WWF NEWS
ISSUE 1
2017

WWF FOREST AND CLIMATE
CANOPY

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM WWF'S INTERNATIONAL FOREST AND CLIMATE TEAM

Supporting Indigenous Peoples on the International Stage

By Jolly Sassa Kiuka and Flory Botamba, WWF-DRC

In September, the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Member's Assembly, made up of representatives from both governments and civil society organizations, voted to create a new category of membership for Indigenous Peoples' organizations. This decision strengthens the inclusion and participation of Indigenous Peoples in the IUCN.

This vote represents yet another international acknowledgement that Indigenous Peoples make a crucial contribution to the management and preservation of large and important natural spaces – with forest coverage, water sources, endemic species, and other natural resources – that are integral to their ways of life.

For WWF, partnering with Indigenous Peoples is an essential part of our conservation work. Those partnerships often include supporting Indigenous Peoples to participate on the international stage at global meetings like the Member's Assembly and UNFCCC climate negotiations. By amplifying Indigenous voices, we affirm the importance – and promote the inclusion – of their traditional knowledge in adaptation and mitigation actions and the fight against climate change.

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Alonso Córdova, of WWF-Peru, attended the September Assembly to accompany representatives of COICA, a key coordination entity for Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon region, and to present an e-poster. COICA was promoting their proposal, Holistic Management of Indigenous Lands: Strategies and Practices for the Governance of Indigenous Lands in the Amazon Basin, and sharing regional experiences of Amazon Indigenous REDD+ (RIA, by its Spanish acronym), based on experiences from Madre de Dios, Peru.

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NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM WWF'S GLOBAL FOREST AND CLIMATE TEAM

FEATURE

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE 1

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Why we are here
WWF Forest and Climate works to ensure that the conservation of tropical forests as carbon stores is secured by green economic development that benefits people, the climate and biodiversity in transformational ways.

www.panda.org/forestclimate

MEDIA

VIDEOS

Forests: Key to confronting climate change

When forests are destroyed, they release large quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which contributes to climate change. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation must be part of the solution to the global climate change problem. Forests have a critical role to play in combating climate change, and WWF is implementing a strategy around the world to win that battle.

WATCH: http://bit.ly/2fUzGIO
CON SUBTÍTULOS: http://bit.ly/2pYtgw9
AVEC SOUS-TITRES: http://bit.ly/2pYt3Ji

CANOPY IS ALSO AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMAIL. SUBSCRIBE AT: bit.ly/CNPY-nws

FOREST AND CLIMATE NEWS

PANAMA SIGNS AGREEMENT TO PROMOTE LEGAL TIMBER

When forests are destroyed, they release large quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which contributes to climate change. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation must be part of the solution to the global climate change problem. Forests have a critical role to play in combating climate change, and WWF is implementing a strategy around the world to win that battle.

MORE: http://bit.ly/2pkC7Yo

EL CHOCÓ CUENTA CON UNA NUEVA ÁREA PROTEGIDA

WWF-Colombia – El pasado 22 de diciembre, el país recibió de regalo de navidad la declaratoria del área protegida que conservará la zona donde nace el río Atrato. Se trata del Distrito Regional de Manejo Integrado Alto Atrato que comprende parte del complejo de Páramos del Sol – Las Alegrías y tiene una extensión de casi 18.000 hectáreas.

MÁS: http://bit.ly/2q6T0qc

© CAMILO ORTEGA / WWF

2016 DECLARED THE HOTTEST YEAR ON RECORD

WWF-US – Earth's surface temperatures in 2016 shattered all previous record highs since modern record keeping began in 1880, NASA and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced today. This is the third consecutive year of record warmth for the globe. And much of the warming is attributed to climate change.

MORE: http://wwf.to/2oLiHbT

WWF-PARAGUAY FIRMA CONVENIO DE COOPERACIÓN BILATERAL CON LA SECRETARÍA DE EMERGENCIA NACIONAL

WWF-Paraguay – El Ministro Joaquín Roa y la Directora País Lucy Aquino firmaron el documento que sienta las bases de futuros trabajos con una institución pública que tiene un alto impacto en temas ambientales y sociales. La firma se hizo durante el Simposio por el Día Mundial de los Humedales, donde expositores nacionales e internacionales hablaron sobre los humedales para la reducción de desastres, la necesidad de conservación, las aves y los yacarés, entre otros temas. Del evento también participaron Julio Sampaio de WWF–Brasil y Alfonso Llobet de WWF–Bolivia.

MÁS: http://bit.ly/2ovrYIU

COMUNICADO DE WWF-PERÚ SOBRE ESPECIE ARBÓREA SHIHUAHUACO

WWF-Perú – WWF-Perú apoya la investigación y análisis de las poblaciones de Shihuahuaco (Dipteryx sp.), cuya distribución incluye las regiones de Huánuco, Madre de Dios, Loreto y Ucayali; con la finalidad de determinar su grado de amenaza o vulnerabilidad en el Perú; y su situación en el marco de la Convención sobre el Comercio Internacional de Especies Amenazadas de Fauna y Flora Silvestres (CITES por sus siglas en inglés). Coincidimos también que el Shihuahuaco es una especie que por sus características de crecimiento – puede tardar hasta 300 años en llegar a una edad ideal de madurez para extracción – no se pueda explotar comercialmente como se ha hecho con otras especies en el pasado.

MÁS: http://bit.ly/2oLmV3l

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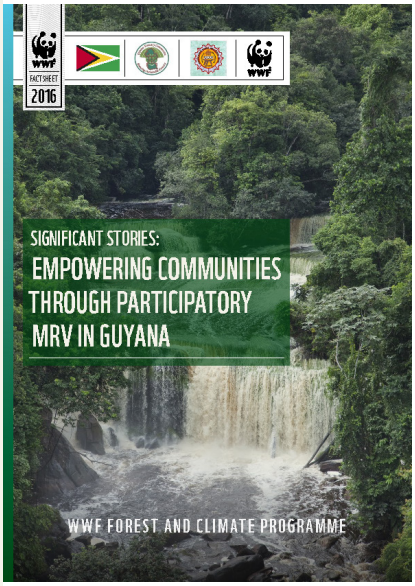
PUBLICATIONS

The community of REDD+ practitioners and experts from around the world grows every day, and WWF's global Forest and Climate team is working to ensure that the capacity-building and informational materials it produces are available to a diverse audience.

SIGNIFICANT STORIES: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTICIPATORY MRV IN GUYANA

This Forest and Climate Significant Story describes how WWF-Guyana led a process to engage with the Kanashen leadership and community members; the relevant government agencies, GFC and PAC; and community-based organizational partner, the NRDDB, to establish a participatory MRV capacity with the Wai Wai community of Kanashen, whose titled territory covers 1.5 million forested acres in far southern Guyana on the Brazil border.

READ MORE: http://bit.ly/2jszaCE



CONSERVING FORESTS TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

A new translation of our 2016 overview of REDD+ is available now in French. Portuguese and Spanish translations are forthcoming.

READ MORE: http://bit.ly/29ShuIq

USING PUBLIC DATA PLATFORMS TO ASSESS DEFORESTATION RISKS WITHIN JURISDICTIONS

World Wildlife Fund-US, with support from Global Forest Watch, developed the Jurisdictional Risk Assessment to explore potential applications of public data platforms (such as Global Forest Watch) that allow companies, governments, and other end-users to assess certain jurisdictions and their potential association with illegal deforestation. This tool can help companies and governments prioritize and strengthen their traceability and due diligence efforts.

READ MORE: http://bit.ly/2kpjzBf

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND REDD+: ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTIONS AND THE PURSUIT OF SYNERGIES

This paper analyses potential synergies between two recent sustainable development initiatives, namely the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+). It elaborates a conceptual framework based on institutional interactions and distinguishes core, complementary, and supplementary synergies that maybe realized between the SDGs and REDD+.

READ MORE: http://bit.ly/2o3hbEN

PUBLICATIONS

The community of REDD+ practitioners and experts from around the world grows every day, and WWF's global Forest and Climate team is working to ensure that the capacity-building and informational materials it produces are available to a diverse audience.

MAPPING REDD+: A VISUAL GUIDE TO UNFCCC DECISIONS

In this comprehensive resource, we visually map the UNFCCC articles and decisions related to REDD+, and the connections between them, presenting all relevant decisions within one user-friendly document. The information is grouped into categories for easy reference - such as finance, safeguards, and MRV - to ensure the highest levels of clarity and accessibility. Much of the text is taken verbatim from official UNFCCC decisions, including citations, so readers can refer to the original documents for additional context. French and Spanish translations are forthcoming.

READ MORE: http://bit.ly/2lVlMVL

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REDD+ CAPACITY BUILDING

WWF FOREST AND CLIMATE LEARNING SESSIONS ARE FREE AND ARE DESIGNED TO LEVERAGE AND SHARE REDD+ KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE. WE INVITE EXPERTS TO PRESENT ON A KEY ISSUE SO THAT REDD+ PRACTITIONERS CAN HAVE ACCESS TO THE LATEST INFORMATION RELEVANT TO REDD+.

To watch an archived learning lesson or to register for an upcoming webinar, please visit: bit.ly/REDDlearn.

JURISDICTIONAL APPROACHES TO ZERO DEFORESTATION COMMODITIES

Jurisdictional approaches to zero-deforestation commodities (JA-ZDCs) lie at the intersection of three existing strategies to reduce forest loss and degradation, along with improving the health and sustainability of rural and frontier economies. In this learning session, Michael Wolosin, of Climate Advisors, and Lloyd Gamble, of WWF Forest and Climate, will map the landscape of why, where, who, and how various actors are approaching the increasing convergence of these strategies to reduce deforestation and forest degradation related to commodity production.

WATCH: http://bit.ly/2h3WExq

CONSERVING TROPICAL FORESTS BY UNDERSTANDING, VALUING, AND MONETIZING THEIR SERVICES TO DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Tropical forest services contribute to development goals related to food, water, energy, health, safety, and poverty reduction, in addition to climate and biodiversity. However, precisely quantifying the economic value of forest services can be challenging. And initiatives to "make forests worth more alive than dead" by monetizing their services have had some boutique successes but have not reversed the tide of tropical deforestation. This Learning Session with Frances Seymour and Jonah Busch of the Center for Global Development reviews the latest science and economics of tropical forest services.

WATCH: http://bit.ly/2mYFf8m

FOREST MONITORING USING STRUCTURE FROM MOTION TECHNOLOGY

Structure from Motion (SfM) is a new technology used to reconstruct any 3D object with photos taken using drones, which have become dramatically cheaper the last few years. Using any common digital camera, we can take airborne data anytime using cheap drones to monitor forests using 3D data without the need for any special equipment like a laser scanner. In this learning session, Dr. Akira Kato from Chiba University, Japan will introduce SfM technology for forest and ecological application.

WATCH: http://bit.ly/2lzKfPW

FOREST AND REDD+ HIGHLIGHTS FROM COP22

Though forests did not have a formal agenda item in the climate negotiations at Marrakech, COP22 was crucial to maintaining international forest momentum. Labelled the 'action COP,' COP22 saw broad support for forests from governments, Indigenous Peoples, and the private sector, and showcased economic and development transformations that are already underway. In this learning session, Josefina Braña-Varela and Karen Petersen, of WWF Forest and Climate, will review forest and REDD+ highlights from COP22, and discuss next steps and priorities for forest and climate.

WATCH: http://bit.ly/2jVf7KS

WWF-DRC COMPLETES ITS FIRST NATIONAL BIOMASS MAP USING LIDAR SAMPLING

The Democratic Republic of Congo has become the first African country to build a national biomass map using LiDAR, furthering the scientific underpinning of their REDD+ processes.

WWF-DRC launched the Carbon Map and Model project in 2012, in partnership with the Ministry of Environment of the DRC and WWF-Germany, and with the support of its partners, University of California, Los Angeles, Southern Mapping Company, and Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale. This project was developed to complete the national forest biomass map through an aerial LiDAR sampling approach.

Each LiDAR sampling site was selected systematically and randomly throughout DRC, incorporating a variety of plots which represent the various Congolese rainforest types. In total, the flight campaign covered 216 sites and over 430,000 ha. All available plot data were compiled and processed to develop a LiDAR biomass model, which was then extrapolated to national scale by satellite imagery, including optical Landsat 8 and active radar data.

Importantly, the map is a living document, and can be updated and improved by integrating new data and information (e.g. National Forest Inventory data, national Wood Density information, and national allometric equations), so that the government of the DRC, supported by WWF-DRC, can continue to improve its accuracy and precision.

© Martin Harvey / WWF

WWF Carbon Map and Model project manager Mina Lee said, "We are very excited that this map can be finally released after several years of collaborative hard work by our partners. The DRC national forest biomass map is a remarkable milestone in terms of a newly implemented method, and resulting accuracy. We believe that the map will bring significant added-value to the DRC's sustainable development efforts and look forward to seeing it integrated into the REDD+ processes, which is already occurring in Maï-Ndombe province."

The map will support national forest cover monitoring efforts, which include identification of deforested and degraded areas, as well as helping to assess annual carbon emissions from deforestation, and the necessary reporting to the international mechanisms for REDD+. The biomass information from the map has already been integrated into the final Maï-Ndombe Emissions Reduction Program, which is the largest REDD+ program in Africa.

This carbon map will strengthen REDD+ in DRC, providing additional layers of data on forest cover changes and emissions. With tropical deforestation making up nearly 10 percent of global carbon emissions, the success of REDD+ in DRC, where over 60% of Central Africa's forest is located, is essential to efforts to mitigate global climate change.

GUYANA IS A REDD+ BEST-CASE SCENARIO

© WWF-GUIANAS

Guyana is one of the greenest countries on Earth, with fully 85% of its land area fully covered by tropical forests, and exhibits one of the lowest deforestation rates in the tropics - 0.065% in 2014, the last year for which figures are available. Guyana's forests are packed with dense-wooded, carbon-rich trees that challenge the logging industry with high production costs and relatively low value timber -- making Guyana a best-case scenario for REDD+.

Among the earliest proponents of REDD+ for High Forest Cover/Low Deforestation (HFLD) countries, Guyana and Norway became the world's first countries to sign a bilateral, national scale, payment-for-performance, avoided deforestation agreement in 2009. More recent events - highlighting the marginal profitability of even well-financed and experienced timber concessionaires - provide the opportunity for Guyana to use REDD+ to pivot further toward a green forest economy, based on replacing low-return log exports with forest carbon REDD+ ecosystem service payments. By capitalizing on its strategic advantages, conservation and REDD+ can generate significantly more revenue for Guyana than wholesale log exports by foreign timber concessionaires.

A country of less than 750,000 people, Guyana's vast forest estate covers 18.5 million hectares (an area the size of the US state of Washington) of which 7.4 million hectares were under timber concession agreements at this time last year. The changing fortune of fully one third of those concessions in 2016 provides the opportunity to demonstrate a clear financial advantage of REDD+ over log exports and advance REDD+ as a pillar of Guyana's green development, more than replacing timber's historic contribution to GDP.

Guyana's high operating costs – little existing infrastructure; widely spaced and small girth commercial trees; dense, expensive to process and relatively low-value timber – result in marginal profitability that has kept investments in the timber sector to a minimum. One indication of the marginal profitability of logging is that most timber companies harvest at a fraction of their allowable rates. Over its 25 years of operations in Guyana, Barama Company Limited produced less than 20% of its allowable cut.

Even allowing for harvesting, active timber concessions in Guyana exhibit significantly higher deforestation rates than areas without timber concessions, because roads built of necessity by timber operators provide free access to goldminers who can and do ignore forestry regulations. Furthermore, in Guyana, all timber concessions are overlain with mining concessions, and mining rights take precedence.

In 2016, 2.3 million hectares of timber concessions were returned to the State. During the course of the year, the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) moved in stages to repossess 700,000 hectares from Baishanlin International Forest Development Inc. for failure to pay even the few GFC fees from which they were not exempted. Then in October, Barama, the country's biggest forest operator, announced it would not seek to extend its lease on 1.6 million hectares of concessions after 25 years of operations in Guyana, citing lack of profitability.

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PANDAS IN THE WILD

Maria Fernanda Jaramillo, Knowledge Sharing and Learning Manager for WWF Forest and Climate, travels the world helping WWF teams and our partners better integrate adaptive management strategies into their programs and projects.

"BEING ABLE TO IDENTIFY AND INCORPORATE LESSONS LEARNED IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ENSURING THAT OUR EFFORTS ARE AS RELEVANT AND IMPACTFUL AS POSSIBLE," SHE SAYS. "IT'S MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE TO INTEGRATE THESE PROCESSES INTO ALL ASPECTS OF OUR WORK THAN IT IS TO REFLECT BACK AT THE END OF A PROJECT. BUT, THAT CAN REQUIRE SOME SPECIAL SKILLS AND BEHAVIOR CHANGES IN ORDER TO DO IT CORRECTLY."

© Nakoa Aguilar Amuchastegui / WWF

In December, she flew from a lessons collection workshop in Jakarta with colleagues at WWF-Indonesia to Bogota, Colombia to facilitate a workshop for the Capacity Building Programme on Territorial Indigenous Governance. This workshop was the first in-person meeting of the Programme's Coordinating Pedagogic Committee, which is made up of representatives of the five participating countries – Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru – as well as members of WWF and Forest Trends.

Designed by a consortium of indigenous organizations, universities, and NGOs, the Programme will empower Latin American indigenous communities to overcome governance challenges in their territories. 150 Indigenous People will be able to participate in the year-long curriculum.

"The curricula includes a broad spectrum of topics, from collective rights, to gender and generational equity, climate change risks, drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and conflict resolution," according to Maria Fernanda. Increasing capacities to navigate these issues strengthens indigenous governance, and supports self-sustaining natural resource stewardship abilities and subsequent access to REDD+ and other benefits.

Maria Fernanda has been facilitating the participatory development of the Programme from its inception, including collecting experiences from previous processes to define its scope and methodology, building off and learning from what has happened in the past. As the Programme moves forward with implementation, one of her tasks will be the assessment of lessons learned at every step of the way through adaptive management. By incorporating reflection and learning into the program cycle, Maria Fernanda ensures that the partners are able to make adjustments to improve implementation as needed, and to better achieve the overall goals.

Building and supporting science-based, impactful programs is central to WWF's mission. As an organization – as people who cherish and depend on this planet – we choose to direct our resources towards efforts that will have impacts at-scale. Practicing adaptive management through systematized lessons collection is one tool we can use to be as effective as possible as we work towards a world where humans live in harmony with nature.

REDD+ PEOPLE

CLIMATE CONNECTIONS IN NEPAL

© WWF-NEPAL

Ugan Manandhar, pictured here at far right, with community members and students learning how to inventory forest carbon in Pokhara, Nepal.

We sat down with Ugan Manandhar of WWF-Nepal, to learn about how their climate work is moving forward in 2017.

What is your role at WWF?

I currently head the Climate and Energy Program at WWF-Nepal. I've been working on the REDD+ program since 2007 when it was initially conceptualized, with funding from WWF-US, under the Carbonated Tiger program.

How did you get involved in this kind of conservation work?

You may be a bit surprised with my academic background – I studied electrical engineering in India, followed by an MBA, and initially worked for a hydropower company. This background actually helped me become the Alternative Energy Officer at WWF-Nepal in 2006, where I started out working with local communities living in conservation areas to build community-based micro-hydro programs. It was in 2007 when we started the Forest Carbon program where I started gaining my expertise in REDD+.

Being a part of WWF and working with communities really embeds the core values of conservation within you. I would say joining WWF was a real turning point in my life because as engineers we were taught to look at resources differently, not necessarily as natural assets for countries that need to be kept intact.

What are you currently working on?

There are a lot of large but connected projects, especially in terms of policy and funding. For the Forest Carbon program, we are currently developing an Emissions Reduction Program Document, or ERPD, under the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility with the government of Nepal. We work closely with the government on policies like the national REDD+ strategy and adaptation plans, providing technical and financial support and looking into how to make vulnerability assessments more scientific. We are also working on developing a proposal to the Green Climate Fund on adaptation, as well as looking into other climate finance regimes that can help benefit the country.

Working with the government is especially important now, as Nepal has just endorsed a new constitution, and the government will soon be implementing it. The country is going from a more centralized approach to a more decentralized approach, establishing new federal provinces that will have their own policies. However, the political situation is up in the air right now as the different political parties work out the boundaries of the new federal provinces.

Wherever the boundaries are drawn will affect how we work, because currently the landscapes we are working in are centrally managed, but soon they will be under new federal states and will be broken up in terms of jurisdiction. The Terai Arc landscape will be under five

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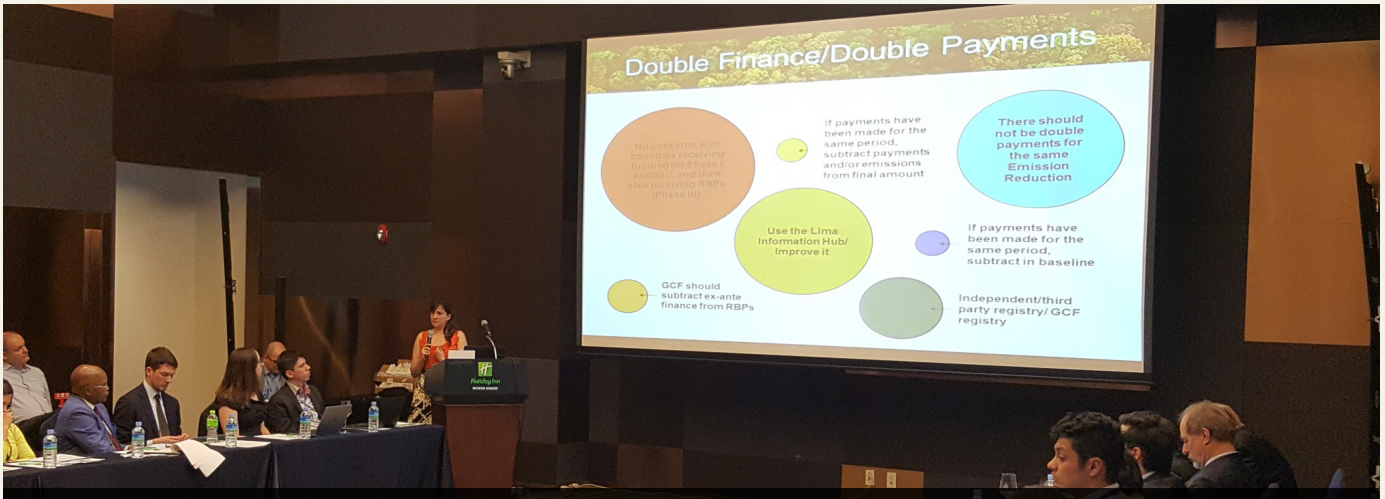
PANDAS IN THE WILD

Naikoa Aguilar-Amuchastegui, WWF Forest and Climate's Director of Forest Carbon Science, participated in the **45th session of the IPCC** in Guadalajara, Mexico. On the agenda for this session were proposed outlines for two IPCC Special Reports: on Climate Change, oceans and the cryosphere; and on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems. There, Naikoa and participants from IPCC member countries and other observer organizations provided feedback on the expected content of those future reports, making sure that pertinent topics – like forests-climate interactions and their potential contributions to adaptation and mitigation – will be appropriately addressed.



Josefina Braña Varela, Senior Director of WWF Forest and Climate, organized a side event on REDD+ results-based payments at the Green Climate Fund's first Board meeting of 2017. The event was a collaboration between Josefina and Maggie Comstock, of Conservation International, and Dylan Murray, of The Nature Conservancy. It aimed to inform Board members and alternates about the results from the call for inputs to help operationalize REDD+ results-based payments under the Fund, and to create more knowledge about the role that forests and REDD+ can play in achieving the GCF's climate goals. During their sixteenth meeting (B.16), the Board approved eight new projects for a total of more than US $750 million in funding.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

"HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT IS A VISION THAT INCORPORATES TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, WHICH HAS EFFECTS ON LEGAL PROCESSES, AND ALLOWS ONE TO CONTINUE WITH THE PRACTICES OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT, AND TRADITIONAL USE OF FOREST RESOURCES," SAID EDWIN VASQUEZ, PRESIDENT OF COICA. "THE PILOT EXPERIENCES...ARE VIVID EXAMPLES OF HOW THE IDEAS OF RIA TRANSLATE INTO ACTION."

For COICA and its member organizations at the national level, RIA is a tool that facilitates the implementation of social and environmental safeguards and balances traditional use and sustainable development of indigenous lands. They argue that legal recognition of their lands empowers them to manage their resources and take action against threats to their forests, and would consequently reduce emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change. Indeed, deforestation rates have been found to be two to three times lower in legally-held indigenous lands. COICA'S challenge is to work for the legal recognition of 200 million hectares of traditionally-held indigenous lands.

During the IUCN Assembly, representatives from COICA called for more explicit inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the international arena, and for decision-making processes to be more transparent, in order to support Indigenous strategies and projects – like RIA – in collaboration with key international allies.

Greater inclusion of Indigenous Peoples is on the horizon. The incipient UNFCCC platform for Indigenous Peoples and local communities created under the Paris Agreement will give Indigenous Peoples the opportunity to participate more directly in multi-stakeholder processes. The next step in the UNFCCC process is a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the operationalization of the platform, which will be held in conjunction with SBSTA 46 and SBI 46 at the Bonn Climate Change Conference in early May of this year.

"These international developments open important windows that make the contributions of Indigenous Peoples visible, especially regarding contributions to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through transformative actions," says Alonso.

"Territorial management is one crucial example of those contributions, as it includes elements of both adaptation and joint mitigation hand in hand with participation in resource monitoring. RIA is one such example of a mitigation approach, along with the reduction of monoculture plantations, and adaptation actions are being driven largely by indigenous women."

Indigenous recognition is one tool we have in the fight against global climate change and in building a more just and sustainable world. Indigenous Peoples play important roles in the conservation and management of forest ecosystems, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is incumbent upon us, as conservationists, to support their empowerment and participation in processes related to our work, for the future of forests and the futures of Indigenous Peoples.

RESOURCES

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

WWF Forest and Climate works closely with communities to empower them to participate in REDD+ processes. Want to learn more? Dive into this resource bank!

- Free, Prior and Informed Consent and REDD+: Guidelines and Resources
- Fostering participation and cross-cultural dialogue
- Significant Stories: Empowering Communities through Participatory MRV in Guyana
- REDD+ Inspiring Practice: Strengthening Land Tenure through Participatory Land-use Mapping in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Empowering Communities through Participatory Carbon Measurement in Indonesia
- A Bottom-Up Approach to Building REDD+ Safeguards with the Afro-Colombian Community in Colombia's Pacific Region

SAVING FORESTS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

By Karen Petersen and Josefina Braña-Varela, WWF Forest and Climate

When countries from around the world came together last year in Paris, we signed an accord that represented an effort to work towards a common global interest. We spoke with a unified voice about the importance of ensuring a stable future for all people. We spoke sincerely of the need to act urgently because inaction is not an option, and certainly not a just option. We spoke of climate change

Over 100 countries have now ratified the Paris Agreement, marking an important milestone in the worldwide effort to reach consensus on how to best confront this challenge. Success in this arena will demand our empathy, ingenuity, and ambition. Success will depend on collaboration.

In many countries, a substantial portion of greenhouse gas emissions is attributed to the way we use land. Roughly 10 to 14 percent of global emissions result from deforestation and forest degradation alone, driven largely by expanding industrial agriculture, extractive industries, unsustainable logging, and infrastructure. In Latin America this accounts for nearly half of the emissions in some countries, and even more in others. Because trees are significant repositories of carbon – which they capture from the atmosphere and store from their roots to the tip of each leaf – cutting them down at the current pace and scale is risky. Keeping trees standing is a measure we must take to avoid the most perilous impacts of climate change.

The decision to conserve and sustainably manage forests to address climate change is not simply an economic tradeoff between production and protection. It is a decision that impacts the well-being of millions of people who call forests home – more than one in five people worldwide depend on forests for food and their livelihood. The survival of countless plants and animals is also linked directly to forests, which contain 80% of the biodiversity on land. The benefits of forests extend to delivering key services we all rely on, like providing clean drinking water and purifying the air we breathe. The hard line that is often drawn between forest protection and economic prosperity does not wholly take the immense value of forests into account.

Halting deforestation and restoring forests that have already been degraded or cut down has huge potential. Of the total reduction in global emissions we need to achieve collectively by 2030, ceasing deforestation and restoring forests can contribute one third of the solution. To date, forests are also the only proven “technology” we have that can effectively filter carbon out of the atmosphere without negative or poorly understood consequences.

Many of the building blocks are already in place to reduce pressure on forests. Indeed, many countries have already made commitments to both protect and restore their forests, and have included forests within their official climate change strategies. Companies with global reach have also acknowledged that acting on climate change is not only a moral

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© Nicolas Villaume / WWF-US

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For the right to exploit 1.6 million hectares of forests, Barama had paid the GFC roughly US$1.25 million annually in export duties on log and wood products valued at US$10 million, having been granted exemptions on all other duties, taxes, and fees in their original direct foreign investment deal. The indication by the Government of Guyana that a renewal of the concessions would be subject to the same fees and taxes paid by the local timber industry resulted in Barama walking away from all their concessions.

On the other side of the equation, the competitive advantage of REDD+ benefits over timber revenues in Guyana are clear and measurable. The high carbon content of Guyana's forests – more than three times the carbon density of rainforests in the Peruvian Amazon – mean Guyana's forests are rich in REDD+ benefits, including carbon sequestration.

"The combination of Guyana's marginally profitable timber industry and forests with very high carbon content – averaging 280 tons of carbon per hectare – make Guyana the ideal location for REDD+," says Chuck Hutchinson of WWF-Guyana. Another distinct REDD+ advantage is Guyana's advanced readiness. The Measurement, Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) developed under the Guyana Norway Agreement (GNA) provides accurate and verifiable nation-wide annual reporting on forest cover, deforestation, and forest degradation.

Although the original GNA focused on avoided deforestation and did not monetize forest degradation emissions, we believe that a renegotiated agreement could also provide incentives for verifiable emissions reductions. Based on the data from Guyana's reference level submission to the UNFCCC and Barama's production figures, 400,000 tons of CO_2 equivalent of verifiable emissions from forest degradation would be avoided if Barama's former timber concessions were converted to REDD+ concessions, according to Hutchinson.

At US$5/ton, that emissions reduction would be worth US$2.0 million annually, a 60% increase in revenue over the total of Barama payments. Including the Baishanlin concessions would add an additional million.

Although Baishanlin used almost entirely Chinese labor in their concessions, they also bought logs from community and small-scale loggers; Barama employed some 500 Guyanese directly in their harvesting operations and bought logs from local suppliers. If Guyana is to successfully switch to a REDD+ based monetization of forests over log exports, the loss of jobs and opportunities for small scale operators must be addressed.

The key to making REDD+ a viable alternative is to develop effective means to use the extra revenues REDD+ generates to foster community benefits and rural development.

One opportunity is to redeploy tree spotters and fellers in reforestation. Over 90% of deforestation in Guyana is caused by gold mining. These lands are generally left in a severely degraded state, stripped of topsoil and organic material of any kind, and, most often, with rivers and streams converted to a series of flooded pits. Without interventions, these mined out areas take decades, if not longer, to return to carbon-sequestering forests.

To date there have been only limited efforts to reforest mined out areas. Redeploying timber industry workers in reforestation efforts could pay Guyana doubly under REDD+ – by reducing forest degradation emissions from logging and by reversing deforestation emissions from mining.

The unique characteristics of Guyana's forests – high carbon content and low timber value - make Guyana the ideal REDD+ model. The GNA provides the immediate opportunity to replace a logging industry that has long struggled to be profitable, with a source of revenue that provides the resources and the impetus to pivot to a new green and truly sustainable future.

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imperative but also a business imperative. With pledges to eliminate deforestation from the purchase of products like palm oil, beef, and soy, and to reforest and restore vast areas of forest, the private sector has declared that acting on climate change is necessary to protect the bottom line.

Collaboration is vital – both to conserve the world's forests and to ensure that efforts to address climate change are equitable. Division and procrastination on this issue hinders progress towards the common good. Forested countries must step forward with bold visions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore their forests, while countries with historical obligations and all others in a position to do so must support them in this endeavour, with strong financial and technical backing. Companies must continue to swiftly increase ambition and, crucially, they must follow through on existing pledges to conserve forests.

Perhaps most importantly, each and every one of us can contribute by understanding what the implications of inaction are and by acting to make sure decision makers know too. Together we can keep the world's forests standing, and ensure a healthier and more stable planet for generations to come.

CHILE FIRES OFFER VALUABLE LESSONS FOR CONSERVATION

By Rodrigo Catalán, Conservation Director, WWF-Chile

Chile continues to suffer from the worst wildfires ever recorded in the country, with ten times more area burnt compared to the historical average. The catastrophe offers valuable lessons not just for Chile but for countries around the world, and for WWF's own conservation framework.

Almost 600,000 hectares of land has been consumed by the fires, including pine and eucalyptus plantations but also grasslands and natural forest that are home to endemic and endangered species. According to recent estimates, 300,000 hectares of tree plantations and 15,000 hectares of natural forest have been destroyed. The flames were so strong that an entire town was destroyed, killing 11 and affecting over 3,000 people. Followed by eight years of drought, temperatures in January reached historic levels – a sign of what we can expect for the coming decades.

Most of the tree plantations affected by the fires were certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which has raised questions more broadly about certification. WWF considers FSC certification a powerful tool to improve forest management. FSC has proven to do that as well as yield positive environmental impacts, such as a decline in forest conversion, increase of protected High Conservation Value (HCV) and restored areas, among other conservation gains. In the last decade alone, FSC-certified tree plantations in Chile have increased from 13 per cent to 70 per cent, largely in part due to WWF's efforts to transform the forest industry.

The issue is that the scope of FSC is within the forest management unit level and the problem of fires was at another scale: the landscape level. FSC is one of the tools to improve forest and plantation management. One of the most important lessons we can take away is that we need to address the key drivers at the landscape level to prevent the type of devastation Chile has recently experienced. The key is to rethink the scale and how to meet expectations from stakeholders, not only at the local level but also more broadly.

The WWF Network has developed complementary initiatives to address some of those challenges, for example through the New Generation Plantations (NGP) concept in the tree plantation industry, where companies don't only look to their own properties or concessions but at the whole landscape, as well as other producers. NGP recommends best practices like forest restoration, riparian vegetation protection, forest and HCV protection, and clear planning that takes the landscape into consideration and with active participation of stakeholders. The final aim of this initiative is to not only transform companies' performance but also to influence legislation and public policy, as well as other stakeholders and productive sectors in the landscapes.

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provinces, for example. This is something we are planning for and thinking about how we can best work with the provincial governments and the central government, and helping them come up with their policies on climate change, energy adaptation, mitigation aspects, and low carbon development.

I also work with the Government of Nepal as an official delegate to the UNFCCC, technically supporting the Ministry of Population and Environment, where I follow issues related to Mitigation, REDD+ and Adaptation on behalf of the Government.

Will the ERPD be targeting any specific drivers of deforestation?

The basic drivers are encroachment, resettlement and the development of infrastructure, and all of these can be sensitive topics to address. Sometimes the government needs land to make a hospital or a school; and encroachment is sometimes politically driven as people are migrating or given political asylum and then encroach on the forest as they settle.

These are the three main drivers, and it is difficult to address them directly because there are issues of safeguards and many funders don't want to come near these sensitive issues. So, the core drivers we are going to address are actually those of degradation – grazing, forest fires, and illegal and unsustainable harvesting of timber and fuel wood extraction – with the basic drivers addressed as spill-off drivers less directly.

In terms of the drivers of degradation, grazing is a problem in Nepal because culturally people here don't eat beef, so people don't kill cows. Once the cows are too old for milking or farm work they are let out and end up in the jungles, driving degradation. Cows are also sometimes connected to forest fires, as people light fires to help grass grow quicker for grazing since there is a prolonged dry season. The conditions are so much drier than they used to be that fires spread quickly. We are also trying to address the demand for fuelwood through alternative energy like the biogas program and installing solar panels to create electrical energy for cooking, to reduce the demand for fuelwood for cooking.

We'll look into those spill-off drivers by handing off more forests to communities, because then the government will have to negotiate with communities to cut down the forest. National forests are government property, so if someone migrates there illegally or wants to use it for infrastructure it's very easy to just it cut down. We are also talking with the Railway Ministry and the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport and the Department of Roads to come up with smarter road designs so that kind of infrastructure development can happen with minimum negative effects on, or without being at the expense of, forests.

You mentioned working with communities – are there specific projects that you're working on?

Much of our work with communities is actually focused on adaptation and helping train citizen scientists to support local data collection whenever possible. We started our adaptation programs in 2003 talking about water security, water shortages, and changing irrigation patterns, for example, helping communities build a conservation to pond to collect water for agriculture practices or domestic use – not consumption, but other uses. We also support automatic weather stations in local communities, to bring in the local data they are able to collect, depending on financial resources and the available technical capacities.

Climate change is cross-cutting and impacting everything, but the core themes with our community work around climate change adaptation are focused on the food, water, and energy nexus and disaster risk reduction; most of our energy comes from hydropower and agriculture is crucial for our economy. Being a "least developed country," infrastructure is also a priority for Nepal. Infrastructure is probably going to get more attention in the future as it can be a key challenge in conservation if it's developed in a business-as-usual approach without climate change taken into account.

What will your top priority be moving forward?

We plan to submit the ERPD by mid-February, and then we'll be having a national workshop where we'll roll out the findings of the ERPD and identify if anything needs to be altered or adjusted. But the core challenge is now funding. At least for Nepal, there has been a fallback of funding coming in for the forest sector. Many donors have currently pulled back or stalled in supporting the forest sector in Nepal, so it's going to be a huge challenge.

WWF-Nepal has taken the consulting role in supporting the Government of Nepal in writing the ERPD, as well as researching funding for implementing actions on the ground, making sure we are scientifically grounded in our carbon accounting and determining the sequestration rate, and talking to core institutions and actors about the drivers. Soon, the government is going to announce the date for local elections so the idea is also to roll out the ERPD in the different provinces as they are formed, informing the state structure about the ERPD and how we implement programs on the ground to move forward.

REDUCING RISKS, ENDING DEFORESTATION

By David McLaughlin, VP, Agriculture, Markets and Food, WWF-US

In a global movement to protect the world's tropical forests, countless companies, governments, NGOs, and Indigenous Peoples' organizations have committed to ending deforestation. Many include the world's largest food companies who have pledged to eliminate deforestation from their agricultural supply chains, including from the production of palm oil. While this international ambition shows great promise, the challenge now rests with finding a way to ensure that these commitments are successfully implemented

Fortunately, the increased availability of publicly available spatial data from satellite imagery and other sources has revolutionized the way the world sees and can respond to deforestation. Platforms such as Global Forest Watch (GFW) have extended the accessibility of global datasets to track deforestation in near real-time, and carry with them new possibilities to better protect forests.

With support from GFW, World Wildlife Fund – US is piloting a new tool, the Jurisdictional Risk Assessment, or JRA, to enable companies and governments to leverage this wealth of data to prioritize their own efforts to reduce and end deforestation, particularly as they relate to addressing illegal deforestation.

The JRA allows palm oil buyers, governments, and other end-users to assess and compare the extent and rate of past deforestation activities within the palm oil producing districts of Indonesia. More specifically, the JRA is based on a set of key risk assessment indicators, designed to capture only deforestation that is achieved in a manner that is not permitted, or which takes place where certain laws and policies prohibit deforestation or conversion in Indonesia. For example, the tool identifies districts* that have experienced historically higher rates of deforestation in primary forests, protected areas, peatland, and certain sections of the country's Forest Estate through activities considered illegal such as through the use of fire for land conversion. By highlighting jurisdictions associated with higher risk, palm oil buyers can better prioritize their traceability and due diligence efforts toward achieving their commitments to deforestation-free supply chains. Similarly, governments can use the analysis to prioritize domestic efforts to meet climate targets through policy measures and land use planning to reduce deforestation.

Traceability has long been a challenge for food companies, particularly in the palm oil sector. Complex supply chains leave food companies with significant difficulty in verifying the extent to which their products are associated with deforestation and illegal activities, exposing them to a variety of legal, financial, and reputational risks.

While the pilot focuses on palm oil in Indonesia, it could be adapted in further phases for other commodities and geographies associated with deforestation.

Among other important considerations, the JRA is based primarily on remote sensing data and does not quantify social risks (e.g., land insecurity, labor rights). It is also based on historic data but could potentially be developed to self-update

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VIEWPOINTS

On Moving Forward with Paris

"IT HAS CREATED A UNIQUE FRAMEWORK FOR PARTNERSHIP AMONG GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESSES, CIVIL SOCIETY, FAITH GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES TO COLLABORATE AND RALLY BEHIND THIS CRUCIAL COMMON CAUSE FOR THE PLANET. COLLECTIVELY THESE HAVE KEPT THE MOMENTUM TO CHANGE CLIMATE CHANGE GOING."

–Pulgar-Vidal, WWF International's Climate & Energy Practice Leader

On Collective Action

"EVERY FLICK OF A SWITCH OR CLICK ON FACEBOOK TIMELINES IS A REMINDER THAT PEOPLE SEE THEMSELVES AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF CLIMATE ACTION AND IT IS THIS KIND OF COLLECTIVE DETERMINATION WE NEED TO TACKLE THE MOST PRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE OUR PLANET HAS EVER FACED."

– Siddarth Das, Earth Hour Global, Executive Director

On Commitment

"THE RECOVERY OF THE PANDA SHOWS THAT WHEN SCIENCE, POLITICAL WILL AND ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES COME TOGETHER, WE CAN SAVE WILDLIFE AND ALSO IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY"

– Marco Lambertini, WWF Director General

On Earth Hour

"MOVEMENTS MATTER, AND THE EARTH HOUR MOVEMENT IS A GLOBAL REMINDER THAT PEOPLE ARE LEADING THE TRANSFORMATION TO A MORE PROSPEROUS AND RENEWABLE FUTURE."

– Lou Leonard, WWF-US Senior Vice President, Climate and Energy

On SDGs

"OVER THE NEXT 13 YEARS, ALL COUNTRIES ARE EXPECTED TO MAKE PROGRESS ACROSS ALL OF THE SDGS. CONSIDERING THE OVERARCHING FOCUS OF THE SDG AGENDA ON PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT, IT IS CLEAR THAT SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS CAN PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION."

-- Norma Tregurtha, ISEAL Senior Policy & Outreach Manager

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with more current data flows as they become available. The JRA is not intended to be used as a standalone tool with regard to procurement decisions across jurisdictions. However, it can complement other sources of information (in particular, local knowledge and consultations) to paint a broader picture of deforestation risks and underlying conditions in order to facilitate decision-making.

Forests are increasingly recognized for the numerous critical roles they play on this planet, from filtering the air we breathe and purifying the water we drink, to providing habitat for a vast array of biodiversity, and providing an important buffer against the impacts of a changing climate. Their destruction poses direct threats to the very livelihoods of local communities as well as the business interests of local and multinational companies. By shining more light on deforestation risks, companies, governments, and all those seeking to end deforestation can better prioritize their efforts to strengthen due diligence and sustainable production practices at scale—a positive step for everyone, all 7.4 billion of us.

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* **Risk at the District Level:**
In Indonesia, district heads, known as bhupatis, have significant authority over the granting, development and enforcement of rules surrounding palm oil concessions. As a result, the Jurisdictional Risk Assessment is conducted at the district level.

Market tools and voluntary commitments are important at the forest management unit level but not sufficient for the scenario of large scale plantations expansion and climate change impacts that we face in countries like Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, South Africa and others. Participatory landscape planning, strengthening local and national institutions, and policy development are also needed and the integration between market strategies and governance is becoming more important than ever.

The positive side of the tragedy is that many measures and changes are coming and opportunities are opening up for building a future that's better prepared for climate change in the forest landscapes of Southern Chile. President Bachelet recently announced the creation of a Chilean Forest Service, which will strengthen the current forest institutional framework, a measure WWF has been advocating for several years. More activity is also taking place with active participation of WWF. The Ministry of Agriculture's Council is developing the forest policy for 2015-2035 and designing an action plan for the restoration of burned areas. The Ministry of the Environment has created an advisory committee to recommend priorities that consider biodiversity and climate change in the restoration process.

In addition to restoration, WWF-Chile is also advocating for a broad agreement on the future of the forest sector in Chile, one that evolves from a model of contiguous areas of thousands of hectares of even-aged pine and eucalyptus plantations to mosaics of multiple age, multi-species plantations, protected areas, and restored ecosystems as well as agricultural lands, all in a context of good governance, including multi-stakeholder agreements and strong institutions. In this new model, financial flows will also be fundamental, as a combination of public, private, national and international sources will be needed to recover these landscapes, ecosystems, and their services.

For decades, the Chilean forest model has been replicated in other South American countries and now the shock of the fires is forcing us to adapt the model and share the lessons learned, lessons that are also valid for WWF as a network. We have learned that working on forests, tree plantations and markets with FSC need to be complemented with other drivers such as governance and finance, and issues like climate change.

This new approach can be a critical contribution not only for WWF but also for countries like Chile and others in South America, South Africa, and Southeast Asia with similar forest models based on large scale tree plantations.

REDD+ SPECIES

DRYAS MONKEY

Common Name:
Dryas Monkey

Scientific Name:
Cercopithecus dryas

Location:
Democratic Republic of Congo

Status:
Endangered

Until this February, the Dryas monkey, or *cercopithecus dryas*, was thought to live exclusively in the community-managed Kokolopori Reserve in the north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their preferred habitats are dense thickets in secondary forests and flooded areas, which help them to hide quickly and effectively from human observers.

The Dryas exhibit sexual dimorphism, with males sporting a short white beard and markings against a grey-brown coat and black muzzle, and females and young Dryas exhibiting less white overall, with a lighter grey-brown coloring on their upper arms. An elusive yet social creature, Dryas monkeys have been observed in groups of up to 15 individuals, as well as larger groups containing other types of monkeys.

In February, researchers from the Lukuru Foundation TL2 Project and Florida Atlantic University announced they had successfully filmed a previously undiscovered population of Dryas in Lomami National Park. While the size of this new population has not yet been estimated, increased numbers will be a major boon to the species, which is currently listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, with an estimated population of less than 200 individuals.

Read more:
IUCN Red List

Photo source: http://www.jhunewsletter.com/2017/02/16/population-of-endangered-monkeys-discovered/

UPCOMING EVENTS

8-12 May 2017
Tshwane, South Africa
37TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON REMOTE SENSING OF ENVIRONMENT (ISRSE-37)
http://isrse37.org/

8-18 MAY 2017
Bonn, Germany
UNFCCC INTERSESSIONAL (SBI 46/SBSTA 46/APA 1-3)
http://unfccc.int/meetings/bonn_may_2017/meeting/10076.php

22-25 MAY 2017
Washington, DC, USA
52ND MEETING OF THE GEF COUNCIL
http://sdg.iisd.org/events/52nd-meeting-of-the-gef-council/

19-22 JUNE 2017
Paris, France
FCPF 16TH CARBON FUND MEETING
http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/

7-8 JULY 2017
Hamburg, Germany
G20 SUMMIT
https://www.g20.org/Webs/G20/EN/Home/home_node.html

11-14 JULY 2017
Bangkok, Thailand
MONTREAL PROTOCOL OEWG 39
http://conf.montreal-protocol.org/meeting/oewg/oewg-39/SitePages/Home.aspx

18-22 SEPTEMBER 2017
Friedberg, Germany
IUFRO 125TH ANNIVERSARY CONGRESS
http://iufro2017.com/welcome-messages/

6-17 NOVEMBER 2017
Bonn, Germany
UNFCCC COP23
http://unfccc.int/meetings/bonn_nov_2017/meeting/10084.php

Why we are here
To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.panda.org/forestclimate