Amazonia Beyond the Crisis

Accountability for Deforestation: Preventing Further Human Rights, Environmental and Economic Disasters

21 September 2019
New York City
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The following report presents a summary of the meeting “Amazonia Beyond the Crisis: Accountability for Deforestation: Preventing Further Human Rights, Environmental and Economic Disasters”, held in New York City on 21 September 2019, immediately in advance of the United Nations Global Summit for Climate Action.

It is intended to summarise the main issues discussed in the panels, and present the main consensus outcomes, which were drafted in cooperation by conveners and key speakers.

The world’s attention has turned back to Amazonia, due to the headline-grabbing deforestation and fires crisis. Indigenous land and reserves of traditional populations are being affected. Community leaders are being threatened, intimidated or even killed. The right to health is being jeopardised by smoke. Unparalleled ecological and economic assets are being lost, and soil is being impoverished.
After declining in the middle of the past decade, the deforestation rate in the Brazilian Amazon had stabilised in recent years. However, even before the recent spike, it was still too high. Science has now showed how the Amazon forest is moving towards a dieback scenario, where the ecosystem as a whole, across a vast area, could collapse, in a vicious circle of degradation and fragmentation, if deforestation continues to expand.

Society at large - in countries that share Amazonia - no longer accepts large-scale deforestation. It has proven to be bad for the local economy, bad for biodiversity and bad for the climate at both regional and global levels. In addition, it affects the basic human rights of indigenous and traditional populations, in a spiral of threats, violence and conflict. In Brazil, a broad and diverse coalition of mainstream economic and civil society stakeholders just launched a national campaign to hold accountable those who engage in land-grabbing, crime and violence.

Despite different opinions and priorities, most stakeholders share a common expectation that medium- and long-term investments are needed, with strong, timebound commitments by the private sector, to stop deforestation and promote a diverse forest economy based on the unique biological assets of the region. There are plenty of good and successful examples of local economic activities adopting sustainable practices and relying on natural capital.

The event was designed to bring together indigenous and community leaders, scientists, business and NGO leaders from Amazonia in view of the UN Global Summit for Climate Action, to have an opportunity for exchange and to unite their voices to call on Governments, policy makers, and big business to make the significant and deep changes necessary to prevent deforestation and fires in Amazonia in the future, and to protect and promote the human rights of local people, including their right to justice and redress.
Event Program

20 September

Welcome Reception in honour of speakers and participants

West Terrace, 4th floor DDR, United Nations Headquarters, New York

17.00 Accreditation and collection of badges
17.30 Reception opening
17.45 Welcome Remarks by Antonella Dentamaro, the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation
18.00 Greetings from the partners

21 September

Amazonia Beyond the Crisis

The Harvard Club New York, 35 W 44th St

8.30 - 9.00 BREAKFAST AND INFORMAL NETWORKING

9.00 – 9.15 Trailer of the documentary “Soyalism”, introduced by Stefano Liberti

9:15 – 9:30 OPENING REMARKS

Han de Groot, CEO, Rainforest Alliance
Niccolò Figà-Talamanca, Secretary General, No Peace Without Justice
Brenda Brito, Associate Researcher, IMAZON
Maurício Bauer, Senior Corporate Engagement Specialist, National Wildlife Federation
Jeferson Straatmann, Value Chains Coordinator, Instituto Socioambiental
9.30 – 9.45

**KEYNOTE INTRODUCTION**

Perspectives on the Crisis from 50 Years in Amazonia

**Tom Lovejoy**, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation

9.45 – 10.50

**PANEL 1 - Fires As the Tip of the Iceberg: What is Really Happening?**

*Part 1: The Human Rights Crisis*

- **Ana Valéria Araujo**, Executive Coordinator, Brazil Fund for Human Rights, Brazil
- **Maurício Yekuana**, Director, Hutukara Yanomami Association, Brazil
- **Domingo Peas Nampichkai Achuar**, Field Representative, Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuadorian Amazonia
- **Miguel Macedo**, Specialist, Indigenous Peoples, Instituto del Bien Comun, Peru
- **Atossa Soltani**, President of the Board, Amazon Watch
- **Lizardo Cauper**, President, Interethnic Association for Development of Peruvian Rainforest

**MODERATOR: Nigel Sizer**, Chief Program Officer, Rainforest Alliance

10.50 – 11.45

**PANEL 2 - Can the Cattle Industry Help Curb Deforestation?**

- **Mauro Lúcio Costa**, Rancher, Paragominas, Brazil
- **Laurent Micol**, Director, Pecuária Sustentável da Amazônia, Brazil
- **Brenda Brito**, Associate Researcher, IMazon, Brazil
- **Maurício Bauer**, Senior Corporate Engagement Specialist, National Wildlife Federation

**MODERATOR: Natalie Unterstell**, Director, Talanoa
11.45 – 12.40  **PANEL 3 - Leveraging Market Forces to Promote Sustainability**

*Marcello Brito*, President, Brazilian Agribusiness Association  
*Marina Piatto*, Manager, Agriculture, IMAFLORA, Brazil  
*Fabiola Zerbini*, Director, Tropical Forest Alliance Latin America  
*Jeferson Straatmann*, Coordinator, Value Chains, Instituto Socioambiental, Brazil  
*André Guimarães*, Co-facilitator, Coalition for Forests, Climate and Agriculture, Brazil  

**MODERATOR: Roberto Smeraldi**

12.40 – 12.45  **Remarks**

*Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo*

12.45 -14.10  **Luncheon**

During lunch, participants have joined “Thematic Tables” addressing a specific issue for more in depth discussion, under the guidance of one or more experts.

14.15 - 15.10  **PANEL 4 - Fires As the Tip of the Iceberg: What is Really Happening?**  

*Part 2: The Environmental Crisis*

*Carlos Souza*, CEO and Founder, TERRAS App Solutions, Brazil  
*Marielos Pena Claros*, Forest Ecologist at Wageningen University, Bolivia  
*Carmen Josse*, Scientific Director, Ecociencia, Ecuador  
*Natalia Calderón*, Executive Director, Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza, Bolivia  
*Tina Oliveira*, Coordinator, Grupo de Trabajo Socioambiental de la Amazonia - Wataniba, Venezuela  

**MODERATOR: Tasso Azevedo**, Coordinator, MAPBIOMAS
15.10 – 16.00  **PANEL 5 - Beyond Impunity: Accountability, Justice, and Forest Economy Innovation**

Edel Moraes, Vice-President, Council of Traditional Populations – CNS, Brazil

Benito Juarez, Director, Fab Lab, Peru

Virgílio Viana, Director, Fundação Amazonas Sustentável, Brazil

Francisco von Hildebrand, Director, Gaia Amazonas, Colombia

**MODERATOR: Niccolò Figà-Talamanca**, Secretary General, No Peace Without Justice

16.00 – 16.25  **Coffee, tea, and snacks**

16.25 – 17.30  **PANEL 6 - Beyond Crisis: What are the Priorities?**

Jeffrey Sachs, Director, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and SDG Advocate under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

Niccolò Figà-Talamanca, Secretary General, No Peace Without Justice

Nigel Sizer, Chief Program Officer, Rainforest Alliance

Carlos Nobre, Climate Scientist, Brazil

Maurício Voivodic, Director, WWF-Brazil

Tuntiak Katan, Vice-President, Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin

**MODERATOR: Roberto Smeraldi**

5.30 pm  **CLOSING REMARKS**
AMAZON, BEYOND THE CRISIS
Accountability for Deforestation: Preventing Further Human Rights, Environmental and Economic Disaster

We, the participants of “Amazonia Beyond the Crisis Accountability for Deforestation: Preventing Further Human Rights, Environmental and Economic Disaster,” a convening held in New York City on 21 September 2019,


Deeply concerned by the deforestation, fires, and other environmental and human rights violations in Amazonia and believing that the crisis happening now in the Amazon region was avoidable and therefore conscious that its repetition in the years to come is increasingly likely without concerted action at several levels to prevent it;

Stressing that continued deforestation could lead, in the opinion of globally-recognized scientists, to an irreversible dieback of the Amazon, with much of the rainforest deteriorating into a drier, fire-prone savannah ecosystem;

Conscious that systematic violations such as those that have occurred and are occurring in Amazonia are not a product of chance, neglect, or system failures, but the result of deliberate policy choices, explicit or implicit, by decision makers and at various levels;

Conscious that it is necessary for local actors to work closely with national decision makers and the regional and international community in order to prioritize resources and interventions necessary to tackle this issue;
Following enlightening and in-depth debates involving many of the most committed peoples and organisations working for the protection of the Amazonian forest and defence of human rights;

Solemnly declare:

1. While the crisis in Amazonia is of primary concern to the communities of the countries whose territory it encompasses, its protection, reinforcement, care and well-being are also of critical global interest, as it is also a crucial part of the global life-support system.

2. As such, Amazonia must be protected from deforestation, fragmentation, and irreversible degradation, and, in this regard, any initiative devoted to agricultural, mining, or industrial exploitation must be monitored to avoid any new initiatives that do not respect environmental or human rights principles.

3. It is essential to secure and protect the land rights of the indigenous people and traditional communities in Amazonia as well as to protect forests and other natural ecosystems by designating them for conservation and sustainable use.

4. It is also fundamental to provide means and resources for local communities to strengthen their capacities to manage their land and the broader environment, to ensure dignified and sustainable livelihoods and at the same time to promote their participation in the decision-making processes of strategies and solutions for the Amazon development.

5. It is essential to improve the quality and productivity of existing agricultural systems in already deforested areas; to shift public subsidies for activities connected to deforestation and human rights violations instead to conservation, restoration, and sustainable use; and to ensure that loans or investments that use public or private funds comply with environmental laws.

6. Governments must reduce the impunity of those who violate socio-environmental laws and create unfair competition with companies, groups, and individuals that are working to comply with the law.

7. It is equally important to promote a knowledge- and service-based economy (rather than expanding the extractive model) by valuing ecosystem services aligned with technological innovation and traditional knowledge, so that we can establish new businesses that promote Amazonian socio-biodiversity.
8. National, regional, and international markets should not boycott all Amazon products without discrimination. They should instead buy from sustainable sources from the region and partner with local governments and producers to assist in the transition to more sustainably producing systems.

9. It is necessary to strengthen civil society capacity to guarantee human rights; to foster national, regional, and international pressure to resolve socio-environmental issues, improve law enforcement, end impunity for socio-environmental crimes; and to extend executive resources to agencies responsible for managing public lands, protected areas, indigenous lands, and the environmental integrity. 10. Governments must take action to reverse the crisis, including not only preventing illegal fires and deforestation, but also ensuring the protection of human rights defenders and their ability to carry out their work.

11. The Amazon and the issues raised in this document require urgent attention, and to that end, we commit to remaining engaged on these issues through continuous independent monitoring of the situation, with a particular focus on how to ensure accountability and the recognition of the rights of those who contribute to sustainability efforts.

We, the participants, who in large part include representatives of those most affected by the crisis in the Amazon, ask the Heads of State and Government participating in the Global United Nations Climate Change Summit and within the UN system more broadly to endorse and implement these recommendations, which we believe are essential for averting further crises and preventing an irreversible Amazon dieback.
Summary Report of Discussion
20 September 2019

Welcome Reception
at the United Nations Headquarters

During the reception, Antonella Dentamaro of the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation thanked the participants and partners for their participation and commitment to the realisation of this event. She emphasized the Peretti Foundation’s determination to take long-term action and help tackle Amazonian crisis issues. Their course of action was framed as cross-sectorial, as it deals with political, legal, and scientific aspects and requires the involvement of wide-ranging stakeholders: from NGOs to donors, and from institutions to citizens. Thus, committing to a threefold course of action: end impunity for those who commit crimes of this scale and scope against the environment; protect the human rights of indigenous peoples living in the affected areas; and to bring about change in the behaviour of consumers and help find new ways of conceiving the exploitation of natural resources.
Prior to the opening of the event on 21 September, Stefano Liberti introduced and screened the documentary “Soyalism”, which illustrates the production chain of pork and soy that endanger small-scale agriculture, our health and the health of our planet. Here, small farmers have no other choice than selling their lands. Hectares of forest are removed, and fertilizers and chemical pesticides are heavily used. The video documents how the main victims are, first and foremost, the local population that are defenceless and unable to take action.

Keynote Introduction: Perspectives on the Crisis from 50 years in Amazonia
By Thomas Lovejoy, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation

Mr Lovejoy relayed that when he first started living and working in the Amazon it became clear that the creation of new highways was synonymous with spontaneous deforestation. He also explained how the rainforest recreates its own hydrological cycle. At the intersection of these two occurrences, deforestation and the hydrological cycle, is the question of how much water will be lost as the forest diminishes. In this same vein, what is happening today is more than simple deforestation. It is also increased fire usage and climate change. These effects are additionally damaging because of their cumulative effects.

This is not the first time the G7 has turned its eye to the Amazon. He suggests that a different organisation take the message of Amazonia advocacy forward. This organisation should be one that can communicate with all the nine Amazonia countries and smaller stakeholders within these areas to produce a sustainable trajectory. However, none of these plans, no matter how well formed, will work without including indigenous populations and the disenfranchised who must subsist by burning.
PANEL 1

Fires as the Tip of the Iceberg: What is really happening?

Part 1: The Human Rights Crisis

This panel was dedicated to an analysis of what is currently happening in the Amazon. Amongst the panelists there were representatives of indigenous groups and human rights activists, who described the serious human rights violations suffered by the local populations, victims of summary executions, arbitrary detentions and crimes that go unpunished.

Ana Valeria Araujo, Executive Coordinator - Brazil Fund for Human Rights, Brazil

If we equate the human rights issues and violations to an iceberg, then fire is just the tip that is seen from above the water. The vast majority of the violations currently remain hidden from view. In the 1930s and again in the 1960s-1980s there were “development” marches through the forest. Both then and now, land occupations happen under the umbrella of state sponsorship. This government sponsorship and their attitude toward the forest is centred on economic gain and geopolitical paranoia. The prevailing thought process is that if the government is not using forest resources, someone will take it from them. Historically this “development,” which includes mining, burning, or logging, was accomplished by painting indigenous peoples as barriers to be removed. Currently, new policies are blocking protection attempts while simultaneously legitimising destructive industries, symptomatic of a new race to colonise the Amazon.

Mauricio Yekuana, Director - Hutukara, Association of the Yanomami People, Brazil

The media consistently presents indigenous people as obstacles and not legitimate guardians of the forest. We [indigenous peoples] do not take the land for granted and are well positioned to be stewards of the forest. As testament to this claim, indigenous people have many examples of how successful they are at living on the land through sustainable means. Some of the most pressing concerns for indigenous people include loss of land, pollution and water contamination, diseases for which they have no immunity, and the extrajudicial killing of their leaders by antagonist groups. Indigenous people do not want to live under these threats while simultaneously being accused of being isolationist and uncommunicative. In reality, they are communicating their concerns, thoughts and wisdom, and are making significant efforts to develop partnerships with a wide range of actors.
Domingo Peas Nampichkai Achuar, Field Representative - Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuadorian Amazonia

The problems indigenous peoples face - petroleum, mining, disease and deforestation - originates in the historical mismanagement of the forest by outside others. Yet, there is still hope for improvement. Indigenous people have gotten together and are saying “no more” in a united attempt to provide solutions and save land. However, sustainable solutions will not happen if indigenous peoples are excluded from the wider national and global conversation. Inclusive stakeholder representation is what is needed, and this must include the perspectives of children, as they will inherit these issues. Indigenous peoples want to be the bridge that spans the gap between forest conservation and the outside world.

Miguel Macedo, Specialist, Indigenous Peoples - Instituto para el Bien Comun, Peru

Dr. Macedo and his organisation develop ownership and land cover maps of the Amazon in order to improve land management and policy decisions while simultaneously providing information to indigenous leaders so that they may advocate for themselves. The utility of this approach was demonstrated by relaying two stories of violent action against indigenous people. In both cases, which were five years apart, separate indigenous communities campaigned for recognition and legal landownership. These endeavours ended in the death of four indigenous leaders, the attempted murder of several others, and just this year six community leaders were kidnapped. There has been an established precedent of violent action against indigenous communities and periodic world condemnation, yet this pattern continues. Through the information documented in the maps, it is evident that many of the problems arising from a lack of recognition of collective rights ends up hurting individual human rights.

Atossa Soltani, President of the Board - Amazon Watch

How should the Amazonia advocacy movement respond? How could the movement build a super organism in the face of this crisis? The world’s, admittedly short, attention span is focused on the tip of the iceberg but has yet to explore the extent of the violations submerged under water. Ms Soltani challenged everyone to look beneath the iceberg and consider our very model of development. To ask ourselves, if this is a successful system and who is benefiting. If solutions are to be found, they will need to be more adaptive, inclusive, holistic and creative than those of the past. Specifically, changes need to address trading relations, debt, human rights violations, murder, corruption, deforestation, expansion in oil drilling and many more. Bandaging a broken mechanism is inefficient, we must interrogate and change the system, or at the very least challenge what we define as its goals. If development and growth is the goal, how can we achieve success in less destructive ways?
Panel one closed with comments addressing “What needs to change for us to come together to form a stronger alliance, so this crisis does not continue?”

Mr. Yekuana felt that it was necessary to build relationships based on consulting. In this vein, his organisation has produced a platform for how the government and others can communicate with indigenous populations. Others complemented this message by calling for unity and additional alliances, especially national policies that include indigenous peoples. Mr. Peas forcefully stated that indigenous communities know that they cannot conduct this fight alone.

The speakers felt that it is essential for the wider world to realise that the Amazon is not empty. Indigenous people are the stewards of an invaluable resource, yet they receive very little philanthropic investment for their life-plans. It is necessary to empower indigenous populations to be their own agents of change so that they may articulate their message to the wider world, engage new stakeholders and demand that society as a whole think about the Amazon.
PANEL 2

Can the cattle industry help curb deforestation?

The second panel provided a different perspective on the issue thanks to the participation of owners of local agri-business initiatives. They stressed that strategies for conservation should take into account, and include, the views of those actors involved in production processes. This would allow for more responsible exploitation of the lands belonging to Amazonia.

Mauro Lucio Costa, Rancher - Paragominas, Brazil

Cattle production has the reputation of destroying Amazonia, but one of the roots of deforestation is couched in the more complex societal issue of poverty. Populations that currently live in poverty will continue to burn the forest as a resource until they are provided with a more viable economic option. Another aspect of the problem is real estate speculation concerning projected land-use which ill-aligns with reality. Mr Costa believes that it is a fallacy to say that more deforestation is needed in order to grow crops or for the cattle industry to survive.

Laurent Micol, Director - Pecuária Sustentável da Amazônia, Brazil

It is possible to increase cattle production in the Amazon without increasing carbon production and deforestation, with the help of additional funding. Brazilian beef production and exportation is increasing, yet an assessment of the intersection between exportation, profits and forest management shows the need for increased production in order to prevent further deforestation. In response to this need, Mr Micol’s organisation is rehabilitating ranches in order to reduce the time necessary to raise cattle to slaughter weight, cut carbon emissions and provide ranchers with an economically sound income. However, to scale up this small-scale initiative, the model needs additional long-term financing with low interest rates that are locally compatible with this activity. There also needs to be more market incentives for sustainably raised cattle. Boycotting goods from the Amazon will not solve this problem. It would be more effective to give credit and buy from areas that are investing the time and money to grow/raise cattle sustainably.
Brenda Brito, Associate Researcher - Amazon Institute of People and the Environment (IMAZON)

The policies surrounding beef production are not promoting protection. There are meat packing companies that signed agreements not to buy meat from unsustainable suppliers (illegal deforesters). However, violators are not being prosecuted and some intermediary buyers are not always required to show that a cow has always been raised sustainably. It is necessary to tighten these laws in order to close loopholes; educate small producers about the ways, means, and value of sustainable production; connect beef producers to environmentalists and environmental law compliance in productive ways; and end impunity among companies by bringing them to account in a timely manner and, if necessary, punishing habitual violators.

Mauricio Bauer, Senior Corporate Engagement Specialist - National Wildlife Federation

Mr Bauer exposed the power of market initiatives to transform the supply chain. Incentives should be put in place that require action, not just inaction or avoidance. Our approaches need to include the meat packers because they have a substantial effect on curbing deforestation. If these organisations are to make meaningful change, they will need help identifying good actors from bad actors, a herculean task that should not be assigned to any one portion of the production line. Civil society and academia can contribute to this process by helping identify good actors and bring them to the forefront.

Throughout the panel, an agreement emerged concerning having common laws within all countries of Pan-Amazonia. These laws would be the result of consultations with all stakeholders involved, from indigenous populations to owners of businesses. They would not only facilitate dialogue and exchange, but also common ground to cover issues such as deforestation, conservation, incentives, specific models of development, business, etc.
This third panel deepened the issue of business, sustainability, the environment and human rights. Though this panel represented a heavily Brazilian perspective, the assessments introduced were varied thanks to the differentiated fields and focus of the speakers’ work.

Marcello Brito, President - Brazilian Agribusiness Association

It is necessary to realise that Brazil and Brazilians are attempting and making positive steps not just negative ones. These positive steps need to include and, in part, stem from the practices of large corporations. The agendas of these large companies need to align with those of conservation, not just incremental and episodic interest. Other countries are able to preserve their forests because they are making money from them and do not want to lose their income/economic source.

Marina Piatto, Manager, Agriculture - Instituto de Manejo e Certificação Florestal e Agrícola (IMAFLORA), Brazil

There is a gap between commitments not to buy from deforestation areas and actual action. There needs to be commitment and enforcement across the whole supply-chain, not just at one point. All actors in the chain need to pay and invest in sustainable production and products, otherwise it is too expensive for any one stakeholder.

Fabiola Zerbini, Director - Tropical Forest Alliance Latin America

The value-chains and supply-chains are not ready to provide the type of forest and human rights sustainability that is necessary. They need to be developed in conjunction with the Brazilians. In order to build new models, we need to move out of our comfort zone. We need to incorporate and feel the cost of deforestation in new and more internalised ways. Brazilians need to use events like this conference to produce joint solutions, where they have loud and represented voices.
Jeferson Straatmann, Value Chains Coordinator - Instituto Socioambiental

Indigenous populations and traditional communities have a vast and intimate knowledge of the forest, especially as it pertains to biodiversity use, domestication and conservation. Unfortunately, the wider world economic system just takes into consideration the production of raw materials, ignoring the economical positive externalities produced by their modes of life inside their territories. The western societies paradigm about forest must understand, recognise and value this economy based on Knowledge and Services instead of a simple economy of raw material production. Without it, the "sociobiodiversity" products and services could not compete against plantations, synthetics and all predatory activities that are growing in the region.

André Guimarães, Co-facilitator - Coalition for Forests, Climate and Agriculture, Brazil

Fifty years ago, Brazil imported the majority of its consumer goods with very little exports. The decision to flip this approach was instituted because the country was losing money. Economic incentives, roads and other infrastructure were developed to address importation, all at the expense of the Amazon. Today, society in general has more information on the effects deforestation is having on the climate and the economy. It is clear that these effects are bad for both Brazil and the world. The paradigm in Brazil needs to answer how to produce more to ensure the wellbeing of the country and still reduce deforestation? It is necessary to reinvigorate/recontract the world’s commitment to the Amazon because it is the heart/kidneys of the world (because it filters out so much carbon).

The panel ended with a discussion on boycotting as a short-sighted and false solution. Responsible investment across the whole supply chain would be vastly more successful. Concrete action is more difficult but will be more effective than inaction or the redistribution of sourcing, which just shifts the problem.

Boycotts are important and sometimes successful, but they have to be used in the right ways. In this instance, boycotts just lower the bar because Brazil will still sell its products, but now to potentially less respectable buyers. Boycotting may actually end up hurting the Amazon. Many of the violators are large-scale land grabbers. There need to be better ways to understand the problem in order to produce rules and policies that are effective.
Remarks, Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo - Pontifical Academy of Sciences

The Bishop thanked the organisers for putting on a conference that addressed a key challenge of our time. He reminded everyone that the next synod, which would take place from 6 to the 27 October 2019, would deal with the issues of Amazonia, deforestation, climate change and the impact on indigenous populations. He urged the scientific community, all members of civil society, business, and all stakeholders at large to keep their commitment alive on such a fundamental issue.

Discussion followed during lunch, when guests and speakers shared insights and opinions at different thematic tables.
PANEL 4

Fires as the Tip of the Iceberg: What is Really Happening?

Part 2 - The Environmental Crisis

This panel focused on the environmental aspects of the crisis, and highlighted the reality and daily challenges experienced by those engaged in protecting the Amazon forest in various areas. Panelists came from different countries in the Pan-Amazonia region, namely Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Except for Dr. Marielos Pena Claros, all panelists belonged to the Amazonian Network of Georeferenced Socio Environmental Information (RAISG).

Carlos Souza, CEO and Founder - TERRAS App Solutions, Brazil

By mapping deforestation, Dr Souza’s organisation can demonstrate that since 2015 there has been 40,000 new instances of forest degradation. Over the last year, this loss is equal to 260 Central Parks. Tragically, many of these areas are classified as “protected”. His organisation sends new deforestation information to policing agencies when they occur in protected areas. This data can be fed into the supply chain in order to separate the “good guys” from those participating in illegal practices.

Marielos Pena Claros, Forest Ecologist - Wageningen University, Bolivia

The fires in Bolivia have affected 4 million hectares, 76 percent of which are in Santa Cruz. This area includes several different biomes, including savannas and dry forests. The negative effects on local people, the water and local fauna have been devastating. Many people have to move to new regions, which is drastically increasing the size of some communities.

Carmen Josse, Science Director - EcoCiencia, Ecuador

The aboveground carbon density in the Amazon is reducing and the Amazon forest is no longer a carbon sink. In the entire space defined as being the Amazon, 34 percent of above ground carbon is stored in indigenous territory and 24 percent in protected areas. Forty-seven percent of the total carbon loss (2003-2016) was due to human-induced degradation and natural disturbance, while the rest (53 percent) to deforestation.
Natalia Calderón, Executive Director - Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza, Bolivia

Amazonia should be seen as a collective problem and resource for all countries that house the Amazon. Amazonia is more than Brazil. In collaboration with RAISG her organisation is studying land use change in Amazonia and the trends of forest conversion for agriculture usage. She reported tragic figures on how much of Amazonia is burning.

Tina Oliveira-Miranda, Coordinator - Grupo de Trabajo Socioambiental de la Amazonia, Wataniba, Venezuela

Significant amounts of legal and illegal mining overlap with indigenous lands. Dr. Oliveira-Miranda displayed maps that indicated higher levels of deforestation associated with illegal mining in indigenous territories and protected areas. Most of the illegal mining takes place in the rivers, which leads to heightened mercury contamination and significant health problems for the populations living in those areas.

The panel concluded by noting that the current state of the Amazon region is the product of various and contrasting stakeholders, their activities and resulting effect on the environment. Yet all of these components demand positive technological transformations. All stakeholders need to create new ways for saving tracts of land. To do this, there needs to be more information on the current land use and status in order to make informed decisions. However, one reliable observation is that there will be more fires in the future.

We need to work with the communities in education programs to ensure that they have the resources to prevent fires from getting out of control. “Slash and burn” is how farmers normally clear land, making this a predictable variable.

If we want to move forward, humans need to see Amazonia as a whole and not country by country. We should learn from each other’s successes and failures, facilitate open communication but also be sensitive to the differences between countries.

Conversely, making generalisations about the entire Amazon does not capture the complexity of the situation. How to, functionally account for both of these perspectives is a continuous question.
This panel discussed the issue of justice and responsibility for the environmental and human rights crimes taking place in Amazonia. It highlighted how each country has different legislative frameworks, and policies for the management of territories and protected zones. Speakers included representatives of local and indigenous populations and members of enterprises committed to social change.

Edel Moraes, Vice-president - Council of Traditional Populations of Amazonia, Brazil

The local communities, indigenous peoples and Quilombola peoples do an important service by demonstrating that it is possible to live with nature. However, they need capacity building since they lack many skills and tools, including the technology necessary to advocate for their own rights. Indigenous and local peoples are made invisible by processes that want them to be so. They need to be made visible, as they are struggling for the right to have rights, to exist, to contribute to legislation, to be heard. They have a right to be consulted and this cannot be seen as a hindrance to the process. The people that live in the Amazon are the most vulnerable. Indigenous peoples are not groups that need to be protected separately from the rest of the population, because they are not defending only their own human rights but the rights of all of us. Decision-makers need to re-think about the model of society they want.

Benito Juarez, President - Fab Lab, Peru

One of the main challenges is that most of the younger generation want to leave their land. Society at large needs to ask how we can protect and support something if we do not love it. The youth need to rediscover this love and attachment to their lands, as well as to be able to see their future there. With his projects, Mr Juarez’s organisation tries to work on this challenge and that of integrating biological products with technology. They use different technologies in different parts of the Amazon to create different solutions for each context. For example, they use 3D printing technology to print a variety of fruit.
Virgílio Viana, Director - Fundação Amazonas Sustentável, Brazil

Dr. Viana’s NGO is demonstrating that it is possible to make sustainable use profitable, to produce sustainable development through the use of resources and, at the same time, reduce deforestation. This is possible through a holistic people-centred approach and by pairing it with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This strategy involves multiple different domains, from health to environmental conservation, and from development to livelihood. A significant part of the challenge is to prevent “brain drain”. The Amazon has a serious problem of youth migrating to towns, therefore their strategy focuses on engaging the youth in their communities to produce innovation. We cannot simply reject development in the Amazon, as there is a demand for jobs. What we need to focus on, instead, should be the kinds of green jobs we can have.

Francisco von Hildebrand, Director - Gaia Amazonas, Colombia

Amazonia advocates need to incorporate the approach to accountability utilised by indigenous actors, including the additional dimensions of nature and non-human elements. Indigenous communities feel that threats to the Amazon are part of a moral and environmental crisis. Accountability for these issues includes having the ability to understand the violation. His organisation works with indigenous communities to gain full recognition of indigenous municipalities and governments. Indigenous local governments and accountability involve three levels: the social element; an intercultural level; and a traditional component. This keeps the balance in the relationship to nature, politics, economy and society. Asking how to bridge the different understandings of accountability is to ask how to bring indigenous perceptions of accountability to the policy-making level.

The panel concluded by discussing accountability for whom and for what? Indigenous peoples are not waiting for an answer but are instead realising that they can provide solutions to the current crisis. There needs to be the establishment of trust, without which there is no participation and without participation there will be a dearth of quality decision-making. There must be political empowerment, because where you have strong indigenous cultures you have strong forests.
The last panel involved contributions from the event organisers, as well as leading experts in different fields related to Amazonia. With insights from wide-ranging experiences, the discussion developed around current necessities and long-term issues to tackle.

Jeffrey Sachs, Director - UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and SDG Advocate under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

We need clear guidelines that are scientifically and ethically based because the practices that exist do not yet possess the necessary clarity. However, there is progress being made, including the Paris climate agreement, which established clear benchmarks and hard numbers. An agreed quantitative path, for what to do, and when is needed for us to reach our goals. Scientists need to lead this actionable pathway, with input from a multitude of stakeholders. At the moment, there is public interest in the Amazon but what are the concrete steps needed to move forward?

Niccolo Figà-Talamanca, Secretary-General - No Peace Without Justice

Deforestation and human rights abuses are not the result of a natural disaster that could not have been avoided. They were political choices that are the result of a tragic cost-benefit analysis. We need to investigate and publicly identify the drivers of these negative choices. We need to ensure accountability and tackle the issue of impunity as one of our highest priorities.

Carlos Nobre, Climate Scientist, Brazil

Warnings alone do not work. They need to be accompanied with potential solutions. He believes that sustainable sourcing is not the sole solution. We need to start valuing biodiversity and to think disruptively/outside of what we know and are comfortable with.
Mauricio Voivodic, Executive Director - World Wildlife Fund, Brazil

The priorities are to protect, to restore, and to fund. It should be a priority to 1) protect indigenous rights; 2) advance towards a vision of zero deforestation (Brazil can continue to grow without destroying the forest); and 3) promote biodiversity. The Brazilian Government and judiciary must curb the illegal activities and they have to end impunity. The private sector and individuals must get better at taking personal responsibility. Since there is no trust, if you are an organisation and you want to sell a product then prove that you are responsible.

Tuntiak Katan, Vice-President - Confederation of Indigenous Organizations from the Amazon Basin

An immense amount of economic resources earmarked to foster change and support solutions never reach the territory where they are most needed. Instead, they are lost within the bureaucratic system. The mobilisation of resources (technical, technological, financial, human) is a necessary step. Other solutions should include the recognition of ancestral knowledge. This type of knowledge is a pledge of protection for territories and forests. When such knowledge is lost, the safeguard of forests and the territory is impossible. Another solution is “healthy” development. Indigenous peoples have been perceived and depicted as an obstacle to development, however we could change the distribution of resources. We should see the indigenous economy as a holistic concept and ask what positive externalities derive from switching resources for extractive activities to resources for indigenous territories.

Nigel Sizer, Chief Program Officer - Rainforest Alliance

Funding for scientific studies in the Amazon is not as robust as it needs to be. There must be a significant increase in funding. Simultaneously, we must condemn large-scale illegal deforestation while also helping the poor who are burning by providing other economic pathways. A very important component is addressing supply-chain insufficiencies. We need to hold companies that have made commitments accountable and those who have not signed on need to have consequences.
The sixth and last panel concluded that indigenous populations are no longer resisting alone, new alliances are forming and emerging.

Amazonia advocates call themselves by various names but the potential for a more united front is here and it is more mobilised. We need to turn this momentum into an alliance.

Moving forward we, the organisers, need to start looking for where are the levers that can be pulled to help induce change and plan for how to avoid having this same conversation next year. Soon the dry season will end, the fires will not be so intense and attention will wane. We must not lose this momentum.

On behalf of the organisers Brenda Brito (IMAZON) thanked all speakers and participants and read out the major elements that had emerged as outcomes of the Conference, which would be incorporated in an Outcome Document reflecting the consensus that emerged from the discussion.
Ana Araújo, Executive Coordinator, Fundo Brasil Direitos Humanos, Brazil

Ana Valéria Araújo is the founding Executive Director of the Brazil Human Rights Fund, the first public interest Brazilian foundation dedicated to support grassroots and non-profit organisations challenging human rights abuses in the country. For the past 13 years, she has been working to help structure an effective human rights community and to strengthen some of the most invisible segments of the Brazilian society. As a human rights lawyer with more than 20 years of litigation and advocacy experience in the field of indigenous rights and environmental law, she has worked for the Nucleus for Indigenous Rights, one of the first organisations in the country to use legal instruments in the defence of Indigenous peoples.

André Guimarães, Co-facilitator, Coalition for Forests, Climate and Agriculture, Brazil

André has longstanding professional experience in the conservation of Amazonia. He was Vice-President of Development at Conservation International Americas and worked as the Private Sector Relations Coordinator at the World Bank pilot program to conserve the Brazilian rain forest. He was a member of the group that created Amazon Institute of People and the Environment (IMAZON), a prominent think tank in the Brazilian Amazon. He is the creator of various initiatives, such as the Clean Tech Fund, a venture capital fund focused on clean technologies, and the Bioatlantica Institute, dedicated to the conservation and restoration of the Atlantic Forest. He was also the founder and manager of Brasil Florestas, a company that focused on implementing forest products as environmental services. He is currently the director of IPAM, an important NGO from the Amazonian state of Pará.

Antonella Dentamaro, Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation

Antonella Dentamaro is deputy director of the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation. With an academic background in social psychology, she started her collaboration with the Foundation after twenty years of experience in non-governmental organisations. In Italy, she coordinated projects for the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and was a member of “Hands off Cain”, an organisation advocating for the abolition of death penalty. She’s been actively engaged in international campaigns for the defense of rights human rights and women’s rights.
Atossa Soltani, **President of the Board, Amazon Watch**

Atossa is the founder and executive director of Amazon Watch, an international NGO dedicated to protecting the rainforest and advancing the rights of indigenous peoples in the Amazon basin. She is the Hillary Institute of International Leadership’s 2013 Laureate and serves as the chair of the board of trustees of The Christensen Fund, as a board member of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, as an advisor to the Peruvian organisation, The Arkana Alliance, and as an advisor to the InterAmerican Clean Energy Institute. Since 1991, Atossa has been leading international campaigns in defence of the world’s tropical rainforests. Previously she directed campaigns at the Rainforest Action Network to end logging in endangered ecosystems.

Benito Juarez, **President- Fab Lab, Peru**

Benito Juarez is the founder and director of the first Fab Lab in South America and of the Latin America Fab Lab Network. He works for technological democratisation through the creation of digital fabrication projects based on multiculturalism and biodiversity. He recently founded the Floating Fab Lab Amazon, a project aimed at tackling issues related to climate change and social inclusion through the integration of the latest technologies with the cultural and natural diversity of Amazonia. This project received the National Eco-efficiency Award in 2017 and obtained UN recognition on Sustainable Manufacturing and Climate Change.

Brenda Brito, **Researcher, Amazon Institute of People and the Environment (IMAZON)**

Brenda holds a Law Degree from the Federal University of Pará, a Master of Science in Law from Stanford University, where she is currently attending the Doctor of Science of Law Program (JSD). She has been a researcher at IMAZON, Amazon Institute of People and the Environment, an NGO focused in environmental research in the Brazilian Amazon. Her research focuses on the enforcement of environmental laws to protect the forest, the improvement of land laws and administration in Amazonia and mechanisms to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

Carlos Nobre, **Climate Scientist, Brazil**

Carlos is a climate scientist recognised for his work on biosphere-atmosphere interactions and climate impacts of Amazon deforestation. He is known particularly for his studies on the risk of ‘savannization’ of the Amazon forest due to deforestation and climate change. He has been an architect for the establishment of a number of research institutions in Brazil: the Brazilian Center for Weather Prediction and Climate Studies, the Center for Earth System Science, and the National Center for Monitoring and Early Warning of Natural Disasters. Previously he served as the chair of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, a member of the International Panel on Climate Change, the UN Secretary-General Scientific Advisory Board, the Brazilian Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Sciences for the Developing Nations and Foreign Associate of US National Academy of Sciences.
Carlos Souza Jr., CEO and Founder - Terras App Solutions, Brazil

Carlos Souza received a Geology degree, in Brazil, from the Pará State Federal University, a MSc in Soil Science from Penn State University, and PhD in Geography from the University of California in Santa Barbara. Following many years of experience at Amazon Institute of People and the Environment (IMAZON), he co-founded Terras, a start-up that develops apps for assessing agribusiness and financing risks associated with deforestation in Brazil. In 2010, he received the Skoll Award for his work on forest monitoring and in 2017 he became a Conservation Fellow of the Mulago Foundation for his work with Terras.

Carmen Josse, Science Director - EcoCiencia, Ecuador

Carmen Josse holds a PhD in Tropical Ecology and is currently serving as the Science Director of EcoCiencia. She has 17 years of experience in conducting regional projects in Latin America, including projects with components of scientific production for dissemination to stakeholders involved with territorial planning and biodiversity conservation planning. Additionally, Carmen oversees the regional coordination of the project “Amazonian Indigenous Territories: Recognizing and responding to Risk of forest Loss”.

Domingo Peas Nampichkai Achuar, Field Representative, Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuadorian Amazonia (CONFENIAE)

Domingo has been working for more than 25 years as a leader of the Achuar nation and as a leader of CONFENIAE, the Confederation of all indigenous people in Ecuador’s Amazon region. Along with his uncle, Domingo played a key role in creating the first governing organisation that united and represented all of the Achuar people in Ecuador. That organisation, now known as Achuar Nationality of Ecuador (NAE), helps defend their territory and ensure that their forests remain pristine. It also works to preserve Achuar culture and ensure their right to self-determination.

Edel Moraes, Vice-president of the Council of Traditional Populations of Amazonia (CNS)

Edel is an activist and teacher. She graduated in pedagogy and holds a Master’s Degree in Sustainable Development from the University of Brasilia. In 2001, she won the elections at the Tutelary Council of the Municipality of Curralinho, representing the union of rural workers and laborers. She was a special advisor in the Government of the state of Pará, in the board of Participatory Territorial planning. The professional life and personal life of Edel are fully embedded by themes such as non-formal education, multiplication of knowledge about social and political struggles and social movement. Her work at the Council of Traditional Populations of Amazonia is centred on maintaining the rights preserved and in making the government and community respect the traditions and identity of the peoples it represents.
**Fabiola Zerbini, Director, Tropical Forest Alliance, Latin America**

Fabiola is a lawyer and holds a PhD in Environmental Science. She has more than 15 years of experience with sustainable value chains, responsible consumption and corporate sustainability in Latin America. She previously founded Instituto Kairós, an NGO working on responsible consumption related to fair trade and ethical economy movements in Latin America and Europe, followed by her role as secretary executive at FACES do Brazil. Before becoming the regional coordinator of Tropical Rainforest Alliance, she was the executive director of the Forest Stewardship Council in Brazil, where she worked closer to the field of forest.

**Francisco von Hildebrand, Director- Gaia Amazonas, Colombia**

Francis has a background in Development Studies, with specialisations in local strategies, community-based participation, and indigenous participation in decision-making and development processes. He is the Chief Executive Director of Gaia Amazonas (Fundación Gaia Amazonas), a Colombian NGO aimed at protecting the Amazon with active partnership with indigenous peoples. Here, he leads the interdisciplinary team, which has been pivotal in leading to the official recognition of indigenous land titles by the Colombian government, the largest indigenous territory in the world.

**Jeferson Straatmann, Value Chains Coordinator- Instituto Socioambiental (ISA)**

Jeferson Straatmann holds PhD in Production Engineering from the University of São Paulo, where he specialised in socio-biodiversity products, value chains and collaborative networks. He has worked in the Brazilian Amazon since 2005 with forest product value chains, territorial management plans and social and territorial organisation. His current work at Instituto Socioambiental (ISA) is linked to the mission of building sustainable solutions that guarantee collective and diffuse rights that value socioenvironmental diversity. Jeferson is currently responsible for coordinating joint solutions for socio-biodiversity value chains implemented in conjunction with local partners in their territories in the Xingu, Negro and Ribeira river basins.

**Jeffrey Sachs, Director- UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and SDG Advocate under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres**

Jeffrey Sachs is a University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, where he directed the Earth Institute from 2002 until 2016. He is also Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and a commissioner of the UN Broadband Commission for Development. He has been advisor to three United Nations Secretaries-General and currently serves as an SDG Advocate under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.
Laurent Micol, Director, Pecuária Sustentável da Amazônia, Brazil

Laurent Micol is a co-founder and CFO of Pecuária Sustentável da Amazônia (PECSA), a Brazilian B-Corp which restores degraded ranches in the Amazon in order to make them sustainable. He graduated from the ESCP Business School in Paris and started his career as a business strategy consultant in Paris and then with Bain&Co in Sao Paulo. He later specialised in environmental management and engaged in Amazon forest conservation in Mato Grosso state with the local NGO Instituto Centro de Vida (ICV) in 2001. He worked as Deputy Director and then Executive Director at ICV for 14 years, focusing on strategies to reduce deforestation and improve land use sustainability. During that period, he also completed a Master's in Geography and promoted a project on sustainable intensification of cattle ranching, which eventually led to the creation of PECSA as a spin-off of ICV.

Lizardo Cauper, President, Interethnic Association for Development of Peruvian Amazonia

Lizardo was born in the Canaan de Cachiyacu native community of the Contamana district, Ucayali region. He is a teacher by profession and, as a Shipibo leader, has been trained in administrative management. He was the previous president of the Federation of Native Communities of Bajo Ucayali (FECONBU). He assumed the vice presidency of the Regional Organization Aidesep Ucayali (ORAU) and subsequently achieved the presidency in the years 2015 - 2017. From December 2017, Lizardo was elected as president of the Aidesep, after the elections held in Iquitos, in the Loreto region.

Marcello Brito, President, Brazilian Agribusiness Association

Marcello is a food engineer who serves as the CEO of the Agroindustria Palma Real S.A (AGROPALMA) Group, Director of the Brazilian Agribusiness Association, and President of the Brazilian Palm Oil Association. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. Marcello has an MBA from the University of São Paulo and an MSc in International Strategy and Science Administration Management from IAE / University Pierre Mendés, Grenoble, France.

Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, Pontifical Academy of Sciences

Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo is the Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. He is widely published in the sciences and worked as professor in numerous Catholic universities. He has been awarded the title of Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic, the Légion d'Honneur of France, the Grão Mestre da Ordem de Rio Branco of Brazil.
Marielos Peña Claros, Forest Ecologist - Wageningen University, Bolivia

Marielos Peña Claros is a Bolivian tropical forest ecologist, working on the effect of human disturbance on forest ecology and dynamics and on how forest recovery can be accelerated. She is associated to the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands. Her research focuses on the following thematic lines: management of forest resources and sustainable harvesting levels; forest recovery after (natural and anthropogenic) disturbances, which is crucial to understand forest resilience to (global) change; forests in multifunctional landscapes; and the effects of land use change on the provision of ecosystem services.

Marina Piatto, Manager, Agriculture - Instituto de Manejo e Certificação Florestal e Agrícola (IMAFLORA), Brazil

Marina Piatto has a degree in Agronomic Engineering from São Paulo State University in Brazil and a Master’s degree in Tropical Agriculture from Bonn University in Germany with an emphasis on Organic Agriculture. She is currently a Coordinator of the Agriculture Certification Program at IMAFLORA, where she is responsible for coordinating agricultural certification in Brazil and Argentina. Her work involves the certification of farms, groups of small producers and industries under international standards based on good agriculture practices, environmental conservation and human rights. Marina also works to improve and develop certification standards systems under the Sustainable Agriculture Network and develops training courses for auditors and is involved in projects and forums setting standards for the sustainable production of coffee, tea, cattle and other tropical crops.

Maurício Bauer, Senior Corporate Engagement Specialist, National Wildlife Federation (NWF)

Maurício joined International Wildlife Conservation team of NWF in 2017 as Corporate Engagement Specialist. Mauricio built his career in the private sector in production and trading of agricultural commodities in Brazil, Australia and in the United States. He supports NWF’s corporate engagement efforts, focused on eliminating the loss and degradation of tropical and sub-tropical forest ecosystems in Latin America that result from the production of key agricultural commodities, primarily beef and soy. He is also responsible for supporting the development and execution of NWF’s corporate engagement activities with companies in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia, coordinating efforts with coalition partners.

Maurício Voivodic, Executive Director, World Wildlife Fund-Brazil

Mauricio Voivodic is the Executive Director of the World Wildlife Fund-Brazil. A forester by training, Mauricio holds a MS in Environmental Science from the University of São Paulo. His studies were focused on non-state governance systems, in particular the institutional dynamics of voluntary certification systems to build and maintain legitimacy among stakeholders and in the marketplace. He is the former Executive Director of IMAFLORA, a Brazilian NGO that works with tropical forest certification and climate change initiatives. He was also a founding member of the Sustainable Agriculture Network, a member of the Steering Committee of the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 and fellow at the Climate Strategies Accelerator program. Mauricio has worked extensively on certification processes for small producers, community and indigenous groups and timber companies.
Maurício Yekuana, Director, Hutukara – Association of the Yanomami People, Brazil

Yekuana is a Brazilian indigenous leader and activist whose community lives on the banks of a river also called Auaris, in the north west of the state of Roraima, Brazil. He represents both the Yanomami and Ye’kuana in Brazil which is the largest indigenous territory in Brazil. Mauricio is part of a new generation of indigenous leaders that both continue to advocate for the protection of their lands and way of life and act as an informed bridge between international actors and indigenous populations. Threats to the associated land includes extensive and endemic illegal mining and measles outbreaks.

Mauro Lúcio Costa, Rancher, Paragominas, Pará

Mauro Lúcio is a cattle rancher who engages in sustainable practices and, as the former president of the ranchers’ union of Paragominas in Pará, has been a pioneer in transforming production methods and drastically reducing deforestation in his region over the past decade.

Miguel Macedo, Specialist, Indigenous Peoples, Instituto para el Bien Comun, Peru

Miguel is an anthropologist who completed his Master’s and Doctoral studies at the National University of San Marcos. He has experience working with indigenous and local farming populations in the Peruvian Amazon. His topics of professional interest include strengthening the governance of rural populations and their representative organisations in order to facilitate adequate autonomous management of their territories, protected natural areas and indigenous reserves for indigenous peoples in situations of isolation and initial contact. He approaches all of these topics through a landscape lens. Miguel also works to develop sustainable change that allows populations to be their own agents of change.

Natalia Calderón, Executive Director, Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza, Bolivia

Natalia is an economist with 14 years of experience in strategic planning coordination, supervision and management of projects related to sustainable forest management, climate change adaptation, food security, fire management and biodiversity conservation. She is the executive director of Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza, a Bolivian NGO that has been working for over 25 years on the conservation of the environment and biodiversity within Bolivia.

Natalie Unterstell, Director - Talanoa

Natalie holds a degree in business administration and a Master’s degree in public administration from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. She was the coordinator of the first state agency in Brazil that worked on low carbon policy in the state of Amazonas. In 2015, she was selected as environmental leader by Harvard University. She is the co-founder of Movement Now! and the Infra2038 Project.
Niccolò Figá-Talamanca, Secretary-General, No Peace Without Justice

Niccolò has extensive experience on the ground, having led large scale human rights and humanitarian law operations in conflict and post-conflict environments, and in the political and diplomatic field. He has advised governments and institutions on the establishment and operating methodology of international criminal justice institutions and other accountability processes. In 1998, he represented Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Diplomatic Conference that adopted the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and at subsequent sessions of the Preparatory Commissions and the Assembly of States Parties. Niccolò holds a PhD and an LLM in International Law.

Nigel Sizer, Chief Program Officer, Rainforest Alliance

Nigel recently transitioned from president of the Rainforest Alliance to his current role as Chief Program Officer. 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 the United Nations Environment Program, as the former global director of the Forests Program at the World Resources Institute, and as the vice president for Asia-Pacific with Rare. He has served on numerous boards and advisory groups including the Tropical Forest Alliance, the Rainforest Foundation, the Amazon Alliance, the Global Forest Foundation, and the Andean Center for Sustainable Development. A recognised authority on forests, ecology, climate change and development, Nigel holds Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral degrees in natural sciences and tropical forest ecology from the University of Cambridge.

Roberto Smeraldi, Curator of the Event

Roberto is a Brazilian journalist and chef, known for his leadership on food innovation and sustainability issues. He is currently the vice-president of Instituto Atá and a food and sustainability columnist at O Estado de São Paulo daily. Previously, he founded the Amigos da Terra - Brazilian Amazonia and has been the Chair of the International NGO Steering Committee for the UN Conference on Environment and Development, Chair of the International Advisory Group to the G-7 Pilot Program for Brazilian Rainforests, a member of the National Commission on Social Determinants of Health and a member of the Sustainability Board at Banco Real, Banco Santander and Suzano. Roberto also co-chaired the Climate and Forest Dialogue and served on the board of The Forests Dialogue. He has acted as senior advisor to various UN agencies, the World Bank and the President of the Republic of Brazil.

Tasso Azevedo, Coordinator- Brazilian Annual Land Use and Land Cover Mapping Project (MAPBIOMAS) Network, Brazil

Tasso Azevedo is a consultant and social entrepreneur in the field of forests, sustainability and climate change. He is a forestry engineer graduate from Universidade de São Paulo - Escola Superior de Agricultura and was founder and director of the Institute of Forest and Agriculture Management and Certification. He coordinates the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Estimation System Network, a System to Estimate Greenhouse Gas Emissions and MAPBIOMAS, a platform to produce annual land cover and land use maps through a multi-institutional collaboration. Tasso was director of the National Forest Program at the Ministry of Environment, general-secretary of the National Forest Commission and the first chief and director general of the Brazilian Forest Service. He was one of the key people involved in the design and implementation of the National Plan to Combat Deforestation and the Amazon Fund.
Tina Oliveira-Miranda, Coordinator - Grupo de Trabajo Socioambiental de la Amazonia - Wataniba, Venezuela

Tina holds a PhD in Biological Sciences. She has been working in conservation with an integrative perspective, where the environment and people are fundamental components. Dr. Oliveira-Miranda is currently the coordinator of the Socio-Environmental Observatory of the Wataniba organization. This position focuses on the monitoring of deforestation, mining and any degrading activity of the ecosystems in the Venezuelan Amazon and Panamazonia.

Thomas Lovejoy, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation and George Mason University

An ecologist and University Professor at George Mason, Thomas has worked in the Brazilian Amazon since 1965 on the interface of science and environmental policy. Additionally, he has spent decades working on the interaction between climate change and biodiversity. He is the founder of the public television series “Nature”, coined the term “biological diversity” and originated the concept of debt-for-nature swaps. In the past, he served as Senior Advisor to the President of the United Nations Foundation, as the Chief Biodiversity Advisor to the World Bank, as Lead Specialist for the Environment for the Latin American region, as the Assistant Secretary for Environmental and External Affairs for the Smithsonian Institution, as Executive Vice President of World Wildlife Fund-US and as Biodiversity Chair of the Heinz Center for Science, Economics and the Environment. Thomas has served on advisory councils in the Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Clinton administrations.

Tuntiak Katan, Vice-President - Confederation of Indigenous Organizations from the Amazon Basin (COICA)

Tuntiak was born in the Tuutinentsa Shuar community, Morona Santiago Province, in the Amazonian region of Ecuador. Since 2000, he has worked on social, cultural and environmental projects among the different cultures in the Amazon Basin. Currently, he is vice-coordinator of the Confederation of Indigenous Organizations from the Amazon Basin and general coordinator of the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities, grouped by the Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests, Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara from Indonesia, Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin and REPABLEC from Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Virgílio Viana, Director - Fundação Amazonas Sustentável, Brazil

With a PhD from Harvard and post-doctorate in sustainable development from the University of Florida, Virgilio is the current superintendent general of the Amazonas Sustainable Foundation. He graduated in forestry engineering from Escola Superior de Agricultura Luiz de Queiroz and was a professor of the Department of Forest Sciences at Universidade de São Paulo - Escola Superior de Agricultura. He was founder and president of Coordinator of the Agriculture Certification Program at Instituto de Manejo e Certificação Florestal e Agrícola IMAFLORA (1993-2000) and participated in the structuring of the Center for International Research, Institute of Ecological Research and the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund. He was president of the Brazilian Society of Ethnobiology and Ethnoecology, Paulista Association of Forestry Engineers and vice president of the Brazilian Association of Secretaries of State for the Environment.
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