Rainforest Alliance Annual Gala Leadership Summit
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Goldman, Sachs & Co.
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PANELISTS & PRESENTERS

Juan Marco Álvarez has 25+ years experience in conservation management, corporate sustainability and green growth issues. He has an MBA focused on sustainable development from INCAE Business School in Costa Rica.

From 2009-2011 he worked for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Geneva, Switzerland, as Global Thematic Program Director and was also in charge of its Business and Biodiversity unit. There he focused on partnerships with multinationals such as Shell, Holcim, Rio Tinto and Nestlé Nespresso, as well as with the International Council for Mining and Metals (ICMM) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

Prior to IUCN he served as Executive Director of SalvaNATURA, El Salvador´s leading conservation NGO, known for its work on national park (protected areas) management, environmental education, watershed management, as well as the implementation of best practices and sustainable certification for the coffee, sugar and tourism industries.

Juan Marco has served as Board Member in various international organizations such as IUCN (2004-2008), the Union for Ethical Bio Trade based in Amsterdam (2009-2011), the Green Economy Coalition based in London (2009-2011) and the joint IUCN-WWF Program known as TRAFFIC based in Cambridge (2009-2011). From 2010-2014 he served as member of the International Standards Committee of the Rainforest Alliance-Sustainable Agriculture Network.

Most recently Juan Marco served as Executive Director of the Salvadoran Business Council for Sustainable Development, and since early 2016 he moved to Guatemala to work for Grupo HAME-OLMECA, the country’s leading banana and palm oil producers, as their first Corporate Affairs and Sustainability Director.
Townsend Bailey leads supply chain sustainability for McDonald’s U.S.A. In this role, he works with product leads, suppliers, industry and stakeholders to integrate sustainability into McDonald’s food sourcing strategies from the farm to the front counter of McDonald’s 14,000+ restaurants in the U.S. He is also McDonald’s global lead for coffee sustainability.

He joined McDonald’s in 2011 as Global Sustainability Manager, where he created McDonald’s first comprehensive Sustainable Sourcing Guide and designed McDonald’s first global tool for collecting data on raw material sustainability. He has also served as the Global Lead for Packaging and Happy Meal Premiums in McDonald’s Worldwide Supply Chain.

Prior to joining McDonald’s, Townsend consulted with the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability in Atlanta. In this role, he engaged with elected leaders, public officials, business leaders, NGOs, and citizens to support and advance the City of Atlanta’s sustainability efforts.

Townsend started his career as a high school teacher and coach. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Classical Studies from Villanova University, a Master of Education from the University of Notre Dame, and an MBA from Georgia State University.

Townsend lives in Oak Park, Illinois and enjoys running, food, and spending time with his wife and two daughters.

As director for Southeast Asia, Nurdiarna Darus leads a diverse team in creating and implementing a strategic plan to grow the Rainforest Alliance’s footprint in the region, particularly in the palm oil sector.

Darus brings with her over 20 years’ experience in strategic management and program implementation. Most recently she served as the Executive Director of Indonesia Palm Oil Pledge (IPOP) where she worked with more than 30 partners, government officials and international stakeholders in implementing ambitious commitments to sustainable palm oil production and sourcing. In this role, Darus also worked to greatly increase engagement of smallholder farms, local communities and indigenous people throughout Indonesia.
Prior to her role with IPOP Darus worked with the REDD+ Agency as Deputy Minister of Technology, Systems and Monitoring and was a senior advisor for the United Nations office for REDD+ in Indonesia. She has also held various leadership roles with Fortune 500 companies including Accenture, the world’s largest consulting firm operating in 56 countries where she worked for 16 years.

Darus is a distinguished and highly regarded leader in the Indonesian business community across various sectors including forestry, energy and finance. She is also a respected expert in business strategy, information systems, program implementation and business management. Her new role marks a major development in capacity for the Rainforest Alliance, particularly in the Indonesian palm oil sector.

Darus graduated cum laude from the University of Oklahoma and earned a Master’s of Science in Information System Technology from George Washington University.

Dr. Eric Dinerstein is Director of WildTech and the Biodiversity and Wildlife Solutions Program at RESOLVE. For much of the past 25 years he was Chief Scientist at the World Wildlife Fund.

Beginning in 1975, he conducted pioneering studies of tigers and their prey and led conservation programs for large mammals, such as greater-one horned rhinoceros and Asiatic elephants. Along with Dr. Eric Wikramanayake, Eric mapped tiger conservation landscapes, designed the Terai Arc Landscape in Nepal and India, and came up with the idea of a Global Tiger Summit, staged in November 2010, to double the wild tiger population.

He helped create the conservation plans for many iconic places—including the Galapagos, the Chihuahuan Desert, the Himalayas, the panda mountains of China, and the northern Great Plains of Montana. He has conservation experience in many countries and has published widely on large mammal conservation including books on rhinos and tigers.
Ing. Elder Manrique Figueroa Rodríguez is the Executive Secretary of the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP), appointed by the President of the Republic of Guatemala. He is a citizen of Guatemalan, an Environmental Engineer, who graduated from the Rural University of Guatemala. He has extensive experience in the elaboration of Environmental Impact Studies by the College of Agronomist Engineers of Guatemala. He has developed his training in the Environmental Field within the framework of Management of Protected Areas and Sustainable Forest Management. Administrative Authority of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), National Focal Point of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Chair of the Coordinating Council of the National System for the Prevention and Control of Forest Fires - SIPECIF -, Columnist Of the Central American Newspaper on environmental issues. Consultant specialized in the National Institute of Forests -INAB-, being trainer in Forest issues to Municipalities and users of the Forest Service, widely recognized for its leadership and decision making.

Andre de Freitas is Executive Director of the Sustainable Agriculture Network – SAN, a coalition of leading environmental groups that develop and manage the Sustainable Agriculture Standard, against which products bearing the Rainforest Alliance seal are certified. Andre has a long history of supporting social and environmental sustainability initiatives. He obtained an engineering degree in forestry from the University of São Paulo, after which he worked to improve worker’s rights by implementing certification schemes and codes of practice at the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers. He has been Social & Environmental Manager at Rabobank, where he coordinated the development and implementation of a social and environmental policy for the bank’s operations in Brazil, and worked for SAN founding member, IMAFLORA, first as an auditor and then as Executive Director. Most recently, Andre served as the Director General of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), where certification grew by more than 85 million acres under his tenure. During this time, Andre also served as an ISEAL board member, and later as Board Chair until 2012. At the end of 2015, Andre joined the Advisory Board of Social Accountability International.
**Daniel Katz** is the Senior Program Director at The Overbrook Foundation, where he directs the foundation’s environmental giving in the areas of international biodiversity conservation and sustainable consumption. He is the Board Chair and former president of the Rainforest Alliance, an organization he co-founded in 1986 at the age of 24. At Overbrook, Mr. Katz created Catalog Choice -- a web-based service that offers an easy way for millions of users to stop the flow of unwanted catalogs into their mailboxes. He is currently spearheading initiatives to build a stronger, more inclusive and equitable environmental movement in the United States.

A former Kellogg Foundation National Leadership Fellow, Mr. Katz has served as a consultant, adviser and board member for numerous organizations including People for the American Way, Grist.org and the Nespresso Sustainability Advisory Board. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the editor of two volumes: Why Freedom Matters: The Spirit of the Declaration of Independence in Prose, Poetry and Song (Workman) and Tales from the Jungle: A Rainforest Reader (Crown).

Mr. Katz is a frequent speaker at colleges and universities around the country on the topics of social entrepreneurship, rainforest conservation, sustainability and leadership. He received his MBA from the Stern School of Business, New York University. Katz studied Chinese linguistics in Wuhan, the People’s Republic of China. He lives in New York City with his wife, Maggie, and their two children.

**Karin Kreider** is the Executive Director of the ISEAL Alliance - the global backbone organization for the sustainability standards movement. She is one of the world’s leading experts on ecolabels, sustainability standards and certification. Before joining ISEAL in 2009, she was involved in the start-up of Rainforest Alliance, and worked there for more than 20 years, first as Associate Director of the organization, and then as Director of the Sustainable Agriculture Program. Karin holds a BFA and an MBA from New York University and is based in London.
Marco Lowenstein has worked in forestry, forest products and natural resources management for the past 35 years throughout North and Latin America. He has experience in both for-profit and not-for-profit settings. Marco is Purchasing Manager for Latin America at North American Wood Products (NAWPI.com) where he has collaborated with RA since 2004 working with communities to develop components for musical instruments in Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. Marco is also Board Member at Northwest Natural Resources Group (NNRG.org) who manages an FSC Group with over 150 members managing 150,000 acres. Previously Marco was SMARTWOOD coordinator for the Western United States and for the Northern Forest. Marco has a Master’s degree in Forest Science from Yale University and lives with his family in Corrales New Mexico.

Dr. Jeffrey Milder is the Rainforest Alliance’s chief scientist and lead advisor for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.

He works to incorporate best available scientific evidence into the organization’s sustainability standards, programs, and overall strategy. He also leads the Evaluation & Research team, which is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effects of the Rainforest Alliance’s certification programs and field projects on people and the environment. Milder serves on numerous scientific and policy working groups on sustainability standards and evaluation, including the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) International Standards Committee, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Ecosystem Services Procedure working group, and evaluation and research initiatives of the ISEAL Alliance, WWF, and others.

Prior to joining the Rainforest Alliance, Milder served as the director of research for EcoAgriculture Partners and has also advised governments and conservation organizations on sustainable development initiatives in North America, Latin America, and Africa. His research has focused on the evaluation of sustainability strategies including voluntary certification standards, integrated landscape management, payments for ecosystem services, and silvopastoralism (diversified cattle-crop-tree farming systems). He has published widely, including in leading scientific journals such as Nature, Conservation Biology, BioScience, Biological Conservation, Ecology & Society, and the International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability.
Milder earned Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Natural Resources from Cornell University and a B.A. in Earth Sciences from Harvard University. He has held research posts at Cornell University, Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

**Jeff Nedelman** is global head of Prime Services, which includes the Prime Brokerage, Clearing (GSEC) and Futures businesses. He serves on the Securities Division ExecComm and the Hedge Fund/Private Equity Screening Committee. Previously, Jeff was head of Americas Equities Sale from 2014 to 2016. He joined Goldman Sachs in 1993 as an associate in Private Client Services in Los Angeles. Jeff was named managing director in 2001 and partner in 2004. Jeff earned an undergraduate degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1988 and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in 1993.

**Felisa Navas Perez** has been an unshakable leader and defender of Guatemala’s precious Maya Biosphere Reserve (MBR). Her determination and commitment have been key to maintaining the social fabric in the MBR even in the face of threats and intimidation from those opposed to the forest concessions.

She has ably served two terms as president of the forestry concession, Asociación Forestal Integral Cruce a La Colorada (AFICC). Amid political, social, and economic uncertainty, Felisa has kept the AFICC in good standing with certifying bodies from the state and has kept the concession solvent as other forestry concessions folded under the same pressures. Thanks to Felisa and her team, more than 1.4 million acres of forest in the MBR are sustainably managed.

By ensuring the health of the forest, Felisa is also supporting the people whose livelihoods depend on the forest. Women and youth in the Petén region have particularly benefited from sustainable forestry management by participating in harvesting and processing non-timber products like xate and ramón nuts. Previously, the concession only produced timber products.
The perseverance of Felisa, a widow with five children, is admirable. Her ability to protect forests, bolster her organization, and simultaneously strengthen relationships with government, communities, corporations, and nonprofits serves as an example for sustainability leadership worldwide.

**Elmer Leonel Salazar Mejía** has been working with Community Forest Concessions for 13 years within the Maya Biosphere Reserve (an entire career since formation) – working as a Timber and Non-Timber Forest Management Technician, advising communities for the management and protection of resources that were granted by the state of Guatemala. He is currently Director of the Social Management Area within the Management Committee of the Association of Forest Communities of Peten (ACOFOP). He has been coordinating the social area for five years within ACOFOP; and spent three years running and managing productive projects for community organizations that make up ACOFOP. Partner and son of Founding Partner of ACOFOP and a Concession denominated Custodians of the Forest in Jurisdiction of Melchor de Mencos Peten.

He currently represents the Executive Director, Dr. Macedonio Cortave.

**Sydney Samuels** was born on April 9, 1952 in Bananera, Morales, Izabal. He has a Doctorate in Public Administration from Atlantic International University. A PhD in Local Public Management at the University of Jaen, Spain with an outstanding qualification. He is a Civil Engineer at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala. He has been Dean of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, where supported associations with the development and research projects of integral development, created the Master of Municipal Development, master and the career of agro-industrial engineering with the mode of double degree with the school of Agronomy. He has signed and supported agreements with municipalities of the interior of the country. He was Director of the school of Civil Engineering, Professor in the Area of planning projects and Planner Professor.

He has conducted research studies at the Central American level in the area of municipal management. For over 30 years in positions of institutions of the Directorate for Administration
Public, Private Sector and international organizations related to the municipal level, the development of programmes and projects of decentralization and strengthening municipal, with focus on the landbase.

He is currently retired from USAC and consults on projects of development and teaches master’s degree courses in the areas of sustainable development, evaluation of projects and public policy at the Universidad Mariano Gálvez de Guatemala.

Dr. Nigel Sizer began his term as president of the Rainforest Alliance in February 2016, bringing with him 25 years of international experience in natural resource management. As former Global Director of Forests Program at the World Resources Institute, Sizer led a hundred-person team geographically dispersed across Africa, Asia and Latin America and launched path-breaking partnerships including Global Forest Watch and the Global Restoration Initiative.

Sizer also served as vice president for Asia-Pacific with Rare, where he developed grassroots efforts to link impoverished communities in Indonesia to global carbon markets and pioneered community-based fisheries and marine protected areas efforts. In 2008, he served as lead advisor on climate change and energy issues in Asia to former US President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative. He has also worked with UNEP in Nairobi and established The Nature Conservancy’s Asia-Pacific Forest Program. He also founded and co-chaired The Forests Dialogue, and helped establish and lead the Asia Forest Partnership.

A globally recognized authority on forests and landscape management, Sizer holds
Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral degrees in natural sciences and tropical forest ecology from the University of Cambridge, UK, and has served on many boards and advisory groups, including the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020, UNEP, the Andean Center for Sustainable Development, the Rainforest Foundation and the Coalition in Support of Amazonian Peoples and their Environment. Nigel has lived and worked in Brazil, Africa and spent ten years in Indonesia. He has served on numerous boards and advisory groups including the Tropical Forest Alliance, UNEP, The Rainforest Foundation, the Amazon Alliance, the Global Forest Foundation, and the Andean Center for Sustainable Development.

A dual national of the UK and the US, Sizer is based in the Rainforest Alliance’s New York office.

Ana Paula Tavares is the Executive Vice President of the Rainforest Alliance and has been with the organization for 15 years. A native of Brazil, she has dedicated her career to protecting the world’s most threatened ecosystems and ensuring sustainable livelihoods for farmers, forest workers and their families. As Executive Vice President, she represents the Rainforest Alliance at international conferences and meetings, collaborates with government and intergovernmental agencies in the development of sustainable development projects and helps Rainforest Alliance division vice presidents define projects. She has been involved in initiatives to increase production of sustainable products and services in Latin America and promote greater linkages with mainstream global markets. She has led the Rainforest Alliance’s Development division since joining the organization and currently oversees several other functions including Communications & Marketing, Education, Markets Transformation and Claims, Traceability & Trademarks. Prior to joining the Rainforest Alliance, Ana Paula was a founding partner at New Frontiers Group, a financial services group in São Paulo, Brazil that promoted investment funds for biodiversity, sustainable forestry, carbon sequestration and renewable energy. She has also worked as the director of science development at the New York Botanical Garden and in Membership, Development and Licensing at the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance.
Chris Wille, now an independent consultant in Portland, Oregon, worked for 22 years for the Rainforest Alliance, based in Costa Rica.

He guided the development of the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), a coalition of leading, local conservation groups. The SAN developed the first farm standards that integrated all three areas of sustainability – planet, people and prosperity. The SAN standards, now used in many tropical countries, benefit farmers, farm workers and wildlife on farms producing bananas, coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar cane, citrus, cut flowers and other important export crops. The SAN standard underwrites Rainforest Alliance Certified™, and certified farm products are sold around the world.

Wille helped agricultural companies such as Chiquita implement best management practices. He collaborated with companies such as Kraft, Unilever, McDonald’s, Nescafe and Nespresso in creating and operationalizing their sustainable sourcing initiatives. He has visited smallholder farms and plantations in 35 countries, participated in training and research, and helped conduct farm assessments and audits.

A wildlife biologist and journalist, Wille previously worked in the Rainforest Alliance’s Neotropics Communications program, headquartered in Costa Rica. Prior to moving to Costa Rica in 1990, Wille was a vice president at the National Audubon Society in New York and an editor with the National Wildlife Federation in Washington, DC. For the U.S. EPA and the Guam Department of Wildlife Conservation, he developed environmental education and public outreach programs and participated in marine and ornithological research projects. He also developed, hosted and produced an award-winning television program on the outdoors for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.
David Wilsey’s research and practice focus on development of integrated natural resource conservation and livelihood programs, generally focusing on forest- and farm-based livelihood systems. One focus is the role of non-timber forest products in food and livelihood systems, and in the development of market-based interventions to support livelihood and lifestyle goals within landscapes of high biodiversity conservation value. Wilsey is the Director of the Masters in Development Practice (MDP) program at the University of Minnesota. Prior to joining the MDP program he spent five years as an associate Extension professor and educator with the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sciences.

His Extension work focused on three themes: natural resource-based livelihood systems, non-timber forest products, and cross-cultural program development. Although Wilsey was situated within the forestry program area, his work regularly crossed boundaries and he established productive collaborations with the small farms team, community vitality and economics, family resource management, and the American Indian leadership team, of which he was an active member. Over the course of his career Wilsey has worked primarily with forest-based and forest-oriented groups in the Americas: in Minnesota, several states in Mexico, Guatemala, and Ecuador. He holds a doctorate in Interdisciplinary Ecology (2008), a masters in Conservation Biology (2001) and a bachelors in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance (1994).

As Program Director, Britta Wyss Bisang has strategic oversight of the UTZ certification standards and their implementation and impact around the world. This includes responsibility for the UTZ Academy, which extends high quality training to all UTZ stakeholders through a global network of trainers and an online learning platform. In addition, Britta is responsible for the delivery of a major new program focused on sector level change in issues like child labor, climate change and living wages. She joined UTZ in 2007 after working for many years on the audit side of certification, and she is an expert in the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable farming. Britta is the Chair of the Board of Directors for ISEAL, the membership organization for credible sustainability standards.