

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



**mangrove
action
project**

Healthy Mangroves Sustain Life



The Finest Flower of the Mangroves, Soham Bhattacharyya

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Founded in 1992, Mangrove Action Project was created to address the rapid global loss of mangrove forests, combining scientific methods with community involvement. A pioneer in community-led conservation, MAP introduced the Community-based Ecological Mangrove Restoration (or **CBEMR**, for short) method in 2005, restoring mangroves naturally in over 30 countries, to date. **We have consistently fought destructive practices, while empowering coastal communities to protect and regenerate their ecosystems.**

Why do Mangroves Matter?

Mangroves are critical ecosystems that support fisheries and marine life, protect coastlines, and capture carbon. They serve as nurseries for endangered species, prevent erosion, and store more carbon than terrestrial forests. Human activities and climate change have destroyed over half of the world's mangrove forests, making **urgent conservation efforts essential.**

Our Mission

MAP partners with communities and organizations worldwide to **conserve, manage, and restore mangrove forests.** Through science, training, and environmental education, we provide nature-based solutions for people and our planet.

From our Executive Director

Dr. Dominic Wodehouse

After 31 years protecting and restoring our planet's most essential and overlooked forests, Mangrove Action Project is witnessing a global "sea change" in mangrove awareness. The increasing severity of tropical storms and floods, an appreciation that mangrove forests store tremendous amounts of CO₂, and recognition that sustainable fisheries depend on mangroves, are together buoying these vital forests to the forefront of conservation awareness and activity. Unfortunately, there are still a lot of restoration programs that do little more than plant, and sadly many of these fail.

Fortunately, a strong network of NGOs is leading the charge to protect and restore mangrove forests. Mangrove Action Project is at the front lines of that work: sharing best practice tools to make restoration efforts successful, and providing on-site consultation to ensure that restoration efforts will actually succeed.

However, the conservation of mangroves and wetlands often hinges on political will, which can be undermined by short-term profits, urban expansion or unsustainable enterprises like intensive shrimp farming and salt production. Over time, the loss of these critical ecosystems can lead to the collapse of native fisheries and increased vulnerability of coastal communities to tropical storms, leaving them without the protection mangroves once provided.

There is little point in governments claiming to protect wetlands and mangroves when other departments in the same administration subsidise fossil fuel production and prioritise land conversion for urban expansion, port building and oil palm production over mangrove conservation. These competing demands suggest that **the NGO community needs to push for more coordinated policy from central and local government, with the key objective being conserving and protecting mangrove ecosystems.** This way communities are protected from climate change, violent weather and sea level rise; food security is provided and communities have the materials they need for sustainable living.



Mombassa, Kenya

Rooted in Action

Dr. Laura Michie, Program Manager

This year, MAP achieved significant milestones in our ongoing mission to protect and restore mangrove ecosystems. Our dedicated team, as well as our fantastic funders and supporters, have been instrumental in driving our success, enabling us to expand our reach and impact globally.

We successfully implemented restoration training projects across multiple countries, including Indonesia, the Bahamas, and Kenya. These projects provided valuable training and support to local communities, empowering them to take an active role in the conservation and restoration of their mangrove forests. The positive feedback from our workshop participants, who gained a deeper understanding of mangrove restoration best practices, was incredibly rewarding. Their newfound knowledge is critical for driving future actions that can address the world's climate challenges.

Additionally, our education and outreach programs continued to thrive. We engaged over 800 students in our Coastal Education Program, providing hands-on learning experiences that fostered a deeper understanding of the importance of mangroves.

Our annual Children's Art Contest attracted participation from young artists around the world, showcasing the global significance of mangrove conservation through their creative expression.

However, despite these successes, we are acutely aware of the ongoing climate challenges. It is crucial that we address these issues head-on. As we look ahead to the coming year, we remain committed to advancing our mission and scaling up our impact. **We are confident that we can create a world where mangroves thrive and provide essential benefits to both people and the planet.**



Photo taken in Madagascar, @Fita_Prod



Lamu, Kenya

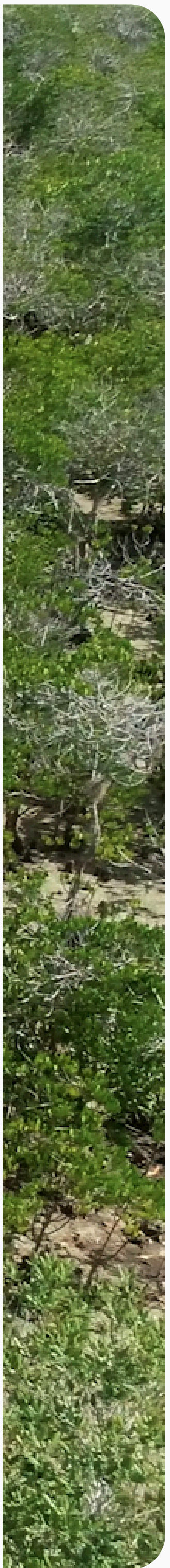
2023

Year in Review

In 2023, Mangrove Action Project celebrated 31 years since our founding, driven by the vision to restore and protect vital mangrove ecosystems worldwide. Since 1992 our dedicated supporters have taken action against mangrove loss, enabling us to expand our impact across Central and South America, Asia, and Africa through restoration training, education programs, and other critical initiatives.

Our community's dedication to mangrove restoration and conservation provided us with numerous reasons to celebrate this year. Together, we reached significant landmarks, bringing us closer to our goal of restoring and protecting these crucial ecosystems. This progress would not have been possible without the generous contributions from all our supporters, from our small monthly donors to our long-standing patrons.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. With your continued support, we look forward to achieving even greater successes in the years to come.





2023 OUR IMPACT

325

Forest managers, government officials, NGO personal, and community members trained in mangrove restoration

800+

Students trained in our Coastal Education Program

712

Photographers from 72 nations entered our Mangrove Photography Awards

245

Young artists participated in our annual art contest

Community-Based Ecological Mangrove Restoration



MAP supported Bonefish & Tarpon Trust (BTT) and Waterkeepers Bahamas (WKB) in their efforts to restore habitats damaged by Hurricane Dorian, including planting 48,000 red mangroves since 2020. To further these efforts, **MAP held two training sessions: one in Freeport for 32 BTT members and another for University of Bahamas students through the USFS NiCAR program.** These sessions focused on building mangrove restoration skills, promoting the CBEMR approach, and fostering collaboration with local stakeholders through site visits and knowledge sharing.



In Ecuador, **MAP and Global Mangrove Alliance-Ecuador conducted a seven-day training** on the CBEMR approach, engaging 39 participants. The workshop integrated theoretical learning with practical field trips, aiming to bolster expertise in mangrove restoration, cultivate professional networks, and advance sustainable mangrove conservation practices nationwide.





MAP partnered with the Save Our Mangroves Now! Initiative and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to conduct a workshop in Mombasa focused on improving mangrove management. Over five days, **42 participants, including KFS managers and academics, received training in the CBEMR approach** through a blend of theoretical sessions and field trips to local mangrove sites. The workshop aimed to update skills, deepen understanding of mangrove ecology, and foster a collaborative conservation network in Kenya.

MAP teamed up with the Global Mangrove Alliance Indonesia to conduct an eight-day CBEMR workshop in Bangkalis, Sumatra. The workshop, **attended by 41 participants from diverse sectors including academia, businesses, NGOs, and government**, focused on enhancing mangrove restoration skills and knowledge. Through theory-based sessions and practical field trips, participants were equipped with best practices in mangrove ecology and CBEMR techniques. The training aimed to bolster local capacity, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and advance sustainable mangrove management across Indonesia.

Restoration Site Assessments

The MAP team visited the **Sundarbans** of India and Bangladesh, the world's largest mangrove forest, for a restoration site consultation in November. Despite its UNESCO status, the Sundarbans faces threats from urban expansion and illegal shrimp farming. Local NGOs like BEDS and NEWS are leading restoration efforts, empowering communities, and showcasing successful initiatives. This visit strengthened partnerships and laid the groundwork for future projects.

Dr. Dominic Wodehouse traveled to Kemitraan, **Indonesia**, for a site consultation in January. He visited Mindanao in the Philippines in November to meet with the Livelihoods-Venture team and Green Mindanao to assess a mangrove restoration site.

Online Training

MAP conducted an online training series for WWF in December as part of a "climate-smart mangroves learning journey" for mangrove projects in **Mexico, Colombia, Madagascar, and Fiji**. This initiative emphasizes climate-smart mangrove restoration as a key objective. The training featured a virtual learning exchange to evaluate gaps, challenges, and progress, followed by a comprehensive week-long series.



Follow-up visits



The MAP team visited the Bay of Jiquilisco, El Salvador, in February to follow up on mangrove restoration training provided in 2011, which started a national effort to restore mangrove forests. Collaborating with NGOs and local communities, MAP introduced CBEMR principles and trained local groups in best practices. **Over the last 12 years, these efforts have restored hundreds of hectares of mangroves** by digging over 10 km of channels, greatly benefiting the local ecosystem and communities reliant on fishing and agriculture, without the need to plant any trees.

Dr. Dominic Wodehouse and Dr. Laura Michie traveled to Mozambique in June, assisting Instituto Oikos in Pemba and supporting Van Oord's mangrove work in Quelimane. Instituto Oikos, in challenging areas north of Pemba, received advice for their 55ha plots. Van Oord in Quelimane, with limited mangrove experience, benefited from guidance on their nearly 60ha sites. These visits, and indeed this work as a whole, would not have been possible without the support of the Levine Family Foundation.





Educating Future Mangrove Champions

Our youth education program reached over 800 Cayman Islands students in 20 class lessons and 17 field trips led by education program manager, Cassandra MacDowell. These trips introduced students to mangrove habitats, coral reefs, and seagrass beds as part of the Coastal Education Program, which emphasizes the importance of coastal ecosystems.

MAP conducted education programs in partnership with Mangrove Education Project, including Mangrove Rangers and Junior Ranger training. The Mangrove Art Festival and family fun day included activities like mangrove walks, boat and E-Bike tours, and a clean-up with Plastic Free Cayman, attracting 150+ participants.

Our expanded youth education curriculum, the Coastal Education Guide, was finalized and tested locally, primed for global adoption.

Inspiring Young Artists

Our 22nd annual Children's Art Contest received **entries from 245 young artists from 35 countries**, and has brought our total submissions to over 9,000 since its inception.



Participants depicted the importance of mangroves to their communities through their artwork, showcasing their creativity and understanding of environmental conservation. The winning artworks were featured in our annual art calendar, highlighting the talent and passion of these young artists while raising awareness about the critical role of mangroves.



Between Ancient and Modern Lights, Aaron Ruy G. Musa



Expanding our Reach

MAP's Newsletter is **one of the world's longest-running source of major mangrove-related news**. It summarizes global events for practitioners and enthusiasts, reaching over 2,000 recipients. This reinforces our role as a global leader in providing information on mangrove conservation and restoration.

Our mangrove restorationist cohort **now boasts 575 global members** dedicated to protecting and restoring mangroves. This email group actively shares knowledge, experience, and contacts to enhance mangrove restoration success.

We entrusted our social media management to a creative storytelling agency, and achieved an **average reach of over 30,000 people across all platforms**. In November, we launched a new website to enhance our online presence and engagement.

Dr. Dominic Wodehouse and Dr. Laura Michie participated in the 6th **Mangrove Macrobenthos and Management conference in Colombia**, with Laura presenting. Dominic presented at the **Society for Ecological Restoration Conference in Australia**. Additionally, Laura presented at the 24th **International BIOECON Conference in Spain**, while MAP's Founder, Alfredo Quarto, joined a panel for the **Tropical Reforestation Network in Costa Rica**.

MANGROVES

Captured in 2,210 Unique Moments

Our annual **Mangrove Photography Awards** captivate audiences with stunning images illustrating mangroves' vital ecological roles. These creative works raise awareness about mangrove ecosystems, their threats, and the urgent need for conservation. This year, **712 photographers from 72 countries participated, showcasing the beauty and importance of mangroves**. Soham Bhattacharyya claimed the title of Mangrove Photographer of the Year 2023 with 'The Finest "Flower" of the Mangroves,' featuring an endangered tigress in the Sundarbans (annual report cover). Endorsed as a **UN Decade programme**, the Awards garnered global attention, covered by major media outlets like [BBC News](#) and the Guardian, and featured in UNESCO exhibitions across Thailand, Paris, and India. [Explore the 2023 winners here.](#)



Pink Mangrove Lagoon, Felipe Santander

FILMING

Restoration Success

MAP's outreach program raises public awareness with award-winning video production and photography. ***Return of the Mangroves*** follows the MAP team to El Salvador's Bay of Jiquilisco, where Alfredo Quarto, MAP's Co-Founder, and Jim Enright revisit their mangrove restoration efforts after 12 years, with Dr. Laura Michie's help. The bay, home to one of Central America's largest mangrove forests, is crucial for the ecosystem and local communities but remains threatened. **This collaborative project with Asociación Mangle aims to showcase ongoing challenges and successes in mangrove conservation.** Directed by Leo Thom and supported by SALZWASSER e.V., the film offers an intimate portrayal of efforts to protect this vital coastal habitat.

Recovering Mangroves in the Bahamas is a short film about the Bahamas Mangrove Restoration Project, told through local voices. After Hurricane Dorian destroyed 73% of the mangroves on Grand Bahama and nearly half on the Abaco Islands, MAP conducted a CBEMR training workshop for the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust (BTT) and Waterkeepers Bahamas (WKB). These organizations, in collaboration with partners like MANG, have **planted 50,000 red mangroves and aim for 50,000 more.** The workshop built capacity for stakeholders and supported restoration efforts. Directed by Leo Thom, the film showcases the collaborative work and the contributions of Justin Lewis and his team at BTT.



From our Chief Operating Officer

Nick Hardigg

As one of the newest members of the MAP team, I'm highly impressed with what I've found: a business model based on empowering local communities, a remarkable track record, strong program managers and directors, and funders who are taking notice.

Financially, MAP continues to be strong: with the equivalent of 10 months' operating expenses in cash reserves, continued growth, and high demand for our services. We also operate with high efficiency: program activities account for 73% of our expenses.

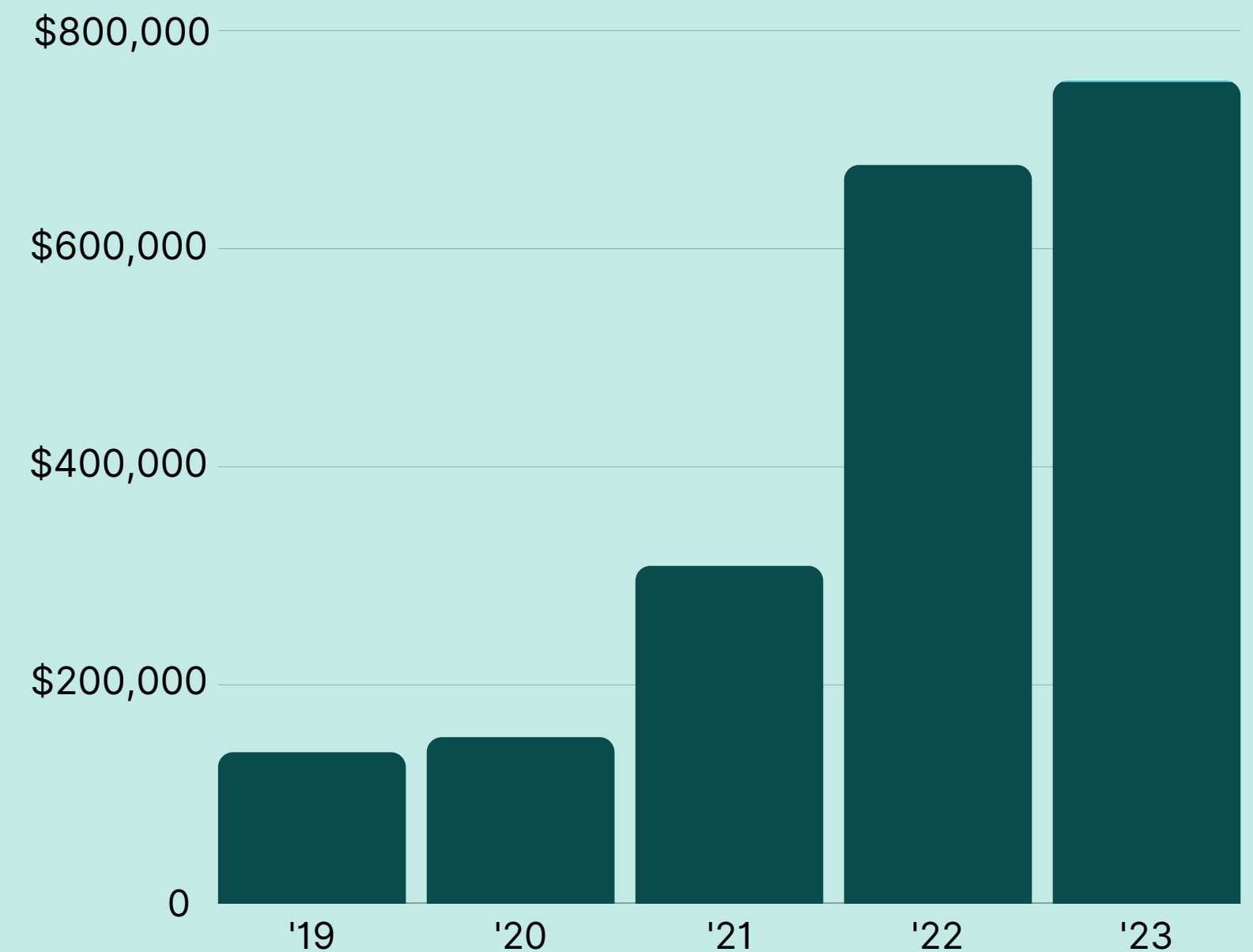
It's also been exciting to be involved with communications, where our award-winning video productions show exactly what we do, and how we change lives and futures: one forest at a time, leaving communities with the capacity to keep the restoration wave moving forward.

I've worked for 30 years in conservation, and have rarely seen an organization capable of having such enduring impact on ecosystems and communities like Mangrove Action Project.



FINANCIAL REPORT

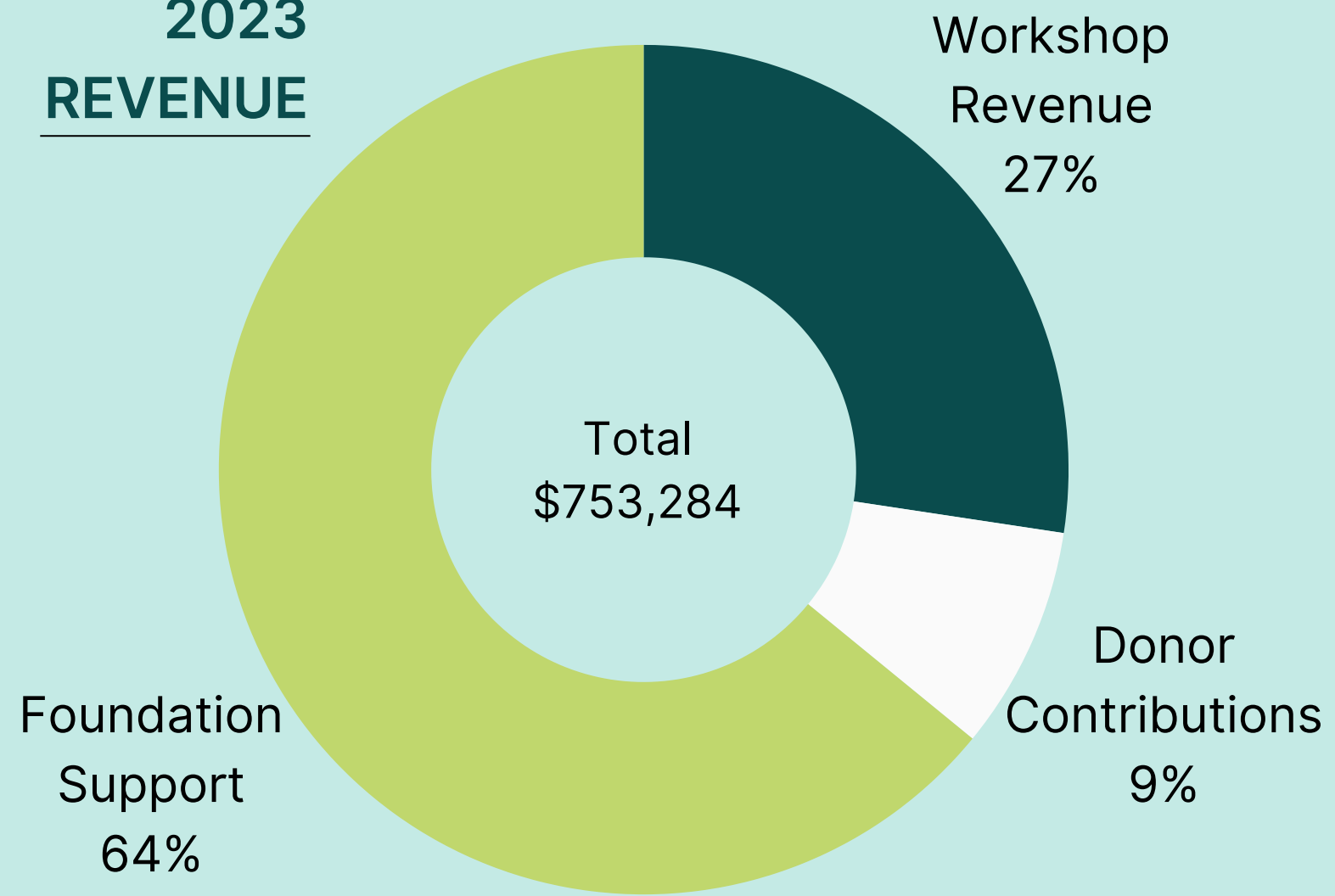
Operating Revenue Growth



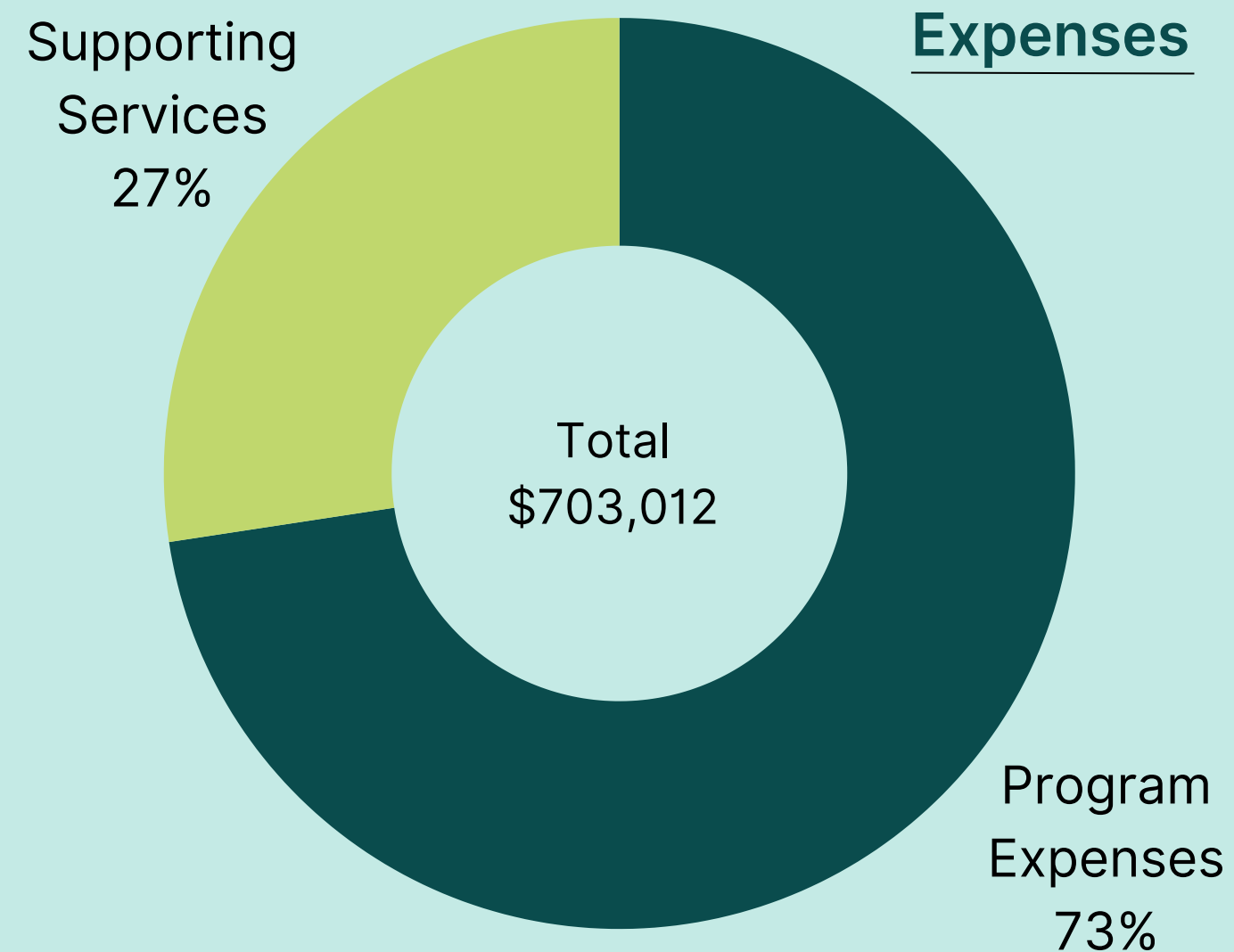
2019	\$138,280
2020	\$152,090
2021	\$309,144
2022	\$676,725
2023	\$753,284

Statement of Activities

2023 REVENUE



Functional Expenses



Fiscal year operating revenues and expenses

2023 Total

2022 Total

Revenues

Donor Contributions	\$64,212	\$113,490
Foundation Support	\$482,554	\$512,461
Workshop Revenue	\$206,206	\$49,680
Mis. Income	\$311	\$1,905
Total Revenues	\$753,284	\$676,725

Expenses

Staffing	\$484,959	\$342,880
Professional Services	\$81,886	\$24,524
Advertising & Marketing	\$2,600	\$2,000
Office and Administration	\$39,177	\$17,369
Travel	\$109,173	\$26,439
Insurance	\$5,661	\$1,768
Interest Expense	\$1,798	\$1,737
Grants & Awards Issued	\$12,012	\$26,475
Other	\$1,798	\$1,695
Total Expenses	\$703,012	\$444,887

Net Operating Income

\$50,272

\$231,838

Statement of Functional Expenses

Program Expenses	\$510,336
Supporting Services	\$192,676
Total	\$703,012

Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$219,290
Restricted	\$164,525

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our major donors, without whom our work would not be possible. **THANK YOU** for your generous support.

Major Foundations & Companies

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Major Individual Donors

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Jessica McGhee Molly Bang
Kurth Family



Tanga, Tanzania

OUR STORY

CONTINUES

Since its founding, Mangrove Action Project has been committed to protecting and restoring mangrove ecosystems worldwide. Over the past 31 years, our progress has been made possible by the unwavering support of our remarkable donors and funders. Despite our achievements, the threats facing mangroves persist, highlighting the continued importance of our work.

Our dedicated supporters have been the cornerstone of our success, enabling us to expand our impact and implement crucial initiatives. Their generous contributions have been instrumental in every project and restoration training. **You are the heroes behind our success stories.**

We are deeply grateful to our donors for their dedicated commitment, which fuels our drive to restore and conserve mangrove forests for future generations. As we reflect on our accomplishments, we recognize the need to accelerate our efforts and broaden our reach.

As we embark on a new year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our donors. Your support makes MAP's work possible. Together, with your continued support, we can create a world where mangroves thrive and flourish. Thank you for being a vital part of our mission.





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MAP is a registered 501c(3) non-profit charity organisation

The Finest Flower of the Mangroves, Soham Bhattacharyya