

Indigenous Stewardship and Resource Co-Management:

*Co-creating A Sustainable Food System in Saisiyat Socio-Ecological
Production Landscape, Taiwan*



Forestry and Nature Conservation Agency
(FANCA), MOA

Director General
Dr. LIN Hwa-Ching

x



Miaoli County Saisiyat Indigenous Peoples Forestry
and Worker Limited Liability Cooperative

Chair of the Board
Tribal Elder **KEN Chih-You**
《ta:in a taboeh Sa:wan kaS'ames》

TAIWAN

- Sub-tropical and tropical climate zones
- With **268** mountains above 3000 m
- Over **60,000** species
- **16** indigenous groups

► **High
Biological and
Cultural
Diversity**

Eurasian Plate

Tropic of Cancer

Philippine Sea Plate



As a result of the nationalization of forests, which began with the Japanese colonial government more than a century ago, many indigenous people have lost their traditional territories.

In addition, in the past Taiwanese government enacted many laws and regulations to protect natural resources, further restricting sustainable use of wild animals and plants by indigenous people.





February 7, 2018

FANCA signed a forest co-management partnership agreement with the Saisiyat Tribe at the Legislative Yuan

The Main Principles of FANCA Co-management Mechanism

Initiative

Initiated by regional branches of FANCA



1. Initiated by Indigenous tribes or organizations
2. Convened by regional branches of FANCA (8 in total)
3. Cross-jurisdictional efforts between multiple branches

Decision making

Consultation and information sharing



1. Sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources
2. Tribal self-management via FANCA entrustment scheme

Collaboration

Forest Co-management Committee



1. Carried out by the Forest Co-management Committee
2. Supported by administrative contracts with FANCA

Promoting Effective Forest Co-management



農業部林業及自然保育署
Forestry And Nature Conservation Agency, Ministry Of Agriculture



April 28, 2018

**SaSiyoS Reconciliation Ceremony
in the tradition of the Saisiyat
Tribe**



Elder Ken

**“What kind of substantive co-operation
can we have?”**

Director Lin

“Let’s start with forest honey!”



FANCA commissioned the Saisiyat Tribe to assist in forest patrol of the surrounding national forest – Saisiyat traditional territory.

These forest areas used to be hot spots of illegal logging - in most cases committed by the local tribesmen.

Despite many doubts whether the Saisiyat Tribe could handle this responsibility, FANCA was convinced of the rightness of decision and fully trusted the community.

Now, 7 high-risk individuals from the tribe have joined the Saisiyat Cooperative, and 21 young people have returned to the village.





Elder Ken suggested that the tribe should be allowed to enter the national forest to investigate traditional areas and old trails to develop eco-tourism.

In November 2019, the tribe returned to the forest sanctuary, which had previously served as a site for coming-of-age ceremonies.





The Saisiyat tribal members and their “Father’s Tree”



Bauhinia championii

Tribal Green Economy

- By sharing the benefits of forest ecosystem



Development of forest therapy and ecotourism

- ✦ With the environmental carrying capacity in mind – approximately 3-4 reserved groups per month



Under forest beekeeping

- ✦ 10 apiaries
- ✦ Indicators for measuring carrying capacity of the ecosystem



Shiitake mushroom farming

- ✦ 5 households engaged in cultivation
- ✦ Mushroom production started in fall 2020



Sustainable forest management

- ✦ Logging operations performed by the Saisiyat Cooperative members
- ✦ FSC certification was granted in 2023



Circular Economy

- ✦ Utilization of forest by-products
- ✦ Pure hydrosol & essential oils, potted plants, wood pellets



Forest Station



The forest station. It used to be a checkpoint to control tribal access to the forest – dubbed by the tribesmen as "**the devil's house**". It is now an exhibition space and a local store for tribal forestry products.



“The tribe has been forgotten”

In the past, there were 10 Saisiyat tribes in Penglai Village, Nanzhuang Township. This place was once lush and prosperous, but strict conservation laws led to poverty and many environmental and socio-economic problems.

Protecting Our Ancestors' Forests

- ✚ *Forgotten Saisiyat tribes of Penglai Village*
- ✚ *Development that has been stagnant for more than 50 years*

Hotspot of
illegal
logging

Stagnated
livelihoods

No future

Cultural
gap

Social
problems

Population
outflow

Hatred &
opposition

Aging
population

Environmental
damage

- ♣ On February 7, 2018, the Saisiyat tribe signed a partnership agreement with FANCA. With the doubts of whether FANCA would deceive us, and challenges and mocks from other tribal members, we got only 7 people participating in the under-forest beekeeping. Moreover, problems were coming one after another.
- ♣ We almost gave up due to the lack of income. Over time, with resilience and perseverance, we finally turned things around. Now, we have 158 members in the Miaoli County Saisiyat Indigenous Peoples Forestry and Worker Limited Liability Cooperative (the Saisiyat Cooperative).

From Conflict to Respect to Reconciliation

Under-Forest Economy - Beekeeping



Co-management of the Forest

Creating a Diversified Tribal Forest Economy





Carefully Planning the Utilization of Space to Support Multiple Businesses

- ♣ Beekeeping
- ♣ Shiitake Mushroom Farming
- ♣ Indigenous Chicken Breeding
- ♣ Therapeutic Potted Plants
- ♣ Oil Extraction of *Camellia brevistyla*

- ♣ We use beekeeping as an ecological monitoring indicator to control space utilization and development of various industries. We produce a limited amount of high-quality under-forest products. Through creation of our brand – ‘pakaSan’ – we accomplish the revitalization of the tribe.

Co-management of Forest



- Forest patrol, natural disaster prevention, and wildfire mitigation mechanism was established in 2019. We are proud of returning to the forest and walking on the same trails with our ancestors.

- ✦ What we carry on our hikes is not the equipment, but the garbage left in the forest for years. It is everyone's responsibility to protect the environment.



Protecting the
Mountains and
Forests

Skidding Field of the Saisiyat Tribe



On April 5, 2023, the national forest around the Saisiyat Tribe was granted the **FSC®*** certification.

**FSC – Forest Stewardship Council*



Connecting with the global trend - The forest depot of the Saisiyat - We were granted the FSC certification on May 4th, 2023.



The Saisiyat Cooperative - From September to October 2023, we flew to Austria to study how the tower yarding operation works.



Development of Green Economies Enhancing an Added Value of Tribal Resources





On September 20, 2023, we held a press conference to announce the brand image and package design of our tribal brand – ‘pakaSan-Harmony between Human and Nature’.

Utilization of Logging By-Products

Recycling & regeneration of natural resources to improve the livelihoods of the Tribe





Sustainable Forest Revitalized Tribe



- ✿ China Airlines adopted 18,600 seedlings of *Taiwania cryptomerioides* and *Engelhardtia roxburghiana* and planted them on a 7.6 ha plantation (felling areas no. 28, 23, 25, and 27 of forest compartment no.10).
- ✿ This initiative reflects the commitment of China Airlines to environmental protection, social responsibility, and forest sustainability as part of its ESG goals.

- ♣ Co-management of the forest
- ♣ Tribal culture renaissance

- ♣ Developing sustainable ecotourism that fits GSTC* standards
- ♣ Revitalizing the Tribe

**GSTC – Global Sustainable Tourism Council*



Community Organization System Benefit Sharing



- ❖ The Miaoli County Saisiyat Indigenous Peoples Forestry and Worker Limited Liability Cooperative (the Saisiyat Cooperative) was established in 2019.
- ❖ Through merging tradition with modernity and by establishing a fair, open, and co-sharing business operating system, our aim is to encourage the youth to return to their homeland.

- ♣ The Saisiyat Cooperative holds regular meetings every 10th day of each month. Its members discuss and share benefits together. After the meeting, the members receive their remuneration for the previous month and assignments for the upcoming month.
- ♣ This operating system truly improves the economic status and livelihoods of tribal members.



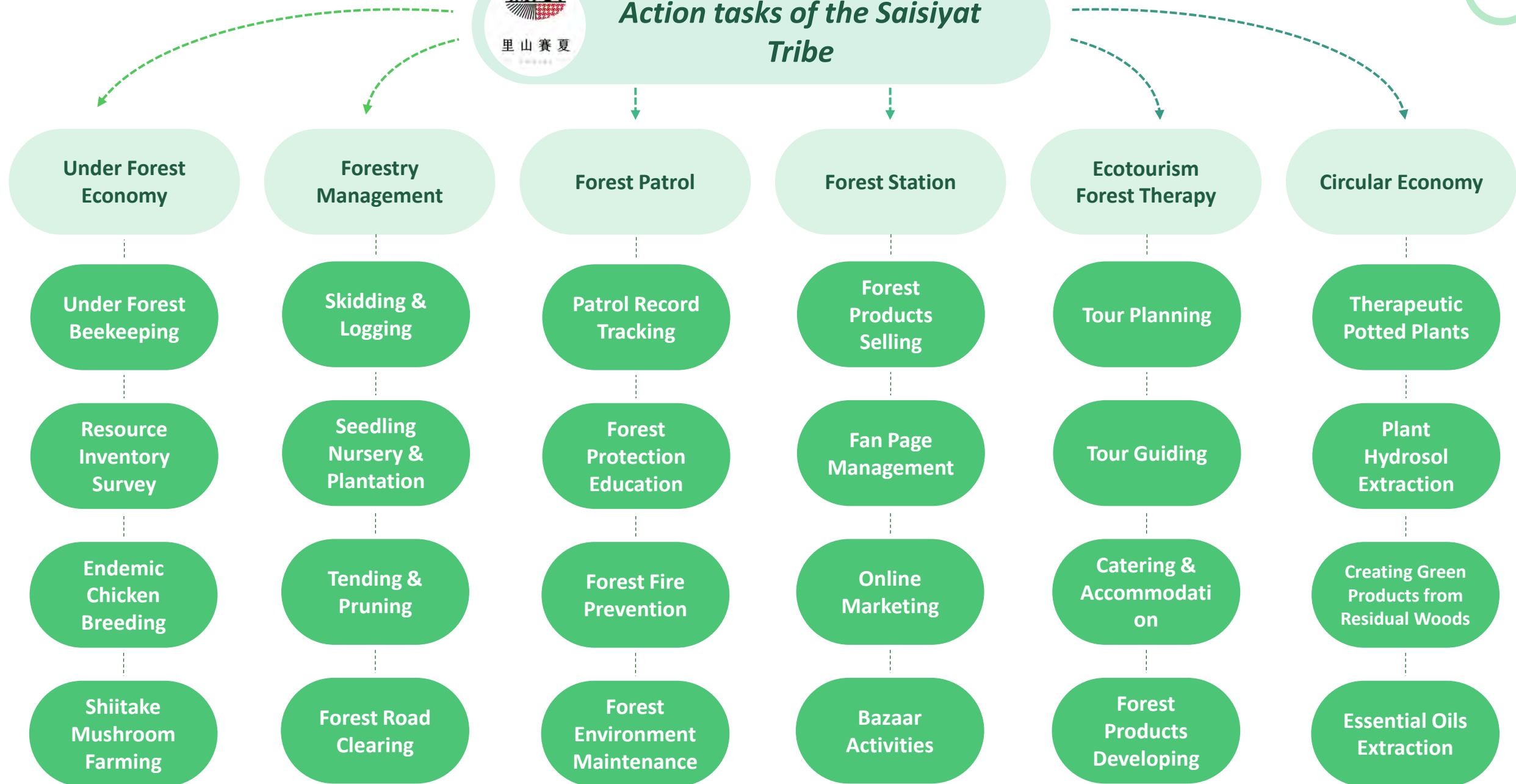
Poverty
Reduction
Livelihood
Stabilization

Changes of the Tribe



- ✿ Tribal trouble-makers who were abandoned by the tribe transformed into stewards of the forest
- ✿ Poverty reduction and improvement of self-esteem and self-worth of the Saisiyat locals
- ✿ Cultural renaissance and transmission of knowledge and values
- ✿ 28 youths have proudly returned Home for good
- ✿ Additional livelihood opportunities and support were created for tribal elders and women







Community Service



- ♣ We maintain the cleanliness of local environment and teach the next generation of the Tribe the concept of nature conservation and sustainability.

Cultural Renaissance Knowledge Transmission

*Restoring the 達葛門 – the
Saisiyat coming-of-age
ceremony, that has been
dormant for 52 years*



Medicinal & Edible Plants



Elaostema lineolatum Wight
var. *majus* Wedd.



Monachosorum henryi



Anoectochilus formosanus
Hayata



Pilea melastomoides (Poir.) Wedd.

Restoring the Saisiyat Native Plant Wisdom

Medicinal Plants



Hemiboea bicornuta (Hayata)
Ohwi.



Schefflera octophylla (Lour.)
Harms



Tetrapanax papyriferus



Bauhinia championii

Restoring Saisiyat Ethnic Plant Wisdom



‘Kudzu’

Pueraria lobata (Willd.) Ohwi

✦ Mother’s flower



‘Mountain Litsea’

Litsea cubeba (Lour.) Persoon

✦ Love flower



‘Stout Camphor Tree’

Cinnamomum kanehirai Hayata

✦ Tree of life



‘Thick-fruited Sloanea’

Sloanea formosana Li

✦ Tree of sun

✦ Every plant used by the Saisiyat people has legends about its origin and properties.




Our Vision:

Protecting the forest for the young people to come Home

Nowadays, climate change and biodiversity loss are the issues that everyone should think about.

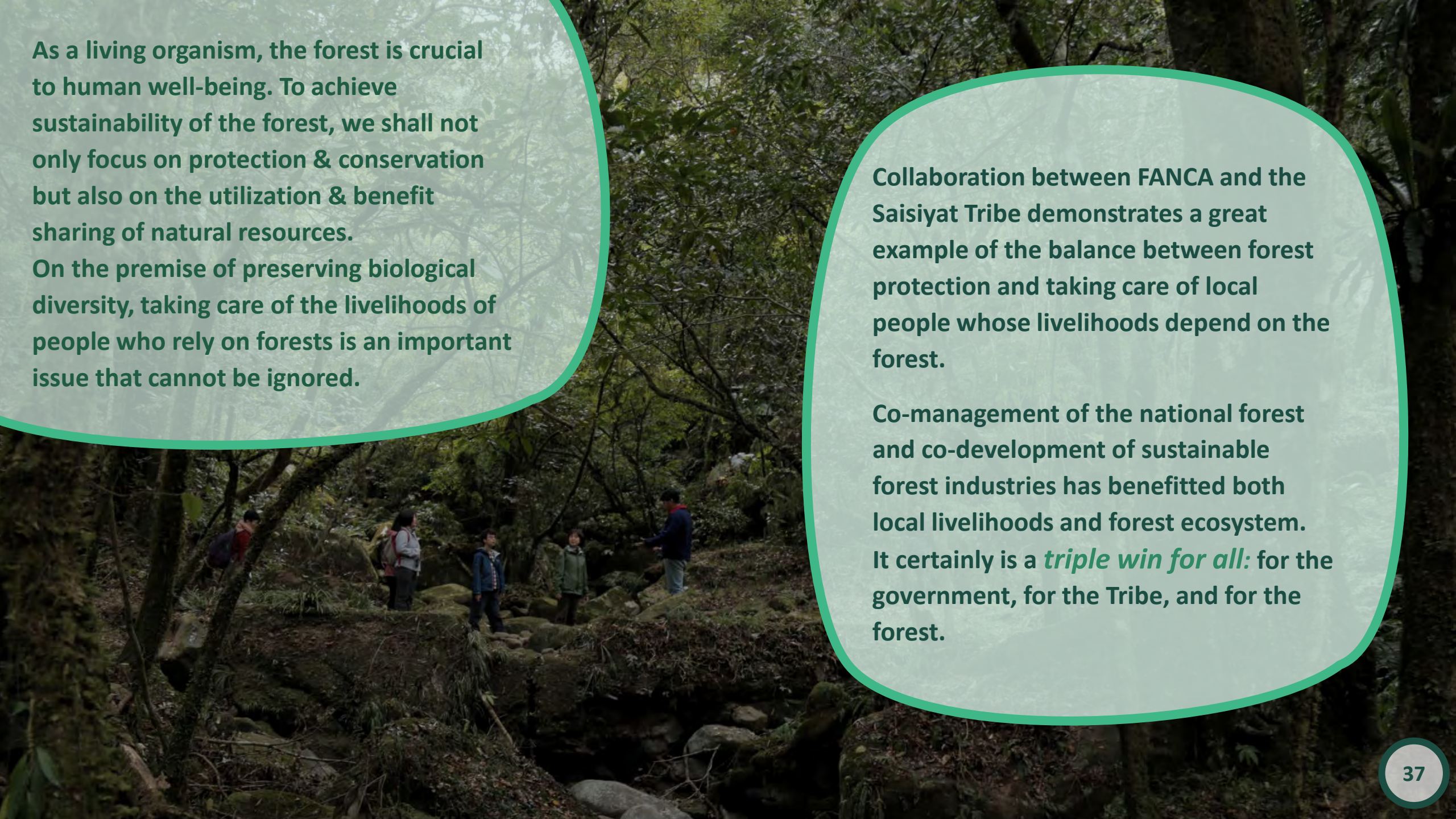
The Saisiyat people strive to protect the Earth by ensuring harmony between humans and nature. This means understanding and sustainably sharing the multiple values and ecosystem services of the forest.

Let the youths come back and thrive for generations to come!!

A scenic view of a mountain range with lush green forests and a small village in the valley. The mountains are covered in dense green vegetation, and a small cluster of buildings is visible in the lower part of the image. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

There is still a long way to go for the Saisiyat people – with only 7,008 of them left in the world.

We are still working hard to protect the mountains and forests. From now on, we hope that the Saisiyat Tribe can thrive...

A group of people are hiking on a rocky trail through a dense forest. The trail is made of large, mossy stones and is surrounded by thick green foliage and trees. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up the trail. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent green bubble in the upper left corner.

As a living organism, the forest is crucial to human well-being. To achieve sustainability of the forest, we shall not only focus on protection & conservation but also on the utilization & benefit sharing of natural resources.

On the premise of preserving biological diversity, taking care of the livelihoods of people who rely on forests is an important issue that cannot be ignored.

Collaboration between FANCA and the Saisiyat Tribe demonstrates a great example of the balance between forest protection and taking care of local people whose livelihoods depend on the forest.

Co-management of the national forest and co-development of sustainable forest industries has benefitted both local livelihoods and forest ecosystem. It certainly is a *triple win for all*: for the government, for the Tribe, and for the forest.



Thank you for listening!