

Activists Are Deploying Recycled Solar Powered Cell Phones To Save Rainforests



By Dylan Charles | [Waking Times](#)

The time is now for innovation in the race to save the world's rainforests, and where governments fail to stand in solidarity with the earth and its creatures, activists are rising to the occasion with dedication and ingenuity.

In an effort to combat illegal logging in some of the most biologically diverse regions of the world, [Rainforest Connection](#) (RFCx), founded by activist [Topher White](#), has developed a warning system which alerts locals and conservationists of immediate threats to old growth trees being targeted by illegal loggers.

Using recycled cell phones, small solar panels and a custom application, RFCx has developed an easily deployable

distributed network of listening devices which serves as a real-time monitoring system for the forest, uploading data to the cloud and alerting conservationists to the sounds of chainsaws. With this data, park rangers and intervention teams can immediately hone in on the location of tree poachers, often early enough to save targeted trees.

These days, statistically speaking, when a tree falls in the forest, there's usually somebody there to hear it – the people that cut it down. With *Rainforest Connection* technology, we can finally rewrite this ancient adage to read:

“If a tree falls in the forest, and no one is there to hear it, **you** still can. And so can the world. We're developing multi-tiered platforms for remote sensing of ecological data that can be used to monitor the health of forests and endangered species.” ~[Rainforest Connection](#)

The system is also being used in research and conservation programs, serving as the ears of the forests, allowing scientists to listen for certain animals or monitor the density of wildlife in a specific area, lending critical data to other conservation efforts.

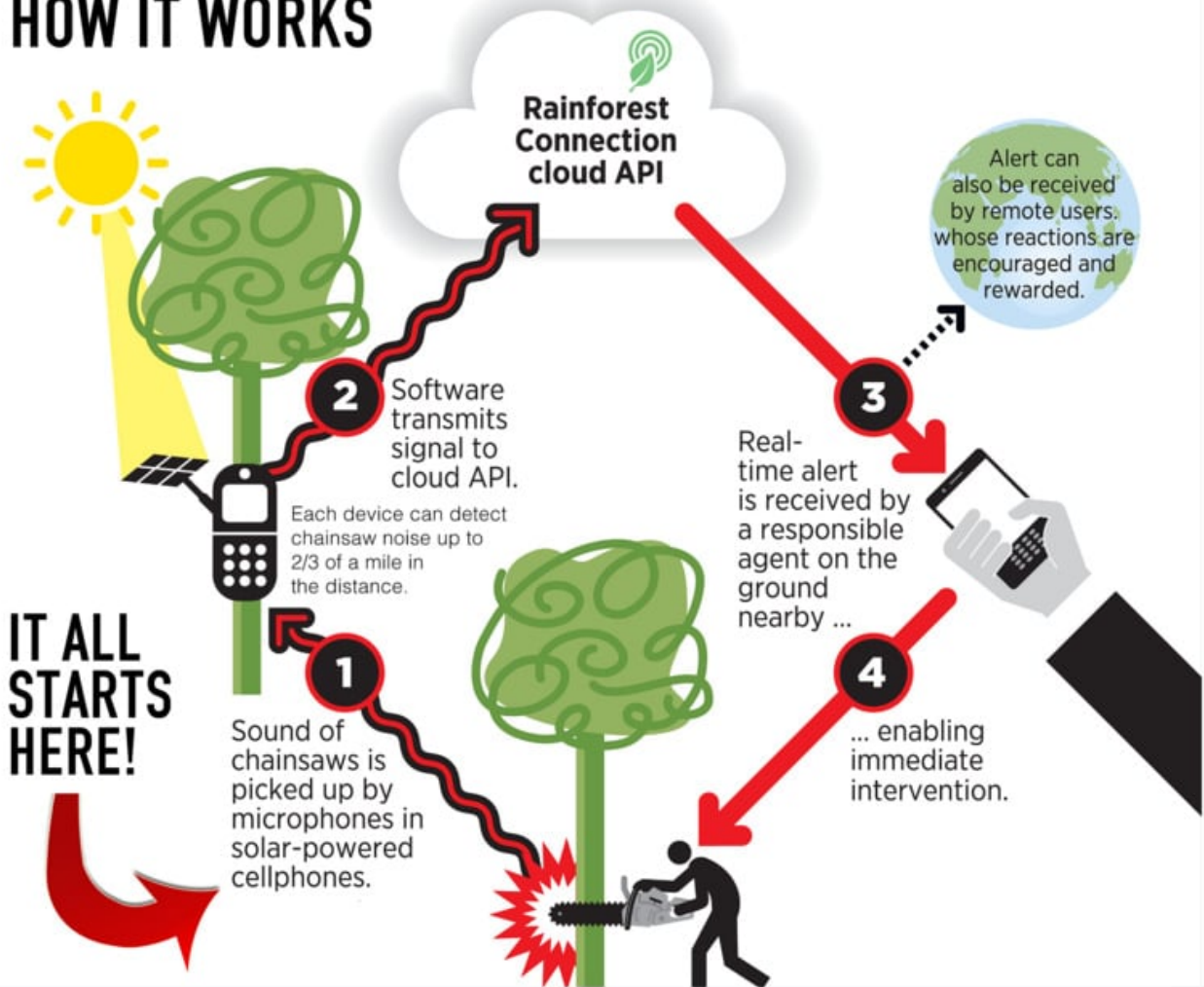
“Rainforest Connection (RFCx) transforms recycled cell-phones into autonomous, solar-powered listening devices that can monitor and pinpoint chainsaw activity at great distance.

This changes the game by providing the world's first real-time logging detection system, pinpointing deforestation activity as it occurs, and providing the data openly, freely, and immediately to anyone around the world.

For the first time on a scalable level, responsible agents can arrive on the scene in time to interrupt the perpetrators and stop the damage, and the world can listen in as it occurs.” ~[Rainforest Connection](#)

The infographic below offers more insight:

RAINFOREST CONNECTION: HOW IT WORKS



How detection of illegal logging by the Rainforest Connection compares to detection by satellite imagery.



Source: Rainforest Connection

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Reed says the project is already a major win for locals who have been struggling to stop the destruction caused by loggers and wildlife poachers. Remarking on why this monitoring network is so helpful to regional tribes, Reed says, 'their territories are too big to cover by manning them because their tribes are too small, and it's too expensive to build a wall,' to keep out poachers.

He can be seen in the following video explaining the RFCx's project in Borneo:

Rainforest Connection's project was recently featured on an episode of Give, hosted by Jenna Bush Hager:

You Can Help

While the efforts of small, dedicated groups of independently funded people are like David vs. Goliath against corporations and poachers, they may be the best hope we have, especially with projects like this one which multiply the capacities of locals engaged in the fight for conservation.

You can help support Rainforest Connection by donating cell

phones, making monetary donations and by spreading the word. Please take a moment to visit their website and their [Facebook page](#). For a look at some of the many incredible creatures this project protects, visit their [Flickr page](#).

About the Author

Dylan Charles is a student and teacher of Shaolin Kung Fu, Tai Chi and Qi Gong, a practitioner of Yoga and Taoist arts, and an activist and idealist passionately engaged in the struggle for a more sustainable and just world for future generations. He is the editor of [WakingTimes.com](#), the proprietor of [OffgridOutpost.com](#), a grateful father and a man who seeks to enlighten others with the power of inspiring information and action. He may be contacted at wakingtimes@gmail.com.

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