content Coordinator, Mongabay India

**Rahmadi Rahmad**

Senior Writer & Editor, Mongabay Indonesia

**Rajesh Chand**

Bookkeeper, Mongabay

**Rebecca Kessler**

Senior Editor- Oceans, Mongabay

**Renuka Kulkarni**

Editorial Assistant, Mongabay India

**Rhett A. Butler**

Founder and CEO, Mongabay

**Richard Romero**

Multimedia Producer, Mongabay Latam

**Ridzki Sigit**

Program Manager, Mongabay Indonesia

**Romina Castagnino**

Associate Digital Editor & Host, Mongabay

**Rohini Alamgir**

Online Community Manager, Mongabay

**Sahana Ghosh**

Contributing Editor, Mongabay India

**Salman Ghani**

Financial Controller, Mongabay

**Sandhya Sekar**

Program Manager, Mongabay India

**Sandy Watt**

Video Producer, Mongabay

**Sapariah Saturi**

Managing Editor, Mongabay Indonesia

**Saumitra Shinde**

Social Media Coordinator, Mongabay India

**Shailesh Shrivastava**

Contributing Editor - Hindi, Mongabay India

**Shreyansh Budhia**

Prospect Research Analyst, Mongabay

**Simrin Sirur**

Staff Writer, Mongabay India

**Sonal Alvares**

Development Assistant, Mongabay

**Sonam Lama**

Staff Writer - Indigenous News, Mongabay

**Suchibrata Borah**

Program Coordinator, Mongabay

**Terna Gyuse**

Managing Editor, Mongabay Africa

**Thelma Gómez**

Senior Editor, Mongabay Latam

**Vanessa Romo**

Research Editor, Mongabay Latam

**Willie Shubert**

Global Program Director, Mongabay

**Xavier Bartaburu**

Contributing Editor, Mongabay Brasil

**Yvette Sierra Praeli**

Senior Staff Writer, Mongabay Latam

## Board of Directors

**Holt Thrasher**

Board Chairperson and Treasurer

**Debby Ng****Jeanne Sedgwick****Katie LaFleur****Kristin Rechberger****Mark Cappellano****Michael Dye****Peter Riggs****Robin Martin****Steve McCormick****Steve Rhee****Tim Kelly**

## Advisory Panel

**Aida Greenbury**

Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE

Dr. Peter Raven





## Global News Program

In 2023, Mongabay's global English newsroom produced 1,650 articles from around the world and inspired impact at both the individual and societal level. Hundreds of readers shared that because of the awareness and information gained by reading Mongabay, they changed behavior from consumer habits to philanthropic and investment decisions. The information Mongabay made available was used on numerous occasions by government officials and stakeholders to inform their decisions and stance on globally significant issues, from large carbon credit deals to conservation aid allocation and project assessment.

The breadth and depth of coverage kept pace with Mongabay's expanded newsroom and increased emphasis on covering the intersection of Indigenous peoples and conservation, oceans, fisheries, and planetary boundaries. [Solutions journalism](#) was another major theme in 2023. While much of the narrative around conservation tends to focus on the what's wrong, the presence of noteworthy successes and promising practices, such as [agroecology](#), [nature-based climate solutions](#), landscape regeneration and [rewilding](#), are equally important to bring into media narratives and build awareness of so that they can be recognized and adopted more widely.

### IMPACT STORY

A group of [U.S. senators](#) cited Mongabay's reporting on the socioenvironmental damages of nickel mining in a letter to top-level cabinet officials raising their concerns about a potential critical minerals trade agreement between Indonesia and the U.S..

Mongabay conveyed its original stories in multiple formats, with data journalism generating more interactive visuals, maps and graphics in 2023. This multimedia storytelling continued to mature with more than 200 videos and 50 podcast episodes produced. Mongabay produced new episodes of popular shows with an on-the-ground investigation in Cambodia featured in a [Chasing Deforestation](#), a [Consumed](#) episode on wheat that explored the crop's role in the politics of planetary boundaries, and a [Mongabay Explains](#) episode on bottom trawling.

The quality of the news produced in 2023 was recognized throughout the year with various awards. In addition to the prestigious 2023 Biophilia Award for Environmental Communication, Mongabay journalists were honored with awards from the Asian American Journalists Association, Society of Environmental Journalism, Society of Publishers in Asia, SEAL Awards, Canadian Online Publishing Awards, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and TRACE International, among others.



## Mongabay Indonesia

Mongabay Indonesia produced a steady stream of news to fill a national and international news gap with more than 1,360 articles and 900 videos. Mongabay Indonesia's on-the-ground reporting covered sensitive and often underreported environmental topics, such as the impacts of industrial palm oil and natural resource extraction, climate change, biodiversity, and fisheries.

Mining emerged as an editorial priority for Mongabay Indonesia in 2023 as the demand for minerals grew in support of renewable energy technologies like electric cars and solar panels. Mongabay Indonesia closely reported on [nickel mining](#) in particular, which the Indonesian government has billed as a push toward clean energy. However, nickel mining has resulted in widespread environmental degradation, including deforestation and river pollution, not to mention human rights and health implications. Mongabay Indonesia's series on mining in North Maluku and its impact on local communities and the environment there has been the subject of multiple studies and used by national and international NGOs and local governments. Mongabay Indonesia also was the first media outlet to provide complete coverage of the impact of mining on Indigenous people and local communities of Tobelo on Halmahera Island.

Another 2023 focus for Mongabay Indonesia was on improving youth access to news through a variety of outreach strategies and opportunities. In June, Mongabay Indonesia hired its first Youth Outreach Officer, dedicated to cultivating the next generation of news users. Under this initiative, Mongabay Indonesia provided trainings to youth groups, internships, and mentored more than 50 students on climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

### IMPACT STORY

An article [mapping mining conflicts](#) in Gorontalo is being used as a reference by Gorontalo State University (UNG), which enables this article to also be considered a source of information for the governments of Gorontalo province in general and Pohuwato district in particular in efforts to resolve land conflicts that occur in community-owned and company-owned gold mining areas.



## Mongabay Latam

In Latin America, Mongabay Latam stepped up its journalism with more data-led reporting in a region considered the most dangerous in the world for environmental activism and increasingly pressured by the rise of illegal economies that threaten fragile ecosystems and Indigenous peoples. Mongabay Latam published more than 800 stories, 230 videos and 40 podcasts, diversifying the distribution of its content across multiple social media platforms and through republishing partnerships with more than 50 media outlets in 15 countries.

### IMPACT STORY

A [report](#) on deforestation caused by Mennonite colonies in Indigenous territories spurred the Colombian Congress to discuss the issue during session. The National Land Authority confirmed that the territories of the Sikuani Indigenous people had been illegally acquired, as Mongabay reported. The authorities requested that these lands be returned to the state and titled in favor of the Sikuani.

Collaborative and cross-border investigations conducted in partnership with local independent media continued to be a key element of Mongabay Latam's reporting, giving us a unique perspective to understand and reflect on the region's environmental issues. Through this work, for example, Mongabay Latam was able to track and geolocate more than [8,000 contaminated sites left by the oil industry](#) in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Bolivia, as well as reconstruct the extent of deforestation over the past 20 years in 16 countries and identify the governments most responsible.

Building databases and investigating environmental crimes through satellite monitoring also was an important part of our coverage in 2023. In Mexico, Mongabay Latam identified for the first time more than [90 cases of environmental defenders](#) who have disappeared. Similarly, in Colombia the news team was able to track the Indigenous communities most threatened by illegal mining, drug trafficking and deforestation, and map the presence of organized crime groups in protected areas.

Mongabay Latam's series Climate Crisis at Cape Horn won the 2023 Journalistic Excellence Award from the Inter American Press Association in the Chronicle category, and two investigations were ranked among the top 10 in the region by the Global Investigative Journalism Network.

Mongabay Latam also received important recognitions in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Mexico.

Thanks to the consistency of our coverage, many Mongabay Latam stories have been used by authorities to open judicial processes, by decision-makers in the private sector, as well as by civil society groups, like the leader of the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin, who advocated using a Mongabay Latam story about oil spills in the Amazon during the first COP of the Escazú Agreement. National radio and television stations in multiple countries invited Mongabay Latam staff members to give interviews about our findings, and numerous journalism associations recognized our work. For example, a special feature on the compounding risk of being an Indigenous woman and environmental defender in four Latin American countries received an honorable mention from the Inter American Press Association. Also, the Global Investigative Journalism Network recognized two stories as the best publications on Indigenous peoples in Latin America. Our coverage on the [illegal trafficking of baby hippos in Colombia](#) and the impacts of [mining projects on national parks and reserves in Chile](#) were finalists in the Gabo Journalism Awards and in the Latin American Conference of Investigative Journalism.



## Mongabay Brasil

Mongabay Brasil closely followed the first year of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's return to the presidency, with his administration drawing high expectations for environmental issues after four years of Jair Bolsonaro's rule. It was a year in which Indigenous rights once again became a part of official policies, marked by the establishment of a Ministry of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition of new Indigenous territories. Mongabay Brasil reported on these developments, as well as the ongoing crisis in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory in the Amazon and the persistent struggles of numerous Indigenous groups across the country to address threats to their lands, such as those posed by the [Brumadinho](#) and [Belo Monte](#) dams.

Mongabay Brasil was actively involved in significant events for forest peoples, providing in-depth coverage of the [Amazon Summit](#) and [Brazil's largest march of original peoples](#). The news team also played a frontline role in various Brazilian biomes, delivering exclusive and comprehensive

reports on some of the country's most critical hotspots. In the Amazon, topics included the [historical drought](#) that resulted in fish fatalities and crop failures, violations in [carbon credit contracts](#) on Indigenous lands, and the emergence of [rodeo culture](#) following deforestation.

In total, Mongabay Brasil published more than 250 articles and 60 videos in both English and Portuguese in 2023, consistently offering compelling narratives on the resilience of local communities, the impact of climate change on the local landscape, and the challenges involved in saving threatened species such as jaguars, maned wolves and blue macaws.

A story about the impacts of mining on [coffee production in the Bahia state](#) won a [BNB Journalism Award](#), sponsored by a prominent state-owned development bank. The article sheds light on how iron mining in Bahia has silted up springs and spread toxic dust across coffee and sugarcane fields in neighboring areas, including Piatã and Abaíra municipalities, where the dust is contaminating the local award-winning coffee beans and cachaça sugarcane liquor.

## IMPACT STORY

[A report on Carbonext](#) revealed that the company, partly owned by Shell Oil, allegedly failed to adhere to international conventions and ignored Brazil's Indigenous affairs agency in convincing Indigenous people in the Amazon to sign documents containing blank pages and offering millions of dollars to obtain exclusive rights to sell carbon credits. The federal prosecutor for the state of Pará told Mongabay the documents "should not even be considered to be a contract."



## Mongabay India

2023 marked Mongabay India's fifth year in existence, with an ever-growing network of India-based journalists publishing more than 500 articles to cover the country's rich [biodiversity](#), track the impacts of climate change, follow India's [transition to renewable energy](#), usher environmental issues into [public politics and discourse](#), as well as call attention to the interplay of [gender and environment](#). Since 2020, Mongabay India has been reporting in Hindi too, dramati-

cally increasing access to environmental news to a huge population of Hindi speakers.

While traditional text-based journalism remained Mongabay India's mainstay, 2023 was a year of experimentation and expansion into other storytelling formats. Mongabay India published more than 60 videos and podcasts and produced more photo essays, illustrations, infographics, static and interactive maps, as well as hosted a number of webinars and training sessions for journalists and science communicators.



[Environmental economics](#) emerged as a new editorial priority for Mongabay India. Under this lens, the team explored the environmental implications of economic policy decisions and vice versa, with a focus on the economic value of conserving biodiversity and the economics of climate change. From the perspective of India's energy transitions, we published in-depth features about [green GDP](#), net-zero [buildings](#), sustainable [data centers](#), water requirements for green hydrogen generation, the poor health of state finance [commissions](#) affecting decentralization, and the rollout of electric vehicle [policies](#).

Mongabay Hindi spearheaded on-the-ground coverage in Joshimath, where land subsidence has [displaced](#) more than 1,000 households. Throughout the year, the newsroom sustained coverage and called attention to related issues from [women's health](#) to [passive policymaking](#).

Demonstrative of Mongabay India's growing reputation as the go-to source for news and information within the country, Mongabay India was invited to lead workshops and discussions at the T20 Mid-Year Conference hosted by Think 20 and the G20 in Mumbai; the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation's annual meeting; UNESCO's Ridge to Reef biosphere reserve networking meeting; as well as advise The Earth Commission on a media strategy; and participate in the collaborative platform ClimateRISE Alliance that's working to enable multistakeholder engagement with national climate change issues.

## IMPACT STORY

Mongabay India reported on the country's first [digital flood inventory](#). After the article was published, the team at MetUK, the U.K.'s meteorological office, contacted the reporter for more information with an interest in a possible collaboration. MetUK is now officially working with the India Meteorological Department to develop impact-based forecast products.



## Mongabay Africa

While Mongabay has long reported on Africa's diverse and globally significant ecosystems, in November 2023 we officially launched a multilingual news bureau dedicated to the continent. This milestone will enable Mongabay to increase our staffing and journalistic network there to broaden coverage into some of the world's most biodiverse hotspots, with the aim of raising awareness about the continent's environmental challenges.

In the lead-up to the formal establishment of Mongabay Africa, Mongabay produced a plethora of news in 2023. Our reporting revealed the beauty of previously undiscovered species in the seas and on secluded mountainsides, while also highlighting the devastating effects of mining on communities and landscapes. Journalists delved deep into the complex relationship between governments, affected communities and the environment, investigating how to balance the desire to profit from natural resources with the need to safeguard the environment.

We also reported on the continent's forests, accompanied researchers in mapping biodiversity hotspots on inselbergs in Tanzania, and monitored tracking systems for sustainable forestry in Gabon and Liberia. Mongabay's reports provided valuable insights into the challenges facing the environment and communities across Africa. For example, the Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education (GRACE) Center, shared that it has incorporated the entire [Mongabay Explores the Congo Basin](#) series into its employee onboarding process, to enable new employees to more quickly grasp the nuances of this region.

Mongabay's impact was felt across the Congo Basin, with articles about the complex pressures on Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the nexus between food security and biodiversity. The organization's reporting provided valuable insights into the challenges facing communities and the environment in this part of the world.

### IMPACT STORY

After Mongabay published [an article](#) about a new 420-megawatt hydroelectric dam in Batchenga, Cameroon, and its socio-environmental impact on surround fishing villages, the project's financial partners and the World Bank set up a group bringing together representatives of professional bodies and the company with an appointed mediator to conduct the negotiation about compensation demanded by the communities.



## Mongabay Investigations Desk

Throughout the year Mongabay continued to publish impactful investigations from around the world, as well as creating new systems for documenting and organizing our investigative program.

Mongabay notably published cross-border investigations into the [carbon neutrality claims of the United Nations](#), in partnership with The New Humanitarian. Reporters obtained details about carbon credits purchased by 33 U.N. entities, representing more than 75% of its reported offset portfolio since 2012. The effort revealed that 40% of the carbon credits the U.N. claims as part of its carbon neutrality were issued by hydropower and wind projects that climate experts say shouldn't be used to offset emissions as the schemes don't need income from credits to be viable. Renowned journalist Bill McKibben [cited](#) the investigation extensively in his writing.

In Latin America, Mongabay investigated the "Amazon's largest single deforester," Bruno Heller, and documented how 10 contiguous areas were registered to various Heller family members divided into smaller properties. [The report](#), published in partnership with The Intercept Brasil, exposed the way Heller took advantage of Brazil's disjointed land registration system to allegedly launder stolen land. At the time of Heller's arrest, authorities identified the same pattern of land grabbing and fraudulent titling of public forests.

Separately, an investigative [report](#) about illegal gold mining on the Cenepa River on the border between Peru and Ecuador also drew decision-makers' attention and prompted remedial action. Mongabay traveled to the territory of Awajún Indigenous communities and observed the social and environmental damage from illegal gold mining, an industry that also threatens parts of their population with forced labor and sexual exploitation. After the report was published, leaders from a local Indigenous organization told Mongabay that the army and police had been informed about the photos and videos in the story before they carried out raids in the area to destroyed hundreds of pieces of equipment used in illegal mining.

In Africa, Mongabay published a deep-dive report into the Salala Rubber Corporation in Liberia, exploring workers' allegations of sexual abuse, land grabbing, pollution and state-backed intimidation of local communities. Mongabay was also among the first outlets [to publish the details](#) of a leaked draft contract that would hand over control of nearly 10% of Liberia's total land mass



to Blue Carbon, a United Arab Emirates-based firm, in a massive million-hectare carbon credit deal. The story was cited by outlets including Middle East Eye and The Guardian, and Bloomberg published follow-up stories about Blue Carbon during COP28.

In Southeast Asia, a miniseries about [illegal logging in Cambodia](#) found that factories in Cambodia's garment sector are fueling their boilers with wood logged illegally from protected areas. Other investigations in Cambodia uncovered a logging operation being run out of a prison that sourced timber from the site of a new hydropower dam, with the involvement of a three-star military general who also serves as a top interior ministry official. [An investigation](#) based on court records and interviews found that police in Indonesia were increasingly charging small-holder farmers for fires despite a law protecting slash-and-burn practices at artisanal scale.



## Delivering News to Diverse Audiences

**Video:** Mongabay's visual storytelling continued to grow in 2023, with more than 1,500 videos published on Mongabay's website and social media. The visibility of the video content doubled, adding more than 200 million views through YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, among other platforms. Content production with the collaboration of third parties also expanded in 2023. [The Caretakers](#), a short documentary, was produced thanks to the support of One World Media. This year, efforts have been made to diversify the short video formats. News breakdowns, videos that condense the week's big headlines, and selfie/behind-the-scenes videos, which show reporters in the field, have been new contributions that seek to increase audience engagement in social media platforms.

**Podcast:** Mongabay's podcast team published nearly 50 new Mongabay Newscast episodes in 2023 and a popular six-part [Mongabay Explores](#) series that dove deep into conservation issues in the Congo Basin. The shows' audiences continued to grow and are set for a vital 2024 with an updated format and hosting strategy owing to the late 2023 hiring of a new co-host, Rachel Donald, to work alongside our existing host in bringing expanded analysis and conversation to climate change and planetary boundaries issues. Meanwhile, Mongabay India published a three-

part series, [Imprints](#), exploring the subcontinent's rich prehistoric megafauna and paleobotany legacies. Mongabay Latam migrated its podcast feed to a top-quality hosting service to reach additional listeners, and expanded its format to include interviews.

**Translations:** In 2023, Mongabay paused translations into Italian, German, Chinese and Japanese to focus our efforts and resources in the languages of our regional teams. This adjustment allowed us to move from a volunteer system to a fully paid system where all our translators are compensated for their work. We are now publishing and translating content in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Hindi and Bahasa Indonesia and the production is frequently over 100 translations per month. The collaboration between Mongabay's regional news bureaus has been strengthened with editors now working together to coordinate the publication of translations and support the process. We have also created a style guide that includes a section of considerations when translating Mongabay content. All of this has contributed to the increased professionalization of our translation program and quality of our translations.



## Education

**Internship Program:** Since its founding in 2011, Mongabay's news writing internship program has served more than 100 up-and-coming environmental journalists. This program provides the increasingly rare opportunity for journalists at the start of their careers to work with experienced editors on meaningful environmental stories and begin to build a publishing history at a respected and widely read news outlet. In 2023, Mongabay selected three interns from more than 240 applicants. Interns published five to seven articles while working with different editors. Two interns started working as freelancers while completing their internships at Mongabay, and have since continued to be Mongabay contributors.

**Fellowship Program:** In 2022, Mongabay launched a new program that provides professional opportunities for early-career journalists from tropical countries. The fellowship honors Y. Eva Tan's passion for equality among all human beings and the conservation of natural habitats by supporting 12 early-career journalists each year to publish original reporting in Spanish

and English. Each fellow reports on critical environmental issues and gains valuable training, experience and credibility to help them advance their careers in journalism and communications.

In 2023, the first three cohorts of fellows overlapped, representing 13 countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Suriname and Venezuela. In all, they published 57 stories throughout the year. Issues covered include profiles of leaders and scientists who are working to save forests and species; stories about community conservation programs; Indigenous peoples and land rights; the effects of climate change, drought and flooding on farmers, communities and children; and reports of environmental crimes. Already, the fellowship has had palpable impacts on participants' careers, with previous fellows going on to win international awards and fellowships, secure new jobs and promotions, and contribute to Mongabay beyond the program. Fellows have described their experience as "incredible because it allowed me to broaden my view on environmental and biodiversity coverage," "a milestone in my journalistic career," and "a great opportunity not only to broaden my portfolio towards the investigation of other countries, but also to find and learn from tools." Importantly, fellows have said the experience has bolstered their desire to stick with environmental journalism in the future. "The opportunities afforded through this fellowship have been truly transformative, and I am greatly appreciative," one fellow commented. "The knowledge that I have received in such short span of time is remarkable," another said. "This fellowship has been crucial to my growth as a journalist."

**Mongabay Kids:** In 2023 Mongabay Kids continued its mission to engage youth in biodiversity and nature conservation, focusing on readers aged 8-14. We published news stories, art activities, puzzles and games, biodiversity explainers, comics, and more. Mongabay Kids partnered with the student-run Jacht Ad Agency at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL), to better understand our readers and how we can improve our website structure and content to meet their needs. The team at Jacht created many useful recommendations that will be implemented in 2024 and beyond. We have also developed a collaboration with Professor Stacy Asher of UNL's School of Art, Art History & Design, working with her and her design students to create innovative biodiversity infographics, games and other content for our expanding international audience.





## 2024 and Beyond

2024 is the first full year of Mongabay's 2030 Strategic Plan and progress is poised to be both swift and significant. Mongabay's staff will exceed 100 people as the organization builds new capabilities to respond to urgent environmental stress and scale impact despite a challenging global media landscape facing the most consequential election year in human history.

We expect Mongabay's growth to enable 2024 to be the year we reach several significant milestones aligned with our strategy. Mongabay will make foundational advances to modernize our publishing technology. We are launching a new website design that better represents the full breadth of Mongabay's existing journalism and introduces multiple new services to provide audiences with impactful reporting in the formats they desire from us. One of Mongabay's new services is a global environmental newswire product dedicated to creating short, written and multimedia content to reach non-technical audiences. This newswire will cover systems that people interact with daily and explain how news events affect the environment in less academic ways.

No matter how long a story needs to be, Mongabay's journalism always aims to cut through the noise of what's said to reveal what is happening. We recognize that rigorous reporting doesn't always need to focus on showing the harm associated with bad actors. Solutions journalism needs to be used to explore how people are working to address environmental problems and reveal insights into the effectiveness of practices in various operating contexts. Scrutinizing the results of a specific solution can reveal how others can adopt positive practices and avoid repeating costly mistakes. Solutions journalism, however, is only possible when it is underpinned by credible information.

In tandem with our effort to expand solutions journalism, we intend to scale up our data journalism capabilities in 2024 with the launch of the Mongabay Data Studio. The studio will help journalists produce visuals that convey complex concepts in exciting and accessible ways, leverage new data sources for storytelling, and bolster investigative reporting and solutions journalism. Data journalism is vital since it can provide the evidence to identify practical, innovative strategies that make a real difference and guard our community against greenwashing and disinformation.

# 2023 Audited Financials

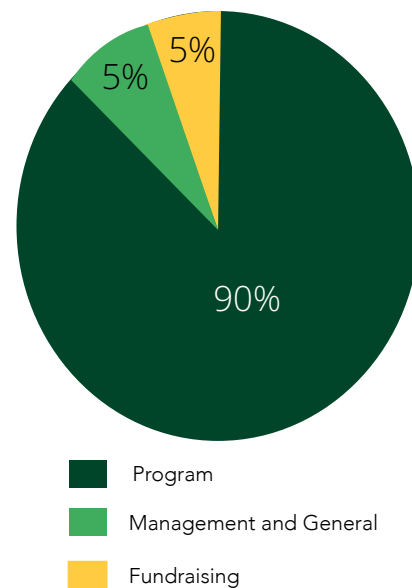
## Statement of Activities

in USD	2022	2023
<b>Revenue</b>		
Contributions and grants	10,241,796	11,062,034
Program service revenue	-	-
Other revenue	(373,697)	651,370
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>9,868,099</b>	<b>11,713,404</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Programs	4,653,271	5,179,621
Management and general	293,489	308,102
Fundraising	145,404	260,168
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>5,092,064</b>	<b>5,747,891</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Change in net assets	4,775,935	5,965,513
Net assets — beginning of year	6,553,967	11,329,902
Net assets — end of year	11,329,902	17,295,415

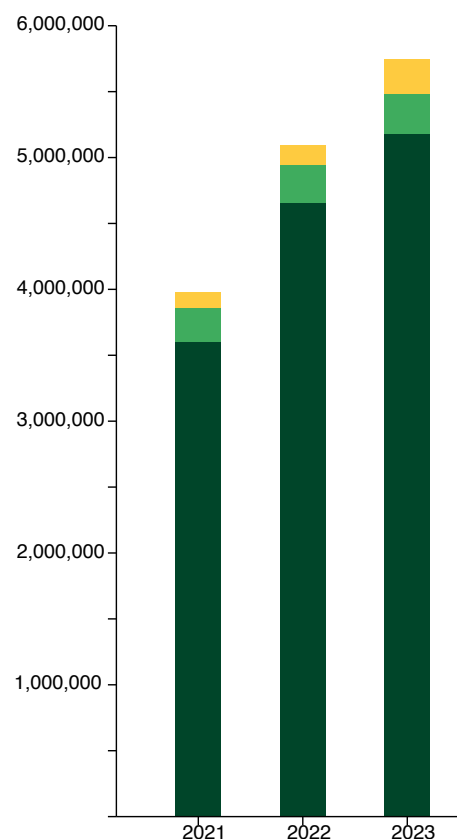
## Balance Sheet

<b>Assets and Liabilities</b>		
Cash and investments	9,879,581	13,899,946
Contributions receivable	2,344,858	3,621,989
Prepaid expense	22,616	49,686
Fixed Assets	-	-
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>12,247,055</b>	<b>17,571,621</b>
Total Liabilities	917,153	276,206
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>11,329,902</b>	<b>17,295,415</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>12,247,055</b>	<b>17,571,621</b>

2023 Functional Expenses, by percentage of total



Total Functional Expenses, from 2021 to 2023



# Donors and Supporters – Thank you for your support in 2023

## **\$100,000+**

Anonymous (4), Arcus Foundation, BAND Foundation, Climate and Land Use Alliance, Ford Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Montpelier & Hampshire Foundations, Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, John F. Swift, Khanna Foundation, Lisa Yang, The Overbrook Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, The Tilia Fund, Walton Family Foundation.

## **\$50,000 - \$99,999**

Anonymous (1), Acton Family Giving, New Venture Fund, Robert and Trudy Gottesman, Sall Family Foundation, Stockel Family Foundation, The Silent Foundation.

## **\$25,000 - \$49,999**

Anonymous (1), Francis and Christine Martin Family Foundation, Global Greengrants Fund, Huang Chen Foundation, Impact Assets, Jake Sargent, John Dawson, Marisla Foundation, Shared Earth Foundation, Silverstrand Capital, Stockel Family Foundation, Suggs Family Foundation, The Copybara Fund, The Christensen Fund, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Weeden Foundation.

## **\$10,000 - \$24,999**

Aloha Bay, Anette Marweld, Anonymous, Charles Smith, Elaine and Eric Hahn, Enlyst Fund, Holt Thrasher, Jeanne Sedgwick, The Mays Family Charitable Fund, Mike and Patricia Fox, Nancy and Penn Butler, Oak Foundation, Tides Foundation, Tina Martin.

## **\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Donna Langley, FJC- A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds, Skyscape Foundation, The Boltini Trust, The Uplands Family Foundation, Tracy DiLeo.

## **\$2,500 - \$4,999**

Mary Clark, Edgar Clark and Janet Roberts Family Fund, Michael Dye, Naomi Zurcher - Donation in Memory of her husband, Al Zurcher, Kathy and Tom Holt

## **\$1,000 - \$2,499**

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*A special thanks to Mongabay's Sustaining Members. Monthly support is one of the most powerful ways to support independent journalism because it provides the financial stability to report on timely issues while also planning ahead.*

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