



WWF

FACTSHEET

2013

REDD+ Inspiring Practices

FOSTERING PARTICIPATION AND CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change in Colombia

SNAPSHOT

What

- » Indigenous peoples participate in Colombia's national REDD+ strategy dialogue

Who

- » WWF Colombia
- » Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA)
- » Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC)
- » Patrimonio Natural (Fund for Biodiversity and Protected Areas)
- » Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia (MADS)

Where

Amazonian watershed of Colombia

When

2008–Ongoing

Project Team

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The Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change in Colombia was created after several workshops where communities shared their thought and concerns.

SUMMARY

The formation of the Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change in Colombia brings together Amazon Basin indigenous peoples and government officials to create a participatory and consultative national REDD+ strategy development process.

This inspiring REDD+ practice highlights the importance of working collaboratively and building the capacity for a wide array of stakeholders to participate in the development of REDD+ policies.

The project team's ability to assess the situation and to adapt to it enabled the project to advance from a capacity building program in local communities to a higher impact mechanism for REDD+ policy dialogue among key stakeholders.

As part of this, the Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change in Colombia was created, which brought together the views of indigenous people, non-governmental organizations and government agencies to successfully address REDD+ issues in Colombia through a participatory and integrated process.

EXPECTED CHANGES

- Increased decision-making capacity of indigenous peoples in the REDD+ policy making process.
- Improved and increased participation of indigenous people in the national REDD+ strategy building process.
- Increased communication and exchange of knowledge with indigenous peoples about forests.



Javier Sabogal Mogollón
of WWF-Colombia.

CONTEXT

Opportunities did not exist in key Colombian government REDD+ policy debates for indigenous peoples to voice their doubts and concerns about REDD+, which created uncertainty for them. It was very difficult for the government of Colombia to reach out all communities, many in remote areas. To address this, WWF, the Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC), Patrimonio Natural, MADS,

and the Coordinator of Indigenous Organization of the Amazon Basin (COICA) partnered to start a capacity building process that would empower indigenous peoples on such key issues as climate change, ecosystem services, adaptation, mitigation and REDD+. This effort, together with the government's willingness to link these issues with the process of developing the Colombian National REDD+ Strategy, created a participatory process that enabled indigenous peoples to be part of the dialogue.

STAKEHOLDERS



DIRECT STAKEHOLDERS

INVOLVED IN PROJECT DESIGN, MAKE DECISIONS, AND RECEIVE BENEFITS.

- OPIAC
- COICA
- Patrimonio Natural (Fund For Biodiversity and Protected Areas)
- Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia (MADS)
- WWF

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDERS

PROVIDES MATERIAL, HUMAN, AND OTHER RESOURCES.

- Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)

INDIRECT STAKEHOLDERS

INFLUENCES PRACTICE WITHOUT BEING DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

- Indigenous peoples of the Amazon watershed
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ombudsman
- Private company that generates carbon offsets for the voluntary market

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

- **2008:** Independent carbon credit dealers begin arriving in Colombia's Amazon forests and offer contracts to indigenous communities. Uncertainty develops about REDD+ issues within the government. At the same time, WWF, COICA and OPIAC partner to develop capacity building workshops to bring awareness of climate change and REDD+ to indigenous peoples and local communities in regions of the Colombian Amazon.
- **2009:** Realizing the importance of addressing REDD+ issues at the national level and to create a space for REDD+ dialogue, several NGOs form the Civil Society REDD+ Roundtable, including: WWF Colombia, Fundación Natura, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International Colombia (CI), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Ecovera Corporation. The Fund for Environmental Action and Childhood and the Fund for Biodiversity and Protected Areas (Patrimonio Natural) subsequently join the roundtable with the interest of developing new financial mechanisms for conservation. At the same time, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, COICA, OPIAC, Patrimonio Natural and WWF then decide to join efforts for capacity building and agree in the design of a REDD+ national strategy for the Colombian Amazon.
- **2010–11:** Carbon issues and the need for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) are recognised in the public agenda. At the international level, the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) approves the REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (RPP) in its meeting in Berlin. The RPP acknowledges FCPF's participatory approach and recommends to reinforce the safeguards process, include other stakeholders, and to develop a carbon Monitoring, Reporting and Verifying (MRV) process that incorporates afro-indigenous views. At the national level, the government establishes the

National REDD+ Strategy as a national policy. At the regional level, WWF, OPIAC, Patrimonio Natural, MADS, and COICA carry out workshops on climate change, ecosystem services, adaptation, mitigation and REDD+ organized for indigenous people and local communities.

- **2012:** The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, creates a draft resolution to establish a REDD+ projects registry. OPIAC, with support from Patrimonio Natural and WWF, creates the Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change (MIAACC in Spanish) with the goal of defining equitable decision-making spaces for analysis, discussion and reaching consensus for defining policies, strategies and activities related to territory, environment, climate change and REDD+.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Amazonian Indigenous Roundtable for Environment and Climate Change has been established. It facilitates debate and dialogue on REDD+ and has generated greater awareness of the need to clarify the processes related to carbon markets and similar REDD+ issues.
- Indigenous people now have their own forest management plans and land use plans that are incorporated into REDD+ initiatives.
- Ten workshops have been held and 700 people from 40 indigenous communities have been trained in the Colombian Amazon on the issues of climate change, ecosystem services, adaptation, mitigation and REDD+. Important lessons have been identified, related to the workshop content and methodology, incorporating the knowledge and perspective of indigenous people.
- This participatory approach to building national policies and strategies in Colombia has achieved international recognition.

“AFTER MY KNOWLEDGE SHARING EXPERIENCES AND DIALOGUES WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES, I NOW BELIEVE THAT BROADER PARTICIPATION IN THE REDD+ POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE CHANGES RELATED TO REDD+.”

Javier Sabogal Mogollón
(WWF–Colombia)



TEN WORKSHOPS HELD AND 700 PEOPLE FROM 40 INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TRAINED IN THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON ON THE ISSUES OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, ADAPTATION, MITIGATION AND REDD+.

100%
RECYCLED

OUR VISION

WWF's global Forest and Climate Initiative is working to ensure that REDD+ significantly contributes to the conservation of tropical forest and thereby to the reduction of emissions from deforestation and degradation for the benefit of people and nature.



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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](#)

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CHALLENGES

- Lack of adequate financial and human resources. The project could have benefited from additional donors and partners.
- Difficult to access the most remote corners of the Amazon.
- Legal gaps especially related to Free Prior and Inform Consent. Consultation processes related to REDD+ need to be more clearly defined.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **The success of a participatory policy development process depends on promoting dialogue and knowledge sharing among a wide array of stakeholders.** Initially, each of the actors and groups (academic, scientific, cultural, etc.) held their own ideas. As the dialogue progressed, these perspectives merged into a collective process incorporating input from every stakeholder. The exchange of different viewpoints improved the group and individual ideas, facilitating the inclusive and participatory development of public policies.
- **In a participatory policy development process, stakeholders need to define their views clearly but also be flexible to adapt to the groups' needs.** Representatives of nongovernmental organizations, indigenous groups, government agencies, and other stakeholders need to know what they want and at the same time be flexible and willing to make necessary changes according to the situation. Every process has difficulties, but it is important to look for alternatives to overcome these or choose a different path to find a solution.
- **Building successful public policies is achieved by integrating two approaches: top down and bottom up.** In local areas there is important knowledge that can feed into regional or national levels, while at the same time political will at the national level can drive important changes at the local or regional level. Integrating these approaches increases the success rate of policies.

OTHER COMMENTS

- REDD+ was once associated almost exclusively with carbon projects and carbon markets. This created unrealistic financial expectations based on incomplete information, which was often supplied by independent carbon dealers with self-serving objectives. As REDD+ dialogue expanded to include a wider array of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, the capacity grew to develop REDD+ legal frameworks with broader benefits to people and nature.
- It is important to integrate a bottom-up approach to REDD+ policy development with broad participation from indigenous peoples and local communities. While public consultation is mandatory in Colombia for public policies, it is important not to simply acknowledge this, but to have the capacity to build and implement a genuine consultative and participatory process.
- Indigenous peoples are recognised as key participants in Colombia's National REDD+ Strategy dialogue, not only from a political perspective but also for the value of their traditional knowledge of forest management and conservation. The participation of indigenous peoples in international forums is also a key to accessing resources that foster local processes.
- Indigenous peoples have a long-held understanding of the zonal uses of their territory, having had to manage it for centuries. For example, they can identify which areas are used exclusively for fishing or for breeding animals, and which areas are sacred places. Indigenous peoples often have their own informal land management plan that restricts land use and condemns improper land use. For these reasons, it is important to include indigenous peoples in REDD+ land-use planning.