



RFN, an investment case for Peru

Creating the conditions for the long-term protection of Peru's three largest contiguous indigenous rainforest territories

Context

The Peruvian Amazon is home to many indigenous peoples with a long history of stewardship of their mega-diverse rainforest home. Today, its guardians are coming under increasing pressure, due to the increased deforestation caused by the expansion of the agricultural frontier, and massive, largely illegal, topsoil strip mining. The rainforest also suffers from widespread degradation caused by the (often-illegal) timber industry; illicit coca cultivation; the development of small- and large-scale infrastructure; and wildcat gold mining which pollutes the Amazonian rivers with mercury. Increasingly, the traditional territories of indigenous peoples are being invaded by loggers, miners, coca growers, business speculators, and a host of other actors seeking economic opportunities in the Peruvian Amazon.



RFN IN PERU IN KEY FIGURES:

- ▶ Budget 2022: **USD 2.5 million**
- ▶ Number of trusted, long-term local partners: **8**
- ▶ Territories protected: **12.5 million hectares, storing 1.75 billion tons of carbon.**

Funding needs and opportunities

A national policy restricting the amount of forest lands that may be recognized as “indigenous territories,” combined with disorganized economic expansion into the Amazon, are causing serious conflicts between these newcomers and native Amazonian peoples who are trying to protect their ancestral homelands. With a weak and unstable political landscape, a deregulated and decentralized country, and inconsistent policies, indigenous and community-led efforts to ensure lasting protection of the remaining rainforest in Peru constitute a cost-effective, catalytic opportunity for progress in the fight against deforestation and climate change. After years of groundwork and support, three large, contiguous indigenous rainforest territories are now ready for upscaled investments: (1) the “territórios integrais” of the North-Western Peruvian Amazon (about 9 million hectares), (2) the Yavarí-Tapiche territorial corridor for the protection of isolated indigenous peoples along the northern border region between Peru and Brazil (about 15.6 million hectares), a third of which is in Peru and (3) the territorial corridor of the Pano, Arawak and other groups for the protection of isolated indigenous peoples (about 9 million hectares on the southern Peru-Brazil border).

What will a US\$ 20 million investment achieve in Peru over five years?

Today, RFN plays a central key role in supporting sustainable rainforest management and governance among 9 indigenous peoples controlling a mostly intact rainforest area of 9 million hectares, including the Wampis and the Awajún territories as well as the Achuar and the Kukama Kukamiria peoples. New autonomous governments were elected in 2021, the second government for the Wampis and the first government of the Awajún peoples. In this context, with a US\$ 10 million investment, RFN will catalyze the following outcomes by 2027:

- ▶ Implementation of IPLCs' management plans and the establishment of an indigenous-led governance structure in at least five IP territories in the North-Western Peruvian Amazon.
- ▶ The establishment of a climate fund for the Wampis and Awajún territories, with appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms recognized by the national authorities and international donors.
- ▶ Policies and affirmative actions to strengthen female leadership and participation in decision-making.
- ▶ Resilience and adaptation plans for sustaining local livelihoods (forest economy, biodiversity).
- ▶ Community-led management plans (including compensation schemes for forest conservation), GIS, surveillance and monitoring systems for the protection of corridors for indigenous peoples living in isolation and initial contact.

How we measure success

- ▶ Deforestation rates in IPLC-managed areas in targeted territories
- ▶ Area of intact rainforest under IPLC management regimes
- ▶ Level of participation of female leaders from targeted areas in local and national decision-making
- ▶ Net increase in climate funding to IPLCs' management plans in targeted areas.

Results to date

- ▶ Since 2004, RFN has supported the national and regional chapters of the main Peruvian organization for indigenous peoples, effectively protecting 9 million ha of pristine rainforest inhabited by indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation and obtaining legal protection for these extremely vulnerable tribes.
- ▶ After years of supporting partners' research, documentation, and advocacy efforts, the Yavari-Tapiche Isolated Peoples Reserve (larger in size than Jamaica) was formally established by decree in 2021. In partnership with Peruvian partner organizations ORPIO, ORAU and allied indigenous organization UNIVAJA in Brazil, RFN also launched a study documenting the existence of the world's largest continuous territories of isolated tribal peoples, across an area of 16 million hectares of intact rainforest along the Peru–Brazil border.
- ▶ RFN's evidence-based advocacy support for its North-Western Amazon partners, based on anthropological and cartographic research, constitutes an important steppingstone to the legal recognition of these peoples' territories as ancestral indigenous territories.
- ▶ RFN's longstanding support to local NGOs and indigenous organizations has resulted in stronger and more effective organizations, improved alliances across civil society sectors, as well as more forceful demands for good governance and rights-based protection of the Peruvian Amazon.



Why is RFN uniquely positioned to deliver

RFN is one of very few NGOs in Peru with global expertise and a solid network of partner organizations focusing on indigenous peoples' rights and rainforest protection. Active in Peru since 2004, RFN has leveraged its knowledge, capacity, and network of contacts, partners and allies to advance (1) the strengthening of representative organizations and institutions for Amazon indigenous peoples; (2) the promotion of the collective rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral territories; and (3) the protection of isolated indigenous peoples. RFN is also a close ally and co-implementer of UNEP's Interfaith Rainforest Initiative. These assets place RFN in a privileged position to "connect the dots," mobilizing a network of local partners, amplifying their voices through core support and guidance, and connecting partners with national and international actors, while catalyzing policy and advocacy campaigns for policy improvements and zero-deforestation commodity markets.

RFN's network of partners in Peru

RFN has been engaged in Peru since 2004, focusing on the protection of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, the strengthening of indigenous organizations, and policy change. Our current partner organizations include indigenous organizations as well as NGOs that specialize in policy change, legal issues, and climate change.

- Coordinadora Regional de Pueblos Indígenas—CORPI San Lorenzo (CORPI)
- Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR)
- Federación Nativa del Rio Madre de Dios y Afluentes (FENAMAD)
- International Institute for Law and Society (IIDS)
- Movimiento Ciudadano frente al Cambio Climático (MOCICC)
- Organización Regional de Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente (ORPIO)
- Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos—Perú Equidad (PERÚ EQUIDAD)
- Proética
- Wampis Nation.

PERUVIAN RAINFOREST: KEY FIGURES

- ▶ World's fourth-largest area of rainforest, with 78.8 million hectares covering some 61% of the total area of the country.
- ▶ Peruvian intact rainforests store 7.2 billion tons of carbon in above-ground living biomass, equivalent to 26 billion of CO₂ emissions if these forest ecosystems were lost.

(Source: State of Rainforest Report 2021, based on 2016 forest-cover data)

References

- ▶ Andreas Dahl-Jørgensen, NICFI
- ▶ Per Fredrik Ilsaas Pharo, NORAD
- ▶ Mireille Perrin, Good Energies Foundation
- ▶ Kevin Currey, Ford Foundation
- ▶ David Kaimowitz, Tenure Facility

Contact us



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