



FACTSHEET

2016



# SIGNIFICANT STORIES: BUILDING GREEN DEVELOPMENT IN MADRE DE DIOS

WWF FOREST AND CLIMATE





## SNAPSHOT

### What

- » A diverse group of stakeholders set out to build the capacities, partnerships, and participatory processes necessary to enable sustainable development and strengthen environmental governance in Peru's Madre de Dios Region.
- » The stakeholders catalysed significant changes that include building unprecedented partnerships with the regional government, local partners, and indigenous groups; facilitating the creation of a regional environmental authority; and helping to design a development plan for the region that guides it towards a low-carbon economy resilient to political change.
- » Key lessons that emerged from this process highlight the importance of participatory processes, and the need to establish trust and define expectations, roles, and responsibilities in order for those processes to succeed.
- » This process gave rise to new capacities and partnerships, and it incorporated new priorities and perspectives – including those of historically marginalized groups, such as indigenous communities – into planning for the region's future. The process is now being replicated at the local government level in two neighbouring provinces.

### WWF contact

Maria Eugenia Arroyo, Forest & Climate Coordinator, WWF-Peru  
me.arroyo@wwf.panda.org

### Direct stakeholders

Involved in project design, make decisions, and receive benefits

- » Regional Government of Madre de Dios (GOREMAD)
  - › Natural Resources and Environment Regional Management Office
  - › Social Development Regional Management Office
  - › Territorial Planning Regional Management Office

### Strategic stakeholders

Provide material, human, and other resources

- » Ministry of the Environment
- » Forests Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation National Programme (PNCB)
- » Madre de Dios River and Tributaries Indigenous Federation (FENAMAD)
- » Peruvian Society of Environmental Law (SPDA)
- » Association for Research and Integral Development (AIDER)
- » Amazonian Interregional Council (CIAM)
- » Amazon Basin Conservation Association (ACCA)
- » Amazon Forests (BAM)
- » Rainforest Alliance INC
- » Madre de Dios National Amazon University (UNAMAD)
- » CARE Peru (PDC)
- » Peru Forests Project – USAID
- » Ministry of Culture – Madre de Dios Office
- » Pronaturaleza
- » Civil Society Working Group for the South Interoceanic Road
- » World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

### Indirect stakeholders

Influence practice without being directly involved

- » Interethnic Association for the Peruvian Forest Development (AIDSESP)

### Where

Peru's Madre de Dios region

### When

2013-ongoing

## COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS



© DIEGO PÉREZ / WWF-PERU

COVER PHOTO: © MANUEL ORBEGOZO / WWF-PERU



## SUMMARY

**T**his Forest and Climate Significant Story captures the process through which community members, regional government officials, civil society members, indigenous groups, and WWF came to work together to lay the foundation for green development in Peru's Madre de Dios region. They overcame a lack of resources, support, and trust to build new partnerships, and create capacities that range from the technical know-how of mapping

deforestation and forest degradation to the ability to incorporate indigenous worldviews and rights in planning for the region's future.

By fostering a truly participatory process, the stakeholders in this shared journey made it possible for previously marginalized voices to be heard and for significant changes to take place. Their work has spurred the design of an updated regional development plan that safeguards the sustainable use of natural resources and the preservation of indigenous

territories and traditional livelihoods, and enforces transparency, gender equity, and adaptation to climate change. Their efforts also helped establish the framework for a regional environmental authority to strengthen environmental governance in Madre de Dios, and created a local base of knowledge and resiliency to sustain that governance over time. These successes in Madre de Dios are now informing and inspiring other initiatives, both at the local community level and on the national scale.



**"THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH THEM [LOCAL GOVERNMENTS] AND SHARE AGENDAS THAT CONTEMPLATE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BASED ON SUSTAINABILITY—A GREEN AGENDA THAT PERMITS AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, BRAZIL NUT PICKERS, AND ALL WHO ARE INVOLVED IN WORKING THE LAND TO START TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOODS."**

*Alonso Córdova, Madre de Dios Head of Office, WWF-Peru*



## INTRODUCTION TO KEY CONCEPTS

The work described here and the foundational work that preceded it have unfolded during a time of significant political change in Peru. Decreed by law in 2002, Peru's decentralization established three levels of government – national, regional (in the form of Departments) and local (in the form of Provinces, Districts, and Municipalities) – and accorded greater decision-making power and responsibility to each level to develop and implement plans, manage resources, administer funds, and otherwise govern. Although this reform brought certain benefits, it has also resulted in poor coordination and communication across these levels of government, confusion around the division of power, and inefficient distribution of resources—all of which affected the work described here, and any work to effect change across the levels of government.

One of the tasks that each regional government must take on due to decentralization is creating a concerted regional development plan (PDCR, after “Plan de Desarrollo Concertado Regional”) that aligns with the national development plan, along with a regional climate change strategy (ERCC) that is linked to the PDCR.

## CONTEXT

Peru's Amazonian region is one of the world's most biodiverse and vital landscapes—a place where more than 70 million hectares of natural forest and thousands of species of flora and fauna are still found.

Within this rich landscape lies Madre de Dios, a region considered to be the biodiversity capital of Peru. Its 8.5 million hectares of well-preserved territory are home to the world's greatest concentration of bird species, as well as healthy populations of jaguar, tapir, and other large Amazonian mammals. Madre de Dios is also home to thousands of local and indigenous communities, including several indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation.

© DIEGO PEREZ / WWF-PERU



**“THE GREAT LESSON WE LEARNED FROM THIS PROCESS IS THAT IT IS VERY, VERY, VERY IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW TO MANAGE PUBLIC AFFAIRS—TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO HELP A NEW GOVERNMENT LEADER TURN HIS OR HER IDEAS INTO POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.”**

*Alonso Córdova, Madre de Dios Head of Office, WWF-Peru*

© DIEGO PEREZ / WWF-PERU



**“COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION MUST GO HAND IN HAND. THIS WILL LEAD US TO PROCESSES THAT HAVE GREATER LEGITIMACY AND SOCIAL OVERSIGHT.”**

*Maria Eugenia Arroyo, Forest & Climate Coordinator, WWF-Peru*



**“PARTICIPATION IS IN ITSELF A CHALLENGE – NOT JUST INSPIRING PEOPLE TO WANT TO PARTICIPATE, BUT ALSO ENSURING WE HAVE ADEQUATE SPACES AND CONDITIONS IN WHICH THEY CAN PARTICIPATE AND FEEL MOTIVATED TO ENGAGE.”**

*Martha Torres,  
Communications Director,  
Madre de Dios Ministry of  
the Environment Technical  
Office Coordinator,  
WWF-Peru*

Despite its environmental, biological, and cultural importance, this region is under growing threat from deforestation and forest degradation. An expanding agricultural frontier that includes extensive papaya plantations, cattle ranching, gold mining, illegal logging, rapid population growth and human migration, poorly planned urban expansion, and the impacts of hydrocarbon industry exploration and exploitation have all contributed to forest loss in Madre de Dios and continue to encroach on standing forests there. Gold mining, in particular, has a powerful hold on the region and its economy, and most efforts to regulate or control it have failed. Climate change presents an additional threat to forest health, by altering temperatures and rainfall patterns in the region.

When WWF first began its REDD+ related work in Madre de Dios in 2010, it faced significant challenges. In the wake of decentralization, the regional government was weak, particularly in its coordination across levels and sectors of government and in its implementation and enforcement of environmental policies. The regional government was also unstable, with frequent turnover of officials and workers that placed decision making in the hands of unprepared and untrained personnel. Efforts to engage community members and marginalized groups were met with resistance, as they had had negative experiences with REDD+ related activities in the past and viewed such activities with limited information and great distrust.

In the face of these challenges, WWF set out to strengthen regional environmental governance and build capacities and participation among all regional stakeholders. A key step in this early stage was the reactivation of the region's REDD+ Roundtable, renamed the Environmental Services & REDD+ Roundtable of Madre de Dios (MSAR). Initially formed as a technical consortium tasked with measuring the impact of forest loss in Madre de Dios and finding ways to respond, the MSAR had failed to meet its objectives

and was relegated to a less active role. But the reactivated MSAR reinvented itself as a diverse participatory forum that unites representatives of the regional government (GOREMAD), Madre de Dios National Amazon University (UNAMAD), Brazil nut pickers and traders, forest concessionaires, agricultural producers, and the region's indigenous communities.

It is with the support and strength of the MSAR that WWF was able to catalyse the changes described here, and to strengthen capacities, provide assistance, and build partnerships to advance the work of sustainable development in Madre de Dios.

## APPROACH

**Participation** and trust – or, more precisely, the **transparency** that creates trust – guided WWF's approach to its work in Madre de Dios. To build capacities and change environmental governance in the region, it was necessary to foster greater participation and cooperation among all stakeholders, and to make each decision and take each step with transparency. To this end, WWF functioned as a “convener” in partnership with and recognized by the regional government, bringing stakeholders to the table and facilitating their search for common ground. The **participatory processes** that resulted gave stakeholders with different interests and perspectives the opportunity to share information, collaborate, and develop solutions together, with a level of involvement by indigenous leaders that had not been seen before.

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

**2008-2009:** National-level REDD+ work begins in Peru. During this period, the regional government of Madre de Dios (GOREMAD) establishes the REDD+ Roundtable of Madre de Dios to better monitor the region's natural resources, but the Roundtable soon falls into inactivity.

**2010:** WWF starts its REDD+ work in Madre de Dios. Recognizing the need to



facilitate coordination and communication between the government, civil society, and local communities, it calls for the reactivation of the REDD+ Roundtable, which is renamed the Environmental Services & REDD+ Roundtable of Madre de Dios (MSAR).

**2011:** WWF works with GOREMAD and a local university to develop the region's first certification course in Environmental Services and Management with a focus on monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV). Over several years, this serves to create a local base of trained and informed individuals to monitor deforestation and forest degradation in the region.

**May 2013:** GOREMAD recognizes and institutionalizes the Indigenous REDD+ Roundtable of Madre de Dios.

**2014:** Through a participatory process, MSAR generates a methodology for deforestation analysis, and presents the biomass and carbon map of Madre de Dios to the Ministry of Environment (MINAM).

**February 2014:** A legal framework for the Regional Authority on Forests and the Environment (ARA) is formed, an achievement backed by MSAR and facilitated by WWF.

**July 2014:** MINAM presents the National Carbon Map—which incorporates the deforestation analysis methodology and biomass and carbon maps generated by MSAR—to the public.

**January 2015:** Political change shifts the regional government of Madre de Dios in favour of mining interests, hindering and even halting progress on many efforts to support sustainable development.

**2015:** Through a participatory process with the Natural Resources and Environment Regional Management Office of GOREMAD, community leaders and the stakeholders within and engaged with MSAR begin to create a Concerted Regional Development Plan (PRDC) that addresses territorial regulation, participation, accountability,

transparency, planning, and monitoring; recognition of indigenous people's rights; economic development based on the sustainable use of natural resources; gender equity; and climate change. The PRDC is still under development by GOREMAD, with the support of the National Planning Centre (CEPLAN).

**November 2015:** Work begins to replicate participatory development planning in local governments in the provinces of Tambopata and Tahuamanu.

### EXPECTED RESULTS

- Enhance technical and institutional capacities within the regional government and among local and indigenous peoples to enable their informed participation in planning for the future of Madre de Dios.
- Foster participatory processes that give previously marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples, a voice in the region's sustainable development and planning.
- Complete carbon mapping and deforestation analysis that reveals the baseline of forest health, and then implement a monitoring system to track changes in forest health over time.
- Establish a critical mass of well-trained people in the region to monitor and make decisions about its natural resources through various educational and capacity building initiatives.
- Craft a development plan that guides the region toward a low carbon economy while safeguarding sustainable use of natural resources, preserving the territories and livelihoods of indigenous peoples, promoting transparency and gender equity, and addressing climate change.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Madre de Dios is working to update its regional development plan, or PDCR, in alignment with Peru's national development plan. The stakeholders

**"IN THE END, IT'S THE DECISION MAKERS WHO MUST APPROVE THIS PLAN, WHICH IS CONCERTED, PARTICIPATORY, CONSIDERS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND GUILDS, AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL AND IN EVERY SECTOR: AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, MINING, PROTECTED AREAS, WHICH ARE MANY IN THIS DEPARTMENT, URBAN ZONES, CONNECTING AREAS AND FUNCTIONAL CENTRES."**

*José Luis Sánchez,  
GOREMAD Office of  
Planning, Budgets, and  
Territorial Planning*

involved in this process moved past their differences and together crafted a document that will guide the region's development while safeguarding the sustainable use of natural resources, the territories and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples, the enforcement of transparency and gender equity, and climate change readiness. This document is still under development in coordination with CEPLAN.

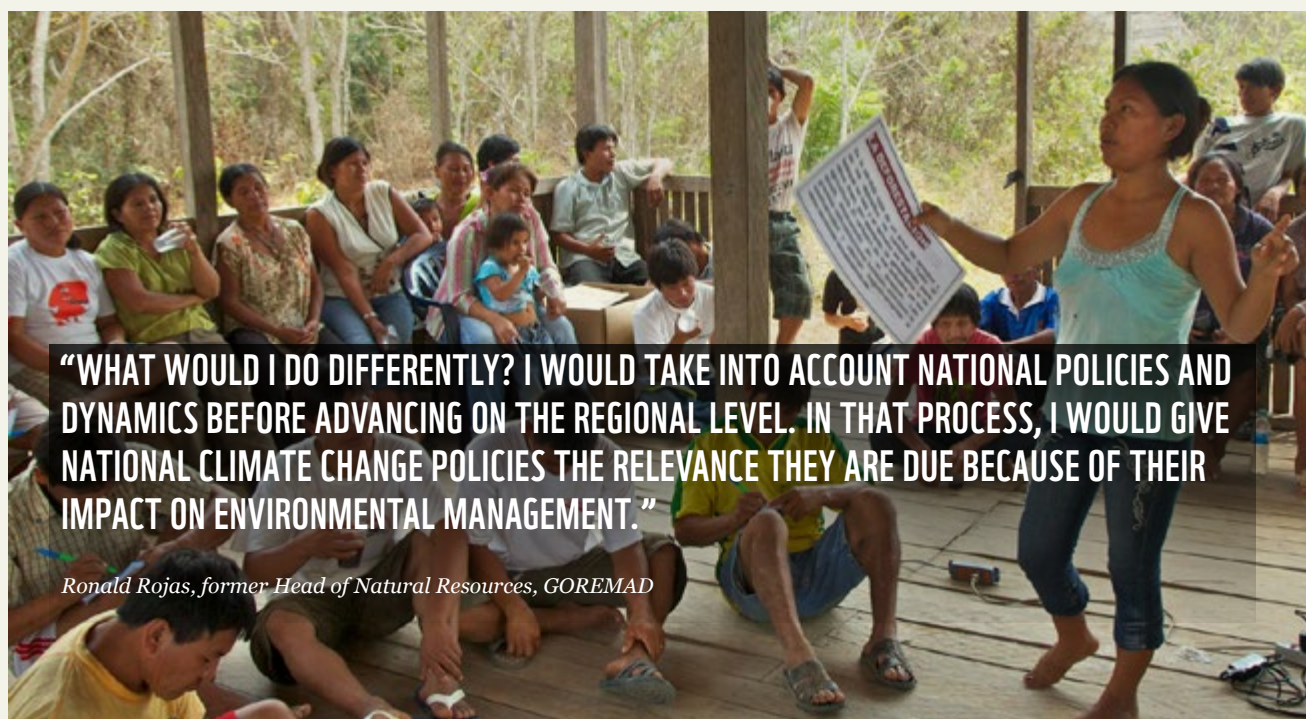
- This process has created capacities well beyond what was expected. Local certification courses and trainings, regional workshops, and other capacity building efforts have empowered stakeholders to take part in planning for the region. A locally-based and knowledgeable community of experts now stand to make informed decisions about the region's future and to sustain and monitor its natural resources over time, with increased resilience to political changes.
- Previously marginalized groups – in particular, indigenous peoples – now have a voice in the

region's sustainable development and planning. The truly transparent participatory processes that formed the core of this work created trust and represented, for many local and indigenous peoples, a first opportunity to feel comfortable and to be heard. The experience helped consolidate the proposal for Amazonian Indigenous REDD+ (RIA). It also contributed to the establishment of the Indigenous REDD+ Roundtable of Madre de Dios, and ultimately to one of the World Bank's first direct engagements with indigenous peoples via the Saweto, Living Memory Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM).

- Through partnerships within and beyond MSAR, and through extensive community-level capacity building, the stakeholders of Madre de Dios were able to achieve significant technical milestones. They completed a forest carbon map for the region; developed and reported reference levels, carbon stock estimations, and deforestation analysis; and designed an early

warning system for monitoring forest change. These tools equip Madre de Dios stakeholders to identify risks, make more informed decisions about their region's development, and to measure the impacts of those decisions as they unfold. They also impact national-level processes, as these maps have been incorporated into the National Carbon Map developed by MINAM.

- The stakeholders defined and established the legal basis for a regional environmental authority tasked with planning, managing, administering, controlling, budgeting for and overseeing environmental matters in the region. This represents a restructuring of the regional government to strengthen environmental governance in Madre de Dios.
- The success of this process has inspired neighbouring communities and provinces that are now mandated to draft PDCRs of their own. It has also highlighted the expertise and support that WWF offers, so that it has become a sought-after partner



**“WHAT WOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY? I WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT NATIONAL POLICIES AND DYNAMICS BEFORE ADVANCING ON THE REGIONAL LEVEL. IN THAT PROCESS, I WOULD GIVE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES THE RELEVANCE THEY ARE DUE BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT.”**

*Ronald Rojas, former Head of Natural Resources, GOREMAD*





**“THE GREAT CHALLENGE OF THIS WORK IS THAT PEOPLE ARE OFTEN PASSIVE PASSENGERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE ROLES, BECAUSE THESE ROLES ARE POLITICAL IN NATURE. THEIR PARTICIPATION HAS HAD TO BE STRENGTHENED THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING.”**

*Raúl Ulises López, Assistant Director of Environmental and Natural Resources Management, GOREMAD*

and facilitator for local communities embarking on their own capacity-building and planning process. Work with local governments in the provinces of Tambopata and Tahuamanu is already under way.

## CHALLENGES

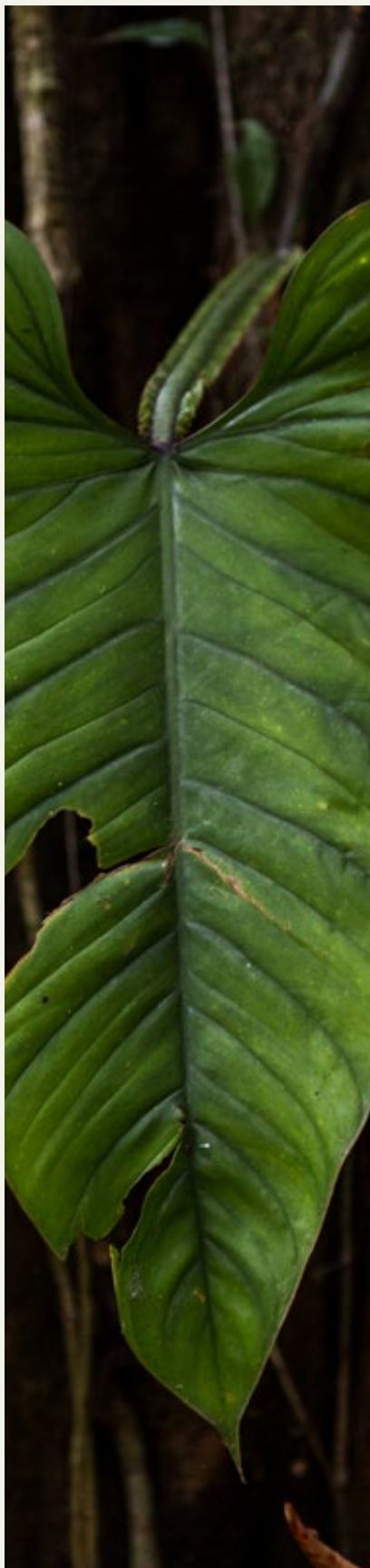
- Misinformation, lack of trust, and weak technical and institutional capacities hindered progress, especially at the start. WWF and its partners have made great strides in addressing these obstacles, but there is still work to be done – not just to enhance knowledge of technical topics, such as climate change or carbon measurement, but of related topics that shape environmental governance, such as basic government processes and budgeting.
- WWF and its partners took on too much from the outset of this work, dividing their time and resources among many different initiatives, and each initiative suffered because of it. Narrowing the focus of their efforts would benefit all the stakeholders, as well as the capacity building, governance strengthening, and other processes the stakeholders have set in motion.
- Participatory processes are slower and more complex and costly. This has limited the effectiveness of this work and its ability to reach all the communities and sectors of the public that would benefit from it.
- Political instability has proven challenging throughout the past decade of work in Madre de Dios, but the regional government change that took place in January 2015 may represent an especially significant threat. The regional government of Madre de Dios now has close ties to mining interests and has so far shown little interest in policies that support sustainable development.
- The shift in regional government priorities and support has blocked the actual implementation of ARA, which in turn impedes strengthening environmental governance and more closely integrating regional and national REDD+.
- Managing the expectations of the provincial and local governments now undertaking sustainable development planning of their own and striking the right balance to foster independence instead of dependency in these new partnerships may prove difficult.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Supporting local and provincial governments as they develop their own PDCRs presents an opportunity to create capacities and strengthen environmental governance on the most direct grassroots level possible. This, in turn, offers a chance to apply the lessons learned on the regional level to build low carbon economies from the bottom up, and to better integrate sustainable development at every level of government.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **Clear communication can determine if an initiative succeeds or fails.** When WWF began its work in Madre de Dios, it recognized immediately the lack of communication and coordination at all levels: within the region's government; between the government and other stakeholders; across local, regional, and national levels of government; and between the government and the public at large. Strengthening communication emerged as a central strategy for building capacities, fostering participation, and effecting change. In order to become personally invested in the process, each stakeholder must know what is being done, what will change, and why.



© DIEGO PÉREZ / WWF-PERU

- **It is important to integrate the local, the regional, and the national from the start.** Lack of coordination and communication across levels of government can slow progress and sow seeds of conflict and frustration. If, for example, efforts at the regional level are not aligned with national policies or recognized at the national level, they can be overlooked and inadequately supported; likewise, failing to integrate and empower local governments and communities widens the gap between leaders and the led, and leaves local efforts vulnerable to political change at higher levels. To successfully strengthen environmental governance in a meaningful way, it is critical to create capacities, build engagement and support, improve policies and administration, and support action at every level of government, and to open and facilitate communication and knowledge-sharing across all those levels.
- **Participatory processes are essential to effect and sustain change, but they must be carefully managed.** Every stakeholder in Madre de Dios deserves a voice in planning for the region's future. But the participatory processes that ensure everyone is heard can be costly, inefficient and slow to produce change. To make participatory processes efficient and effective, it is important to determine the needs and capacities of each stakeholder, to make clear what his or her roles and responsibilities will be, and to create conditions that foster participation and trust. Every detail of a participatory process must be considered and planned for, from the logistics of meeting (when and where gatherings take place) to the cultural factors in play (which languages are used and how stakeholders are addressed).
- **Build independence, not dependency.** WWF served as a facilitator, supporter, and “convener” in the process of planning for the future of Madre de Dios, and its fulfilment of those roles made possible some significant changes. But the risk of doing so much is that it does not enable other stakeholders to help themselves. Building the skills and capacities that prepare stakeholders at the local, regional, or national levels to assume much of that work on their own makes them more resilient and more able to sustain what they achieve.
- **Effecting change is a long-term commitment.** You cannot develop a well-trained, knowledgeable base of local experts, empower long-marginalized groups, or fundamentally change environmental governance overnight – or even over a few years. Building capacities and transforming entrenched ideas takes a long time, and it requires social, political, and financial support for the duration in order to be sustainable and lasting.

#### HIGHLIGHTS AND INNOVATIONS

- Stakeholders in Madre de Dios are creating a regional development plan (PDCR) through entirely participatory and decentralized processes that incorporated the voices and viewpoints of previously marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples. This is the first time that such an approach has been used throughout the development of a key management/governance tool, such as a PDCR, and there is promise that it will be replicated in other communities in the region.
- The MSAR is an innovation in itself, in that a participatory forum on environmental issues that unites the full diversity of stakeholders had not existed before. But it continues to



innovate by expanding its reach beyond technical topics, such as MRV, to questions of environmental governance, and by showing resilience in the face of changing regional government interests and priorities.

- The idea of ARA – a regional environmental authority that encompasses all environmental governance functions as a single administrative unit within the government – alone represents an innovation, and the stakeholders in this process successfully developed a formal proposal for its establishment.
- Its effective partnerships with diverse stakeholders that include the regional government have positioned WWF in a unique role as a trusted and sought-after advisor and collaborator in the region.

## NEXT STEPS

- WWF has signed an agreement with the provinces of Tambopata and Tahuamanu to officially engage as an advisor and facilitator in their local planning processes. Although WWF is already working with these local governments, the agreement formally delineates the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the process, and the commitment of the local governments to take steps toward a sustainable, low carbon future.
- WWF plans to engage with regional environmental commissions, municipal groups, the association of local mayors, and other organizations that are seeking strengthened capacities and connections with efforts at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Drawing from the technical achievements of the regional work done over the past several years,

WWF intends to bring MRV and deforestation analysis to the provincial/local government level. Identifying baselines, high-risk zones, climate change-related risks, priority areas, and drivers of deforestation and forest degradation at the local level would equip stakeholders at that level with the tools they need to craft well-informed plans for their communities.

- Ultimately, all regional and local development plans must be implemented on the ground, so that stakeholders at every level can see real changes in deforestation and forest degradation and discover in practical terms which policies work and which need improvement.

## CONCLUSION

The Madre de Dios region of Peru represents a strategic crossroads where the risks are great and the stakes are high. To combat on every front the deforestation and forest degradation that threaten this key landscape, WWF and its partners have focused their efforts on building technical and institutional capacities among diverse stakeholders in a variety of ways – from supporting historically marginalized indigenous groups in the development of their vision for REDD+, to establishing educational opportunities around forest health management and developing a regional MRV system and workforce. These efforts are bearing fruit: the lessons and achievements of earlier initiatives have equipped stakeholders to craft a regional development plan that incorporates new safeguards and considerations. Now, on the heels of those successes, local governments and community members must design road maps of their own, so that Madre de Dios can truly build a sustainable low carbon economy from the bottom up.

**“WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO CREATE TECHNICAL TOOLS FOR DECISION MAKING, BUT WE MUST ALSO WORK TO MAKE THESE TOOLS KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD BY A WIDER CIRCLE OF PEOPLE. IF WE DON'T, THEY WILL REMAIN JARGON, INACCESSIBLE AND NOT VERY USEFUL FOR THE REGION'S ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE.”**

*Maria Eugenia Arroyo, Forest & Climate Coordinator, WWF-Peru*

© MANUEL ORBEGOZO / WWF-PERU

100%  
RECYCLED



#### OUR VISION

WWF's Forest and Climate Team 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.

[panda.org/forestclimate](http://panda.org/forestclimate)



[f / wwf](https://www.facebook.com/wwf) [/ wwfforestcarbon](https://twitter.com/wwfforestcarbon)

Photos and graphics © WWF or used with permission.  
Text available under a Creative Commons licence.



#### 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](http://www.panda.org/forestclimate)

® WWF Registered Trademark Owner © 1986, WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund), Gland, Switzerland



© DIEGO PÉREZ / WWF-PERU

**This document was produced as part of Project REDD+ for People and Nature II, 2013-2015, a Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation supported program.**

**Written** by Gisela Telis for WWF

**Designed** by Jo Curnow of 1 Tight Ship for WWF

**Edited** by Emelin Gasparrini and Maria F Jaramillo of the WWF Forest and Climate Team