



Photo: Diego Pérez/WCS

TOGETHER FOR CONSERVATION

Wildlife trafficking, illegal logging and timber trade, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; and the illegal or unregulated extraction and trade of gold and alluvial minerals constitute a serious threat to the biodiversity of the Amazon. Civil society plays a key role in the face of these crimes against conservation, whether as an economic agent or through the exercise of active citizenship.

USAID, in partnership with WCS, strengthens the capacities of civil society to protect biodiversity and prevent environmental crimes, connecting urban and rural areas of the region with the conservation of the Amazon.

HOW DOES THE ACTIVITY WORK?

The Together for Conservation Project strengthens regional, collaborative civil society networks that connect local experiences of indigenous peoples and local communities (IP & LCs), private companies, media, journalist networks, and other civil society organizations (CSOs) to develop innovative and effective solutions that can be expanded or replicated beyond the project's direct areas of influence.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

- **More than one million hectares of great biodiversity importance are** under more effective management through participatory planning processes and capacity building efforts.
- **One thousand six hundred (1,600)** people trained, prioritizing the inclusion of women, youth and indigenous people.
- As of March 2024, the open data Ictio platform has **more than 108,400 fish observations** in 77% of Amazon sub-basins. Data is consistent with scientific literature, and citizen science contributed to expanding home ranges **of 17 fish species** by 5% or more.

WCS engaged transportation firms and associations, committed to comply with the Buckingham Palace Declaration to reduce enabling conditions for wildlife trafficking across borders, for example:

- In Colombia, WCS and Avianca partnered and assessed the airline's policies and processes; trained its staff; and initiated a communications plan to raise awareness about wildlife trafficking among Avianca staff and passengers.
- In Ecuador, WCS collaborates with the Metropolitan Public Company of Airport Services and Management of Free Trade Zones and Special Regimes (EPMSA) and other municipal entities to implement activities aimed at the civil society to prevent environmental crimes, as well as actions to reduce potential wildlife trafficking events at the airports of Quito, El Coca, and Galápagos.

WCS and partners strengthened sustainable value chains led by Indigenous Peoples' and local communities (IP&LC) in their territories, such as:

- 14 Conservation agreements covering approximately 200 hectares were signed in Colombia to promote sustainable practices in meliponiculture and prevent environmental crimes like bee trafficking.
- WCS supports sustainable management of 10,000 hectares in Peru's river basins, fostering economic incentives for six communities to conserve forests and rivers within the Communal Tamshiyacu Tahuayo Regional Conservation Area.

We continue supporting IP &LC organizations to demand and/or develop appropriate conditions to increase the supply of legal and sustainable Amazonian goods and services. For example:

- We are strengthening the capacities of more than 700 journalists, several media outlets, in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, through training on digital security, data and investigative journalism, and content creation to improve the quantity and quality of coverage on environmental crimes and on civil society-led solutions.

PROJECT INFORMATION

IMPLEMENTER: Wildlife Conservation Society

OTHER PARTNERS: InterNews, IPAM, ProNaturaleza, Despensa Amazónica and Rare

DURATION: October 2021 – September 2026

LOCATION: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru

USAID FUNDING: \$18.2 millions

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