



Rick Steves'
EUROPE

CLIMATE SMART COMMITMENT

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

\$1.1 Million Invested in 13 Organizations



\$1.1 Million Invested in 13 Organizations to Help Fight Climate Change

CONTENTS

Hi from Rick and Craig.....	2
Agros International.....	3
Andando.....	4
BEADS for Education.....	5
Food 4 Farmers.....	6
Rainforest Alliance.....	7
Zeit Foundation.....	8
Citizens' Climate Education.....	9
Bread for the World.....	10
Rainforest Action Network.....	10
Daring Girls.....	11
Global Communities.....	11

PHOTO CREDITS

- Cover: Zeit Foundation and Brian Siambi
- 2: Heather Locke, Rick Steves' Europe
- 3: Photos courtesy of Agros International
- 4: Photos courtesy of Andando
- 5: Photos courtesy of BEADS for Education
- 6: Photos courtesy of Food 4 Farmers
- 7: Photos courtesy of Rainforest Alliance
- 8: Photos courtesy of Zeit Foundation and Brian Siambi
- 9: Photos courtesy of Citizens' Climate Education
- 10: Bread for the World / Rainforest Action Network and Paul Hilton
- 11: Daring Girls / Global Communities

The sixth year of our Climate Smart Commitment was marked with both extreme optimism and sadness. Our optimism was fueled by the great results of our partners, but the shuttering of USAID and the loss of its life-saving programs—not to mention international goodwill—is sobering. The current US administration and our fractured political landscape have placed the future of all domestic and international climate-related and development work at risk. So, as the world's nonprofit organizations scramble to fill the void left by the US's abdicated leadership, we are hopeful that like-minded global citizens will help us preserve our planet, and steadfastly reaffirm our commitment to generate positive, lasting change through our program's unique mix of hands-on work and advocacy.

We're proud to grapple honestly with this important challenge. By designing our Climate Smart Commitment to pay back the environmental debt created by our travelers flying to Europe to join our bus tours, we believe we've acted ethically as a tour operator. (Plus, it's simply good global citizenship.) Our goal: to creatively mitigate our carbon footprint by smartly investing a self-imposed carbon tax of \$30 per tour member in climate-smart projects around the world (with roughly 35,000 travelers annually, that's a total of about \$1.1 million a year). Our two-fold mission: 1) Help farmers in the developing world do their work more productively while contributing less to climate change and 2) help organizations advocate for government policies that take the threat of climate change more seriously and hold companies accountable for their climate damage.

Climate change and hunger are inexorably linked. The poorest people in the poorest countries are hit the hardest. Roughly half of the world's population (4 billion out of 8 billion people) is made up of smallholder farmers and their families, and in their desperation to grow enough food to survive—and have some left over for the market—their farming

practices contribute substantially to climate change. But with climate-smart technology and training, these hardworking farmers can grow more food to escape extreme poverty while substantially reducing their contribution to climate damage. Plus, because these programs provide farmers with the tools to be more productive, they help create financially independent small businesses. Plus, we mitigate the carbon our travelers create while flying to Europe and back. To us, that's a win-win-win.

The purpose of this report: to show our travelers what we've accomplished in the past year. The organizations we support are good examples of developmental work done right. They have restored biodiversity, reforested degraded land, saved entire forests from becoming firewood, prevented tons of carbon from being emitted, enabled farmers to escape extreme poverty, improved living conditions, educated thousands of women and girls—the world's future leaders—and helped enact major climate legislation. They inspire us. Supporting them is a good and smart investment.

That's why we're proud to offer those who take our tours the peace of mind that our "self-imposed carbon tax" effectively mitigates the carbon that they create when they join us in Europe. And beyond paying for the carbon costs of travelers who join us on a Rick Steves tour, we're honored to be the charity of choice for the thousands of like-minded independent travelers who have donated to the "Rick Steves' Europe Climate Smart Fund" at the National Philanthropic Trust or through our annual Seasons Givings promotion. Together, we're making a difference.

Happy climate-smart travels,

Rick Steves
Chief Executive Officer

Craig Davidson
Chief Operating Officer

2025 DONATION: \$265,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$1,145,000

Our donations have allowed Agros to implement climate-smart agriculture practices in Nicaragua. In so doing, they have lifted the farmers working in our three pilot climate-smart villages (San José, Nueva San José, and La Bendición, Nicaragua) out of extreme poverty. They have also built the Harvest and Hope Teaching Center (HHC) in La Bendición to teach regional farmers the same market-oriented, climate-smart agricultural skills that (along with helping fight climate change) increase income, improve household conditions, and provide the economic opportunities that reduce migration and keep families together.

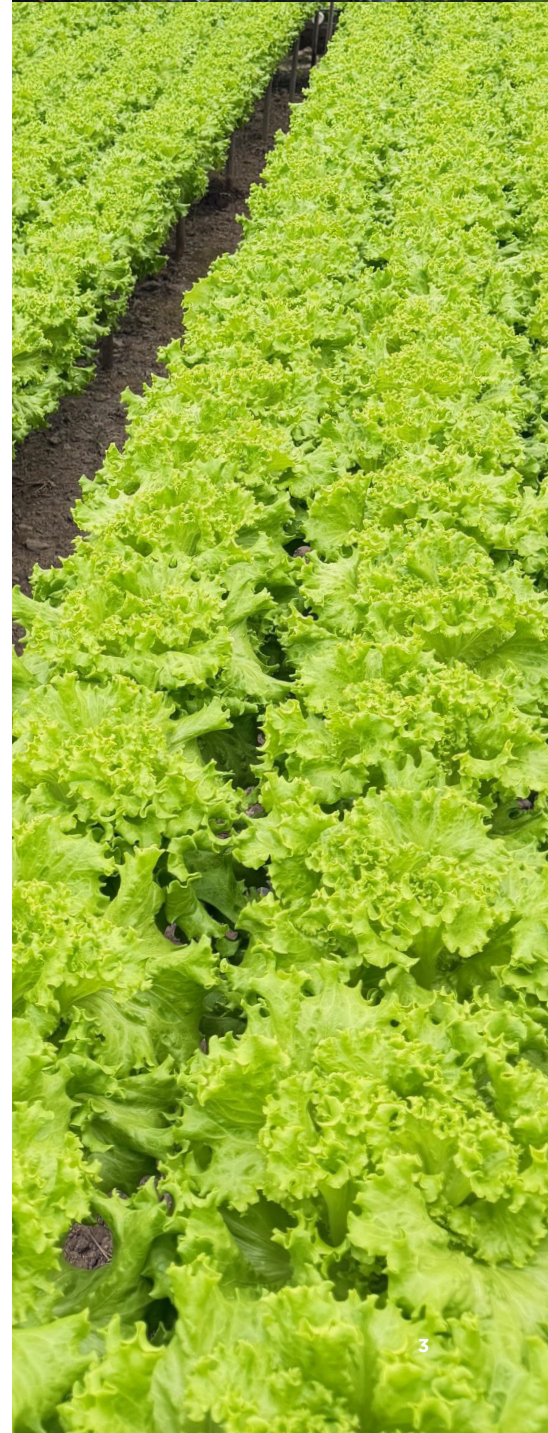
Current farming methods produce a third of all greenhouse emissions worldwide—but don't meet the world's growing demand for food and don't generate enough income for the farmers growing the food. In rural Latin America, Agros believes that there is a solution to break the cycle of poverty for farming families: land ownership, market-led agriculture, financial empowerment, and sustainable climate-smart farming practices.

Since joining our Climate Smart program, Agros has made climate-smart techniques a core component of their development model, created new performance indicators to track the effectiveness of their programs, and seen outstanding results. By building prosperous communities out of what was essentially nothing (as Agros builds new villages from scratch) and creating a vermicompost production and training facility, they have helped more than 500 farming families implement hydroponics, vermicomposting, and reforestation techniques to improve soil conditions, increase their yields, produce healthier food, help with the reforestation effort, protect water recharge zones, and generate more income.

In total, Agros has reduced the use of chemical-based fertilizers by 35 percent, created a nursery, carefully cultivated over 50,000 seedlings, reforested over 47 acres of land, registered 1,397 acres under a sustainable forest management program, installed a water irrigation system and community hydroponic modules, and built family-oriented greenhouses. Their ecological latrines, showers, stoves, and water filters protected water recharge zones and saved over 1.6 million gallons of water and 90,000 kg of wood per year, their certification with the Rainforest Alliance allowed farmers to increase their incomes (by taking advantage of the higher selling price for organic goods), and they've given women the opportunity to diversify their household income by selling surplus produce to other community members. In short: the farms are no longer just sources of food—they are profitable market-connected agribusinesses, carbon sinks, and engines of prosperity.

With our ongoing support, Agros will expand into Honduras and Guatemala, introduce 169 coffee farms to proven climate-smart techniques, manage 160 farms as carbon sinks, and integrate 419 smallholder families into their climate-smart training programs.

Agros International works to break the cycle of poverty for farming families in rural Latin America.





In 2025, Andando was chosen as one of the seven winners of the 2025 .ORG Impact Awards for their positive contributions to society.

2025 DONATION: \$50,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$130,000

Our donations have enabled Andando to become a trusted source for trees in Senegal, operate over 41 women's cooperative gardens (impacting 25,000 people), empower 200 farmers through microloans and training, and create a community woodlot to provide firewood and stop deforestation. They have constructed a Tree Nursery and Agroforestry Center in Podor (including sinking a borehole to provide water security to the facility), germinated over 50,000 beneficial tree seedlings, and taught climate-smart agriculture practices to over 600 rural Senegalese farming families.

In Senegal, hundreds of years of destructive colonial agricultural practices have led to severe deforestation and loss of soil fertility. Andando combats this by constructing women's cooperative gardens, installing solar pumps for water generation, partnering with local farmers to incorporate native trees into field crop production, and reforesting lands using the forest garden permaculture method (intentionally placing plants to mimic the natural environment). The result: a reduction in water consumption, creation of fertile topsoil, and the installation of natural barriers (live thorny fences and windbreaks) that protect the land and sequester carbon.

With our continued donations, Andando will continue to restore approximately 1,633 hectares of land (4,000 acres), establish and protect roughly 75,000 trees, and reforest approximately 100 hectares with 40,000 trees produced in their regional nurseries. (These restored areas are projected to offset several thousand tons of carbon emissions annually, while also providing families with fruit to eat, shade to cool their homes, and fuel for fires.) In addition, Andando will protect over 15,000 naturally germinating trees by adding 100 new farmers to its micro-loan program in Keur Soce (bringing the total to 300), provide all participating farmers with climate-smart training, and—since the past experience has shown these farmers become the biggest advocates for the new processes—ensure the loans continue to cycle through the community (the loans are a one-time investment, but once paid back, they are loaned out over and over again, meaning the 100 loans will support thousands of farmers long into the future).



BEADS FOR EDUCATION

2025 DONATION: \$20,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$196,000

Our donations allowed BEADS for Education (“BEADS”) to teach their 250 students about climate-smart farming practices, expand their school farm, and provide climate education workshops in Kajiado, Narok, the Amboseli National Park region, and the Maasai Mara.

Due to the ongoing deforestation in Kenya, the traditionally pastoral Maasai communities have embraced farming for their food security needs. BEADS, through their Tembea Academy, teaches students creative and critical thinking while instilling a philosophy of returning everything that came from the earth back to the earth. Their school is completely solar powered, and they grow all their own food (for 300 daily meals), practice no-till gardening, don’t use pesticides, use greenhouses, and compost all their organic and paper waste. With over 52 million girls in sub-Saharan Africa not in school, programs like this are of great value.

Over the past year, BEADS helped communities build solar ovens and organized 15 town cleanup days—including the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, the Amboseli National Park, and the Mombasa Coast—to teach the students about the detriments of plastic and how their actions impact the climate. In so doing, they fostered a deeper understanding of sustainable waste management, distributed over 500 reusable “forever bags” (by involving community members, students, and local leaders), and ultimately reached more than 10,000 people. The students also became vicarious European travelers by using Rick Steves guidebooks to learn about Rome and discuss global awareness, cultural empathy, and independent thinking.

Then, the climate-smart work didn’t stop there. During school breaks, each student volunteered to teach their farming families and communities how to generate higher yields and implement a more sustainable farming process by using less water, planting crops to attract and feed insects (along with pollinators, beneficial insects can act as living pesticides to protect crops), and reforesting the indigenous and medicinal plants that have been decimated. Then, each student petitioned the Kenyan parliament to take action on climate change—with one previous student being so successful, she was invited to be a Yale Young African Scholar, selected to be an Ashoka Changemaker, and had her book on climate change and drought published and translated into four languages by World Reader.

BEADS provides a well-rounded, climate-smart education to girls in the vulnerable Maasai communities in Kenya.





Food 4 Farmers partners with coffee-farming families in Latin America to increase food security, teach climate-smart practices, reduce deforestation, and stabilize incomes.

2025 DONATION: \$120,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$415,000

Our donations allow Food 4 Farmers (“F4F”) to partner with five cooperatives representing over 1,461 coffee-farming families in Latin America and increase their food security. F4F’s goals: teach climate-smart practices, strengthen local food systems, improve incomes, reduce deforestation, restore local ecosystems, and create a healthier planet.

Industrial agriculture is responsible for about 80 percent of all tropical deforestation globally. Many small-scale coffee-farming families in Latin America — along with millions of others — live below the Global Poverty Line on less than \$2.00 per person, per day. This is largely due to their dependence on a single commodity crop and a lack of local opportunities to improve their livelihoods. F4F aims to disrupt this trend by helping small-scale farmers transform their monoculture farms into sustainable operations that provide food and income security without the need for increased acreage.

Through their Home Garden Program, F4F’s families maintain almost 800 gardens and teach farmers sustainable farming practices, including making organic compost and pesticides, growing a diverse range of organic food crops, improving soil health, using agroforestry to restore biodiversity, and building low-cost water management systems to sustain gardens through dry seasons. Their Beekeeper and Farmers Markets Program helps to diversify the farmers’ incomes and reduce their dependence on their single commodity crop (coffee) by helping them establish supplemental on-farm businesses that have the added benefit of reforesting land to provide pollinators with food and shelter. And their Community Promoter Program trains and empowers young women and men to bring these climate-smart techniques from the workshops to the farms and ensure the farmers thrive long-term.

Over the next year, our donation will enable the construction of water dams in Colombia (increasing water security in regions that have experienced extreme drought), and allow F4F to expand their farmers markets into Nicaragua and Guatemala, provide fruit and shade trees to families, and continue to engage women and young people to lead their communities to healthier diets, stronger local economies, and climate-smart farming practices.



RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

2025 DONATION: \$70,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$280,000

Our donations allow the Rainforest Alliance (“RA”) to expand their climate-smart agriculture work in Ghana—benefitting 3,600 local farmers across 76 communities by providing the climate-smart tools and training necessary to conserve Ghana’s forest landscape and produce cocoa sustainably.

In Ghana, unsustainable cocoa production is a key driver of deforestation and causes close to half of the forest loss in the high forest zone—resulting in an unbalanced ecosystem with more erosion, heavier rains, longer droughts, and lower crop yields. RA works to conserve Ghana’s forest landscape and support agricultural livelihoods of local farmers by providing them with the skills and resources necessary to produce cocoa more sustainably and an incentive to manage their shade trees. Properly managed shade trees act as a carbon sink, improve soil conditions, restore tree cover, create a suitable habitat for wildlife, and improve the cocoa yield—resulting in more resilient crops and land, higher incomes for farmers, and greater food security.

Over the last six years, RA has enabled communities to implement climate-smart practices that improve soil conditions, established 28 tree nurseries, produced over 650,000 seedlings, restored 10 hectares of degraded land, developed GPS technology to monitor tree survival rates and changes in land use/cover in over 2,100 hectares, and conducted training classes for over 9,000 farmers in 106 communities.

Our donation will allow RA to continue their work in the Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai district and incentivize hardworking farmers, create nurseries, grow and register more trees, conduct more trainings, and transition accountability to local Management Boards—who are responsible for ensuring climate-smart agriculture practices are followed and illegal deforestation is tracked.

The Rainforest Alliance works with rural communities in over 70 countries to conserve forests and support sustainable livelihoods.





2025 DONATION: \$100,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$600,000

Our donations allow the Zeitz Foundation (“ZF”) to continue implementing its Tree of Life Reforestation Initiative in Laikipia, Kenya, which combines women’s education and vocational training with reforestation, conservation, and biodiversity. In so doing, ZF offers women an opportunity for independent incomes and financial freedom while regenerating the landscape (with a goal of reforesting over 3 million acacia trees), enhancing soil stabilization and fertility, recapturing water, and ensuring the survival of a biodiverse ecosystem. This initiative follows ZF’s sustainable “4C” approach by combining conservation, community, culture, and commerce—a philosophy shared globally through the Long Run network.

Since our partnership began six years ago, they have created a nursery; sourced, germinated, and planted over 1.5 million acacia seedlings (with the help of over 60 community members); built over 21 km of fencing to protect new forests; purchased 15 acres of land for use in their vocational teaching; sunk a borehole to create new water access (along with a solar pump, panels, storage tanks, and other plumbing works to generate up to 40,000 liters of water a day for the land, wildlife, and their newly established nursery); built a dam that holds 600,000 cubic meters of water and benefits biodiversity and restoration efforts; and reintroduced the rhino back to the region (establishing an umbrella species that will protect the biodiversity of the entire area).

This work is vital, as over the last decade, Kenya has lost much of its forested land and is currently recovering from the worst drought in over 40 years. Taken together, the impacts of deforestation and drought contribute directly to climate change, degrade the land, and affect not only the biodiversity of plant and animal life but also the well-being of the communities who rely on the land. It’s a vicious cycle resulting in more hunger, more destructive agricultural activities (like the expansion of cattle farming), and less stability.

With this year’s funding, ZF will finalize the design and curriculum for their new 4C Learning Centre (intended to educate the next generation of conservationists and prevent young adults seeking employment—or education—from leaving the community), help 18 women to become “ambassadors” of climate-smart practices (as they have been trained on permaculture and have successfully established their own gardens), and continue to build their climate-smart training center.

The Zeitz Foundation develops and implements ecologically responsible projects in the Greater Segera Region of Kenya.

CITIZENS' CLIMATE EDUCATION

2025 DONATION: \$50,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$280,000

Our donations help Citizens' Climate Education ("CCE") train, support, and provide tools to a growing nationwide coalition of climate advocates, equipping them to engage policymakers and the public on smart solutions to climate change.

CCE empowers a bipartisan coalition of more than 210,000 advocates committed to passing climate-smart and equitable laws. Bipartisan support is essential to creating lasting climate solutions. As long as climate change remains a partisan issue, solutions will inevitably be delayed or rolled back every time opposing parties assume power, and time is running too short for partisan gridlock.

In the last year, CCE's volunteers generated 105,544 calls and messages to Congress, held 1,177 meetings with congressional staff, and achieved 1,613 local media hits about climate action. Their efforts contributed to saving \$6.2 billion to fund the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), \$3.1 million for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and ensuring the One Big Beautiful Bill Act was "25% less bad" for the climate and household energy bills.

Our ongoing donations will help CCE continue to generate bipartisan support for climate solutions, recruit and train more volunteers, and acquire endorsements from influential businesses and community leaders.

Citizens' Climate Education is an advocacy organization that educates policymakers and the public about smart solutions to climate change.



BREAD FOR THE WORLD



Bread for the World is an advocacy organization working to end hunger at home and abroad.

2025 DONATION: \$125,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$600,000

Our donations allowed Bread for the World (“Bread”) to scale up their advocacy efforts and raise awareness in our government of how climate change makes more people hungry which, in turn, makes our world less stable. Climate change is a major contributor to global food insecurity, especially in low-income countries. Extreme weather events such as drought and floods are increasing, affecting food production, and making it harder for those living in poverty to feed their families and provide a nutritious diet.

With the new administration in Washington, DC, dismantling climate-related programs, Bread’s work will be more important than ever. They will continue to educate policymakers and the public about the moral and practical reasons for supporting climate-smart policies that enhance food security and promote sustainability. And because they receive no federal funding, they are not at risk of losing U.S. grants, and can always speak up without retribution.

(Note that Rick Steves’ Europe donates much more to Bread each year, but the contributions here are earmarked specifically for their climate change advocacy work..)

RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK



Rainforest Action Network works to preserve forests, protect the climate, and uphold human rights by challenging corporate power and systemic injustice.

2025 DONATION: \$100,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$430,000

Our donations allow the Rainforest Action Network (“RAN”) to hold multinational corporations responsible for using unethically sourced resources while protecting the Leuser Ecosystem of Sumatra, Indonesia, from the deforestation caused by the illegal expansion of pulpwood and palm oil plantations. In this way, RAN not only protects rainforests from destruction—which is vital to keeping our climate ecosystem intact—they also help consumers “vote with their pocketbook” by identifying companies that don’t walk their climate talk.

RAN works with community partners and local authorities to document illegal deforestation, clearing and burning of peatlands, labor abuses, and other human rights violations. Then, by publishing reports and using high-profile media coverage, RAN focuses public scrutiny on the multinational corporations that benefit from this behavior. RAN’s work can be summed up in three campaigns: Stop Deforestation, Defund Climate Change, and Support Communities.

Over the next year, our donations will help RAN expand their work to East Kalimantan on Borneo, grow their Keep Forests Standing campaign in Indonesia, help rural Indigenous communities build the local capacity to defend their land and their rights, and push the global financial sector to implement reforms that stop illegal logging, deforestation, and rights abuses.

DARING GIRLS

2025 DONATION: \$45,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$87,000

Our donations help Daring Girls (“Daring”) provide leadership and mentoring skills to over 2,700 young girls in the Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions of Tanzania and 1,300 girls at six schools in Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Through a series of 2-Day Challenge Projects and university prep courses, Daring teaches girls to take control of their future, lead positive social change in their communities, and solve environmental and health problems at the local level.

Last year, students benefited from a curriculum that focused on environmental protection and personal responsibility on a global and local scale. Through two courses, students see how climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, and become emboldened by the research that shows female leaders create more protected land, ratify more environmental treaties, create stricter climate change policies, and produce smaller climate footprints in their home country. Then, graduating scholars complete community projects—ranging from planting fruit and drought-resistant trees to teaching younger girls how to make reusable sanitary pads—and help design solutions to local problems.

In the upcoming year, Daring will continue to provide women and girls an environmentally focused curriculum, as we will help make up for the US government’s funding cuts and ensure Daring’s climate smart projects—and their scholars—continue to flourish.



Daring Girls provides knowledge, tools, and mentorship to young girls in Tanzania.

GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

2025 DONATION: \$100,000

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$495,000

Our donations allow Global Communities (“GC”) to help women and farmers in the developing world adapt to climate change and build skills they need to lift themselves out of poverty. By promoting low-cost, climate-smart, and sustainable agricultural practices, GC works with local governments to ensure women have the opportunity to create income and food security.

In the first four years of our partnership, GC transitioned 488 households (2,900 individuals) in the dry western highlands of Huehuetenango, Guatemala away from traditional open fires to climate-smart cookstoves and water filters, built drought-resistant, water-conserving gardens, and planted 30,300 seedlings. In so doing, they significantly reduced deforestation, eliminated 18,216 tons of carbon emissions, and saved future generations from smoke-related health problems (caused by smokey domestic interiors). Then, in 2024 GC shifted to Tanzania, where our donations provided 1,216 farmers—three-quarters of them women—with an education on sustainable crop production and resource management. The result: Over 25 hectares of maize and 15 hectares of beans being produced sustainably and the Government of Tanzania adopting GC’s methodology on a much broader scale.

Next year, GC will build on their learnings from Tanzania and create a community-based network of 1,400 farmers in Guatemala using climate-smart techniques to create food security, build markets, and supply the national school food program.



Global Communities brings together local ingenuity and global insights to save lives and secure strong futures.



LEARN MORE
[RICKSTEVES.COM/CLIMATE](https://ricksteves.com/climate)